

Press Release

I Spy With My Little Eye: A new generation of Beirut artists
11 July - 22 August 2015
Private View: Friday 10 July 6.30pm-8.30pm
Exhibition Open: Tues-Sat, 11am-6pm, FREE
The Mosaic Rooms, 226 Cromwell Road, London SW5 0SW



George Awde, *His Passing Cover*, 2014.
Digital print. 30 x 37 cm. Image courtesy of the artist



Joe Namy, *Half Step* (image still), 2013.
Performance / installation + single channel video. Image
courtesy of the artist

As part of this year's Shubbak Festival, The Mosaic Rooms are pleased to present a group exhibition showcasing a new generation of emerging artists connected to Beirut. Curated by **Sam Bardaouil** and **Till Fellrath** of **Art Reoriented**, the exhibition *I Spy With My Little Eye...* rose out of the curatorial duo's research whilst working on the Lebanese Pavilion for the Venice Biennale in 2013. Over numerous studio visits in diverse cities they began to recognise a distinct and new visual language in a number of younger artists' work.

The exhibition seeks to consider this new wave by looking at the impact of Beirut on contemporary art now. The lack of public funding available for the arts has precipitated the development of home-grown initiatives by individuals and collectives seeking to reclaim public space, create sites for experimentation, and advance debate – as much political, social and civic as artistic. The energy of the city contributes to a sense of possibility. Whilst the exhibiting artists may no longer live in, or even originate from Beirut, each has established and maintained a close connection to the city.

The generation that came of age after the end of the civil war, and developed their practices throughout the 1990s, examined notions of the archive and the collective, responding to the conditions of conflict and the complexity of post-war Lebanon. The younger artists in this exhibition, meanwhile, have been producing work rooted in a sense of transience and fragility, more concerned with unpacking the present moment than preserving the past. As suggested by the title of the exhibition, the curators imagine the artists more as clandestine observers than public commentators. In discussing the premise of the exhibition, Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath explained: "*I Spy with My Little Eye...* provides the artists with an opportunity to showcase their works within a generational context, intimating the rise of a young movement marked by a shift in formal and semantic concerns." Offering a platform for emerging artists to develop their practice is a significant part of The Mosaic Rooms' aims.

Featuring the work of thirteen artists, this is the first time such a group show has been presented in London. With works ranging from painting, video, mixed-media installation, photography and performance, the output is dynamic and engaging. The artists featured are **Caline Aoun, George Awde, Mirna Bamieh, Nour Bishouty, Pascal Hachem, Charbel-joseph H. Boutros, Aya Haidar, Geörgette Power, Siska, Stéphanie Saadé, Joe Namy, Lara Tabet and Tala Worrell.**

Curators Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath co-founded Art Reoriented in 2009, as a multidisciplinary curatorial platform based in Munich and New York. Some of their recent museum exhibitions include *Mona Hatoum: Turbulence* at Mathaf, Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha (2014), and *Songs of Loss and Songs of Love: Oum Kulthoum and Lee Nan-Young* at the Gwangju Museum of Art, South Korea (2014). In 2013, they were the curators of the Lebanese Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale, and curated the comprehensive retrospective *Paul Guiragossian: The Human Condition* at the Beirut Exhibition Center, Lebanon (2013). Bardaouil and Fellrath curated Mathaf's inaugural contemporary art exhibition *Told Untold Retold*, Doha (2010-2011). Their critically acclaimed travelling exhibition *Tea with Nefertiti* was on view at Mathaf (2012), followed by the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA) in Paris, France (2013), the Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM) in Valencia, Spain (2013 - 2014) and the State Museum of Egyptian Art in Munich, Germany (2014).

Bardaouil and Fellrath have authored and contributed to several publications such as *Overcoming the Modern: Dansaekhwa, The Korean Monochrome Movement, Iran Inside Out, ItaliaArabia, and Summer, Autumn, Winter...and Spring: Conversations with Artists from the Arab World.*

A public program, featuring artists' talks and performance amongst other events, will accompany the exhibition at The Mosaic Rooms. The exhibition will tour to **Casa Árabe** in Madrid in September 2015 and Cordoba in December 2015. A dual language publication to accompany the exhibition will be available at all venues.

For further details, images and to arrange interviews contact Rosa Attwood at press@mosaicrooms.org or on + 44 207 370 9990.

■ Notes to Editors

- I Spy With My Little Eye...* is curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, Co-Founders of Art Reoriented, and produced by The Mosaic Rooms, A.M. Qattan Foundation, with exhibition partner Casa Árabe.
- Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, as well as selected artists, are available for interview.
- Images and biographies are available on request. Copy of the dual language publication available on request.
- Entry to the exhibition is free. The Mosaic Rooms are open from 11am-6pm Tuesday to Saturday.
- The exhibition is accompanied by a public program of talks and events. Visit www.mosaicrooms.org for full listings
- The Mosaic Rooms are a leading London-based non-profit cultural organisation dedicated to supporting and promoting contemporary culture from and about the Arab world. They provide an international platform for the arts, particularly new work, and create opportunities for collaboration and professional development between artists, collectives and organisations from the Arab world and the UK. They do this through their free-entry contemporary art exhibitions, their multidisciplinary events, artist residencies and learning and engagement programme. They work in partnership with national and international organisations to disseminate their combined arts program to the widest possible audience. The Mosaic Rooms' program is run by Rachael Jarvis, Director. The Mosaic Rooms are a project of the A.M. Qattan Foundation.
- The Mosaic Rooms are 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.
- Casa Árabe is a Spanish public consortium headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation that operates as a strategic centre for Spain's relations with the Arab world. Visit www.casaarabe.es
- The exhibition has been supported by ATHR, Dina & Mohamad Ali Zameli, and Mohammed Hafiz.

