



## Press Release

### *In the shade of the sun*

Mona Benyamin, Xaytun Ennasr, Makimakkuk, Dina Mimi

Brought together by artists Ruanne Abou-Rahme & Basel Abbas as part of *Bilna'es (in the negative)*

6 September - 14 January 2024

Preview Night: 5 September, 6-8.30pm

Exhibition Open: Tues-Sun, 11am-6pm, FREE

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



Installation view of *Revolution is a forest that the colonist can't burn*, Xaytun Ennasr, 2023

*In the shade of the sun* contemplates the relationship between politics and aesthetics by an exciting new generation of Palestinian artists. The exhibition comprises new commissions by artists **Mona Benyamin**, **Xaytun Ennasr** and **Dina Mimi** as well as a new sonic performance commission by **Makimakkuk**.

Moving between mediums that include film, installation, music and gaming, *In the shade of the sun* brings together artists that are forging a new language to think about and with Palestine. Their individual practices intertwined through soft expressions and radical politics, from the absurd to the poetic, as they make work for future times within the crisis of the present.

*Tomorrow Again*, by **Mona Benyamin** stages a dysfunctional broadcast that consists of different segments which recreate and react to various prominent daily catastrophes from Palestine. Instead of spoken narrative, the film resorts to exaggerated emotional and physical displays.

It utilises fragmented and often conflicting testimonies, doppelgängers, and a surrealist visual language to draw on notions of truth and fiction, and differing temporalities. The cast of the film sees two protagonists, the artist's parents, assume multiple identities spectators, as they narrate and consume their own stories in an endless cycle.

In their multimedia installation, *Revolution is a forest that the colonist can't burn*, **Xaytun Ennasr** celebrates trees as symbols of resistance and devotion. Through the artist's aesthetic of radical softness, the installation examines what a revolutionary relationship with nature looks like. Trees are situated not as resources waiting to be extracted but as beings that are loved and that love back. That relationship is presented through a variety of media, including drawings, poetry, ceramics, textiles, living olive and fig trees, and an interactive digital game.

**Dina Mimi's** project *The melancholy of this useless afternoon* unfolds through two chapters reflecting on the role of the fugitive and the smuggler. Chapter I layers images of birdsong competitions, revolutionary songs from Oman, Yemen and Palestine with a narrative contemplating movement, loss, separation, and revolutionary practice. Chapter II employs a clandestine style to document the practice of bird smuggling and the part the human body plays in this act. These are accompanied by a framed vest with an organic material resembling what the birds are traditionally hidden within.

**Makimakkuk** will debut a newly commissioned sound work titled *What remains in the museum*. This multi-layered work will sonically reflect on identity, colonisation, love, and relationships. It will be performed singularly live in the exhibition during a special event, the date will be announced shortly.

This group of artists is brought together by *Bilna'es (in the negative)*, an interdisciplinary platform that seeks to find new models for artists to redistribute resources and support one another in the production and circulation of work. Functioning as an interdisciplinary publishing space with releases ranging from music to video games Bilna'es was initiated by Ruanne Abou-Rahme & Basel Abbas, Muqata'a, and other anonymous figures as a way to support artistic communities in Palestine and beyond. The exhibition is curated by The Mosaic Rooms in conversation with Bilnae's.

Independent researcher and curator **Adam Haj Yahya** has been specially invited by *Bilnae's* to co-curate the exhibition's accompanying public programme. **Haitham Haddad** of **Studio Mnjnk** has designed the exhibition poster and visual identity.

This exhibition forms part of The Mosaic Rooms 2023 programme, which seeks to interrogate questions of active solidarity; to consider how we can continue to collaborate, host, and create sustainable support networks that enable critical and creative artistic practices.

The exhibition is generously supported by Arts Council England, Bagri Foundation and Henry Moore Foundation.



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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### Artist biographies

**Mona Benyamin** is a visual artist and filmmaker based in Haifa. In her works, she explores intergenerational outlooks on hope, trauma and questions of identity, using humour and irony as political tools of resistance and reflection.

**Dina Mimi** is a visual artist and filmmaker who works and lives between Jerusalem and Amsterdam. Her practice is multifaceted and uses video, sound, performance, and text drawing on extended research into death and memory and the colonial past.

**Xaytun Ennasr** is an artist and interactive designer who is radically soft. Soft like the way they talks, soft like the way they walk, soft like the revolution. Much of their work can be viewed through the vernacular of science fiction, folklore, labour, and intersectional revolutionary utopias.

**Makimakkuk** is a multi-dimensional music performer, maker and selector based in Ramallah, Palestine, weaving genres such as electronic, experimental, coupled with freestyle and storytelling infusing the personal, social and political.

### About The Mosaic Rooms

The Mosaic Rooms are situated on the corner of the Cromwell Road and Earl's Court Road in Kensington, London, a short walk from the V&A and Design Museum. The Mosaic Rooms are open 11am-6pm Tuesday to Sunday, entry is free.

The Mosaic Rooms are a non-profit art gallery and bookshop dedicated to supporting and promoting contemporary culture from the Arab world and beyond. We do this through contemporary art exhibitions, multidisciplinary events (including film screenings, current affairs, talks, book launches and more) artist residencies and learning and engagement programme. We work in partnership with local, national and international organisations to disseminate our arts programme to a wide and diverse audience. Previous collaborations include partnerships with Chisenhale Gallery, Delfina Foundation, ICA, Shubbak Festival, London Design Festival, among others. They are a project of the A. M. Qattan Foundation.

### About the A. M. Qattan Foundation

The A. M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF) is an independent, not-for-profit developmental organisation working in the fields of culture and education, with a particular focus on children, teachers and young artists. Founded and registered in 1993 in the UK as a charity (no 1029450) and as a charitable company limited by guarantee (no 2171893), it has had a registered branch in Palestine as a nonprofit organisation (no QR-0035-F) since 1998. The Foundation's operations are mainly in Palestine, with interventions in Lebanon through Selat: Links Through the Arts, and in the United Kingdom through The Mosaic Rooms.

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