



SUCH STUFF AS  
DREAMS ARE  
MADE ON:

**YOUNG  
ARTISTS  
FROM  
PALESTINE**

**Part I: 18 - 31.03.2011**

Ahmad and Mohammad Abu Nasser (Tarzan & Arab)  
Majd Abdel Hamid \\\ Salman Nawati

---

**Part II: 8 - 21.04.2011**

Abdallah Al Ruzzi \\\ Ayed Arafah  
Jumana Manna \\\ Dina Matar



*Such stuff as dreams are made on* showcases a selection of work by young artists from Palestine, all winners or finalists in the 2010 A.M. Qattan Foundation's Young Artist of the Year Award. The biennial Award is organised by the Foundation's Culture and Arts Programme and is open to young artists under 30 of Palestinian descent from any part of the world. All the finalists for the 2010 Award, however, come from the vicinities of Bethlehem, Gaza, Jerusalem and Ramallah. Each finalist received support from the Foundation to develop and produce their work, which was then exhibited in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah in October 2010.

A First, Second and Third Prize was awarded by a distinguished international jury that included the artists Rajie Cook, Emily Jacir and Raeda Sa'adeh (winner of the inaugural Young Artist Award in 2000), with writers Jean Fisher and Hassan Khader.

**The First Prize** was awarded to the twin brothers, Ahmad and Mohammad Abu Nasser, also known as Tarzan & Arab, for their *Gazawood* project. *Gazawood* features a short film, *Colourful Journey*, and a series of posters for other imaginary films - yet to be made, perhaps - that reflect their interest in and passion for film. The irony is that the titles of the films are names of Israeli Defence Force military campaigns, absurd names reputedly conjured randomly through a computer generating programme. The short film and posters are inspired by different genres (westerns, crime, horror and the supernatural, for example) but the accompanying images are re-imagined to reflect their own experiences of Gaza. Ironically there has been no functioning cinema in Gaza since the late 1980s, but (electricity supplies permitting) there are plenty of opportunities to watch films on satellite TV or on illegal DVD copies, and probably many hours to wile away due to the paralysing situation enforced by Israel's blockade. The hundreds of satellite TV channels from around the Arab world show many films at all hours of the day and night, and not just from Hollywood. Tarzan & Arab's *Gazawood* project reflects a cunning knowledge of film genres and history, as well as a healthy element of humour (albeit black) that counters the prevailing realities around them.

**The Second Prize** was awarded to an artist also from Gaza, Abdallah Al Ruzzi. His large installation work, *The Germ*, was built in a concrete water storage facility near Khan Younis, now abandoned but which had originally supplied Israeli settlements in the area before the withdrawal of the settlers in 2005. In the Mosaic Rooms exhibition, we are therefore showing documentation of this unique and ambitious

project as we are unable to show the original installation. To try to recreate it would have reduced its impact and meaning. The installation consisted of three large 'germs' made of found materials of scrap metal and used oil, food and paint cans. For the artist, the 'germs' are one of the causes of the destruction and decay he sees in his environment, and of the pain "which still lives in the darkness... [and] lies somewhere inside us... some unknown massive thing..."

**The Third Prize** was jointly awarded to Ayed Arafah and Jumana Manna. Ayed's *Horizon* installation reflects his desire to have access to the Mediterranean Sea that is so close to his home but which he is unable to visit due to the restrictions now enforced upon Palestinians with the construction of the separation wall. The installation of small plastic bags filled with blue water, quietly hanging at eye level displaces the sense of injustice and anger with a poetic meditation on the idea of the inaccessible sea's apparently limitless horizon, bringing it closer into a more private and intimate visual field.

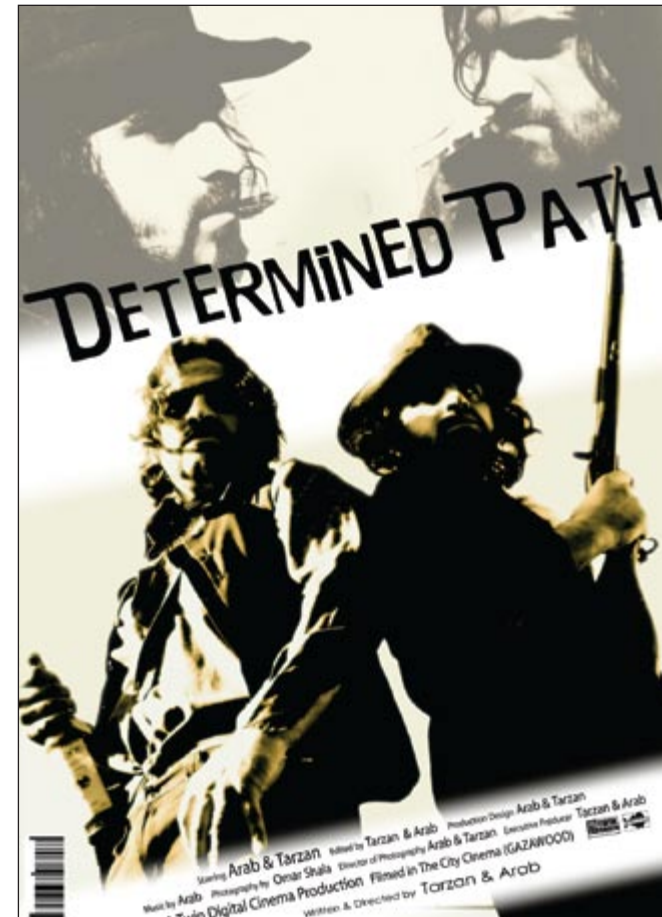
Jumana Manna's recent video work, *Blessed Blessed Oblivion*, is a comment on the frustrations and lost potential of young Palestinian men, in occupied East Jerusalem, for whom there are few opportunities of further employment or education. Society and culture in East Jerusalem (a virtual ghetto) is suffering from the Israeli occupation in subtly different ways from the rest of Palestine. The artist's film explores some of these complex issues and the ever present underlying violence and tension in an unusual and interesting way. The circumstances of the occupation have meant that these young men are in an uncertain and undefined state of political identity that contrasts with the heroic image of the freedom fighter. An apparently misogynistic protagonist recites heroic martyr poems but follows them with cruder, less sacred words. Grooming - of cars in repair shops, and the male body at the barbershop - gives a heightened sense of preparation; but preparation for what? The sense of paralysis of life under occupation is palpable.

Two of the other participants are also young artists based in Gaza, Dina Matar and Salman Nawati. Dina Matar's paintings are a hybrid of colourful pattern with symbols and signs representing her lived reality, while Salman Nawati's video is revealing of the fears and the heavy and different weight of time that accompanies daily life in Gaza. Majd Abdel Hamid's model of the emblematic form of the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem (or the Dome of the Rock as it is known in English) reflects the ubiquitous image of this iconic symbol of the city and its presence in almost every Palestinian home and workplace, not just in Palestine but in all the refugee and exiles' homes around the world. In this work, however, Abdel Hamid plays with the painful reality of unrealised dreams and illusory hopes by covering the form with pain numbing tablets.

For this younger generation does not assume the mantle of optimistic revolution of their parents' generation by addressing issues to do with their future (and present) circumstances. On the contrary, the artists' works are full of sardonic

and wry observation. There is often a sense of fun and play as well; the dreams are different than for previous generations but no less real. There are bad dreams and nightmares, but pleasurable ones also that allow some escape and a space for hope. As with younger generations everywhere - as witnessed in the recent protests and ground level, youth-led social movements in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world - the relative lack of jaded cynicism means there are still dreams to be dreamed and energies to be harnessed to new ideas.

*Such stuff as dreams are made on: Young Artists from Palestine* is curated by Nicola Gray



Ahmad & Mohammad Abu Nasser (Tarzan & Arab) poster from the Gazawood project, 2010 20 posters, 50 x 70 cm

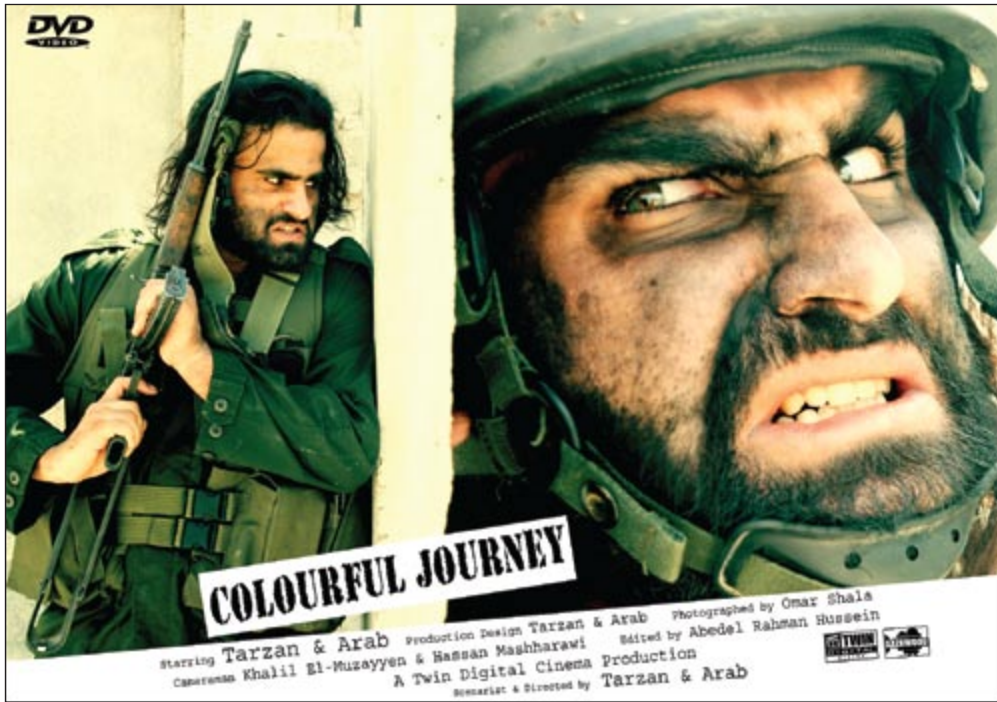
## ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

### Majd Abdel Hamid

was born in Damascus in 1988. He was one of the first year's intake of students to the International Academy of Art in Ramallah when it opened in 2007, but left to complete his studies at the Malmö Art Academy in Sweden from which he graduated in 2010. He was also a finalist in the 2008 Young Artist Award and exhibited in the 'Fragile Bodies' exhibition at The Mosaic Rooms in 2009. Recent work has been exhibited in Sweden, Germany, Italy and China. He was a recipient of the residency award at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 2009.

Majd Abdel Hamid  
*Painkillers*, 2010  
Cardboard, pills & white paint  
38 x 24 cm





Ahmad & Mohammad Abu Nasser (Tarzan & Arab)  
poster for the short film *Colourful Journey*, 2010  
(video, 5:51 min)

## Ahmad and Mohammad Abu Nasser (Tarzan & Arab)

are twin brothers born in Gaza in 1988. They have both been studying painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Al Aqsa University in Gaza since 2007, and have exhibited their work in various exhibitions all over Palestine. They both showed their work in the 'ArtSawa Creative' Palestinian Art exhibition in Dubai in 2010.

## Abdallah Al Ruzzi

was born in Gaza in 1982 and graduated from Al Aqsa University in 2005 with a BA in Education and Fine Arts. He has exhibited in various exhibitions in cultural centres and venues in Gaza and Ramallah as well as participating in an exhibition in New York for young Palestinian artists.

Abdallah Al Ruzzi  
*The Germ*, 2010  
mixed media installation in  
a disused water reservoir;  
Khan Younis, Gaza





Ayed Arafah  
*Horizon*, 2010  
 mixed media installation with  
 coloured water & plastic bags  
 (dimensions variable)

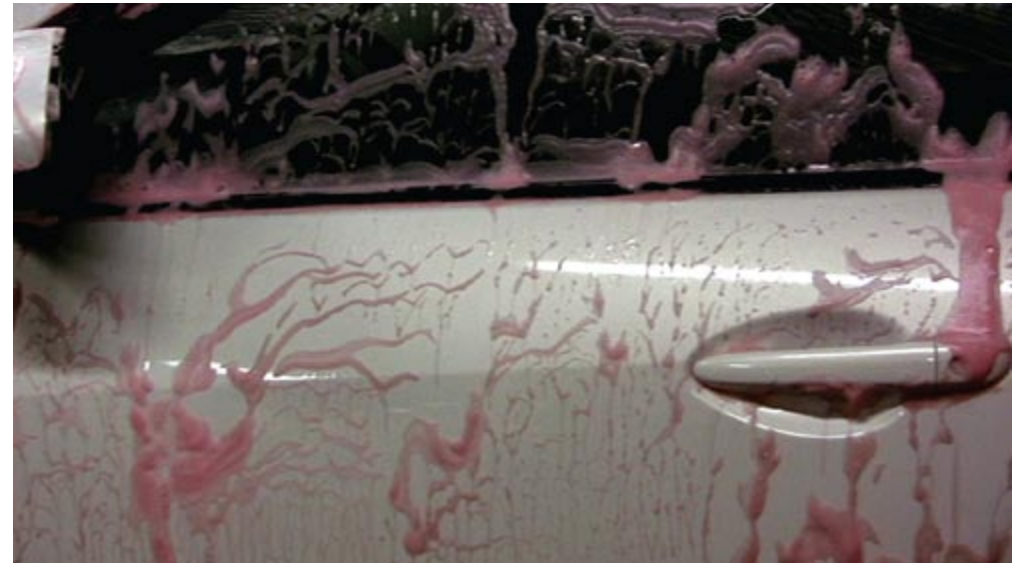
## Ayed Arafah

was born in Jerusalem in 1983 and spent his childhood in the Dheisheh Refugee Camp near Bethlehem. He is enrolled in the International Academy of Art in Ramallah, as well as at Al Quds Open University where he is simultaneously studying for a qualification in Social Work. He is currently on a student exchange in the School of Arts and Media at the University of Brighton.

## Jumana Manna

was born in the US in 1987. After returning to Jerusalem with her family, she studied at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design before moving to Norway and graduating from the National Academy of the Arts in Oslo in 2009. Recent exhibitions include the Mediterranean Biennale of Haifa, 'Another Country' at Ifa Gallery in Berlin, 'A Reluctant Apparition' at the Sue Scott Gallery in New York as well as the 2009 Toronto Palestinian Film Festival. She is currently studying for an MA in Aesthetics and Politics at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts).

Jumana Manna  
 video still from *Blessed Blessed*  
*Oblivion*, 2010  
 HD video, 23:20 min





Dina Matar  
*On the Surface of the Sea, 2010*  
 acrylic on canvas, 195 x 196 cm

## Dina Matar

was born in Gaza in 1985 and graduated from Al Aqsa University with a BA in Fine Art and Education. Her paintings have been included in exhibitions in France, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Gaza and were previously exhibited in the opening exhibition at the Mosaic Rooms, 'Occupied Space 2008'. She is a member of the ELTIQA artists' collective in Gaza City.

## Salman Nawati

was born in Gaza in 1987 and has a BA in Fine Arts from Al Aqsa University. His work has been shown in several exhibitions in Gaza and he has won prizes for his film and video work in competitions organised by the World Health Organisation (2009) and the Jawwal Short Film Competition (2008). He teaches painting in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Al Aqsa University.

Salman Nawati  
 video still from *Torsion... in the Neck of Time, 2010*  
 video, 2:50 min





Abdallah Al Ruzzi  
*The Germ*, 2010  
mixed media installation in a disused water reservoir,  
Khan Younis, Gaza

This exhibition has been generously supported by:



BRITISH  
COUNCIL

The Ben-Brahim Family Fund

**Exhibition:**

**Part I: 18 - 31.03.2011**

Ahmad and Mohammad Abu Nasser (Tarzan & Arab)  
Majd Abdel Hamid \\\ Salman Nawati

**Part II: 8 - 21.04.2011**

Abdallah Al Ruzzi \\\ Ayed Arafah  
Jumana Manna \\\ Dina Matar

Mon-Fri 11 - 6pm; Sat 11 - 4pm



the  
mosaic  
rooms



The Mosaic Rooms brings some of the most exciting, progressive and innovative contemporary creative voices in the Middle East to London.

The Mosaic Rooms  
226 Cromwell Road  
London SW5 0SW  
[www.mosaicrooms.org](http://www.mosaicrooms.org)