

CONTEMPORARY CULTURE FROM THE ARAB WORLD
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the
mosaic
rooms



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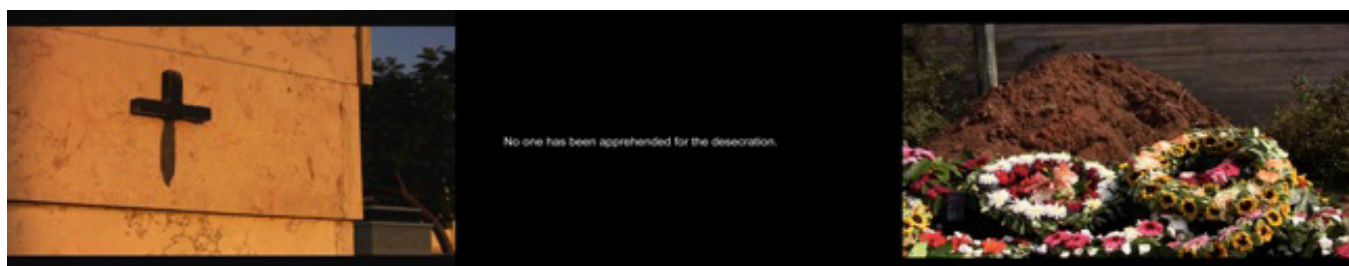
Dor Guez: 40 Days, 12 April - 31 May 2013

Private view Thursday 11 April 2013, 6.30-8.30pm

The Mosaic Rooms, 226 Cromwell Road, London, SW5 0SW



40 DAYS, Scanogram, archival inkjet print, 93 X 65 cm, 2012



40 DAYS, video still, 2012

The Mosaic Rooms hosts the first UK solo show by artist Dor Guez. Guez's family heritage is both Christian Palestinian and Jewish Tunisian. His work focuses on depicting the history and experiences of the Christian Palestinian minorities who have remained in Israel, a dispersed community whose voices and experiences have been marginalized by the prevailing narratives of the region. Guez's work addresses these disparities whilst exploring contemporary art's role in provoking questions about history, nationality, ethnicity, and personal identity.

The exhibition will include new and recent work, including the European premiere of *40 DAYS*, a multi-channel video piece and photographic series about the destroyed gravesites in the Christian Palestinian cemetery in the city of Lod (previously known by its Arabic name of Al-Lydd). Guez says about the work:

"40 DAYS deals with the position of the Christian Palestinian minority in the post "Arab Spring" reality of the Middle East. Both the video works and printed materials relate to the history of the image as an object - the tears, folds and cuts. In the video you see the result of the destruction of the Christian Palestinian cemetery in the city of "Lod/Al-Lydd", and, in parallel, the destruction of the actual photographs, which were taken by my grandfather to the police as evidence. The first destruction is a pure hate crime; the second, of the photographs themselves, notwithstanding poetic and aesthetic appearances, reflects the desperation of a disenfranchised and marginalised community."

The images originate from Guez's ongoing work, begun in 2009, to build the first Christian-Palestinian Archive, the CPA, a growing collection of archival documents about the Palestinian Christians who were expelled from, and those who remained in, the State of Israel after the 1948 war. The archive's starting point was Guez's own family's albums, three generations of the Monayer family living as a "minority within a minority" but today it includes thousands of other images. Guez conveys these experiences using different photographic and video techniques, from scanned archival images, to what he calls "scanograms", and video installations, which are at once documentary, testimonial and experimental films.

Also on exhibit will be the series **Scanograms # 2**, which holds a particular significance in its London showing for the artist:

"I had a special interest in showing **Scanograms #2** in London, as it presents passports of Palestinians from the British Mandate period (1920-1948). These archival documents reflect the freedom of movement people from all communities in the Middle East enjoyed in the first half of the 20th century. This mobility was not physical only, but also translated into the exchange of ideas between cultures and communities."

Guez's practise explores how these archival and documentary media can be used to record and validate as well as reframe and influence ideas of history, culture, and collective identity. Combining the often intimate nature of his material sources, from photographs taken by his grandfather to family testimonies, Guez's work offers audiences a uniquely poignant insight into the complexities of the Middle East today, and wider discourses on the politics of place.

This exhibition launches *Disappearing Cities*, the Mosaic Rooms' ambitious cultural programme of exhibitions, talks and screenings focused on the destruction of Arab urban life in the post-colonial age.

Artist Biography



Photo courtesy Uri Gershuni

Dor Guez was born in Jerusalem in 1980 and currently lives and works in Tel Aviv. His work has been featured in the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Petach Tikva Museum of Art in Israel, KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, the 12th Istanbul Biennial, the 17th Videobrasil in São Paulo, The Jewish Museum in New York, the 3rd Moscow International Biennial, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, Benin Biennial, Artspace in San Antonio and more. Recently he had a first overview at the Rose Art Museum in Boston.

Guez is the recipient of the Orgler Scholarship, Tel Aviv University; Ruth Ann and Nathan Perlmutter Artist in Residency Award, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University; and International Artist in Residence Award, Artspace, San Antonio.

Guez is a lecturer in the History and Theory Department at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem, and a PHD researcher affiliated with Tel Aviv University.

Related Events

Artist Talk , Saturday 20th April 2013, 12pm

Dor Guez will discuss his work with **Achim Borchardt-Hume**, Head of Exhibitions at Tate Modern, and former chief curator at the Whitechapel Gallery.

Notes to editors

- Dor Guez will be available for interview via The Mosaic Rooms. Contact Rachael or Danielle on 020 7370 9990 or email press@mosaicrooms.org.
- Images from the exhibition are available via The Mosaic Rooms.
- Follow the exhibition on twitter #40DAYS.
- Watch Dor Guez talk about his recent work on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Al7iwOi2RT4>
- An exhibition catalogue, including text by Mitra Abbaspour, Associate Curator in Department of Photography at MOMA, New York, will be available from The Mosaic Rooms' bookshop.
- The exhibition will be open Tues-Sat, 11am-6pm, free entry. There will be a special Sunday opening of the exhibition on 19 May, 12-5pm.
- The title 40 DAYS refers to the Eastern Orthodox Church's beliefs that souls of the deceased wander the Earth for 40 days after death, until ascension of the soul occurs. Special prayers at the gravesite and in the church are then held in memorial of the departed on the 40th Day. This tradition is also shared by many other denominations and religions in the region.
- Disappearing Cities aims to explore the histories and consequences of the destruction and violence that has occurred through the post colonial age on the cities of the Arab World through art, architecture, literature, music and cinema. Focusing on certain cities, we plan to examine how the inhabitants of these cities have continued to resist the breakdown or destruction of their environments through civic projects or artistic expression.
- The Mosaic Rooms, a leading independent arts space in west London, deliver a high quality, contemporary and progressive cultural programme from the Arab world and internationally. They are managed by the A.M. Qattan Foundation, a UK charity dedicated to the support of culture and education in Palestine and the Arab world. The Foundation's London office, headed by one of its trustees, Omar Al-Qattan, is responsible for the Mosaic Rooms' programme. The Rooms are part of the Culture and Arts Programme of the A.M. Qattan Foundation.
- The Mosaic Rooms is situated on the corner of the Cromwell Road and Earl's Court Road in Kensington, London, a short walk from Earl's Court Underground Station and Exhibition Centre. For further information about The Mosaic Rooms and the A.M. Qattan Foundation visit www.mosaicrooms.org