

02

THREE

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EXHIBITION

GUIDE

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02

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ARTISTS

نوفمبر ٢٤ - مارس ٢٥

الفنانون

25

Noor Abuarafeh, Asim Abu Shakra, Abbas Akhavan, Farah Al Qasimi, Heba Y Amin, Atelier HOKO, Sophia Balagamwala, Sammy Baloji, Jumana Bayazid El Husseini, Anna Boghiguan, Kasper Bosmans, Cheng Xinhao, Ali Cherri, Chim↑Pom from Smappa!Group, Bouie Choi, Jason Dodge, Mohieddine Ellabbad, Annika Eriksson, Simryn Gill, Kadhim Hayder, Khalid Jauffer, Hayv Kahraman, Sudhira Karna, Madhumala Mandal, Rebati Mandal, Selo Yadav and Sumitra Yadav, Kee Ya Ting and David Tan, with Migrant Ecologies Projects, Candice Lin, Ali Milad, Benoît Piéron, Pilar Quinteros, Walid Raad, Khalil Rabah, Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, Lin May Saeed, Mark Salvatus, Walid Siti, Shimabuku, Mariam Suhail, Risham Syed, Robert Zhao Renhui (The Institute of Critical Zoologists)

أنا بوجيجيان، أتيليه هوكو، أرايا رارتشاريمسوك، أنيكا إريكسون، بيلار كينتيروس، بينوا بيرون، بوي تشوي، تشنغ شينهاو، تشيم أبوم من مجموعة سمايا!، جاسون دودج، جمانة بايزيد الحسيني، خالد جوفر، خليل رباح، ريشام سيد، روبرت تشاو رين هوي (معهد علماء الحيوان النقديين)، سامي بالوجي، سيمرين غيل، شيما بوكو، صوفى بالاغم والا، عاصم أبو شقرة، عباس أخقان، علي شري، علي ميلاد، فرح القاسمي، كاسبر بوسمانس، كاظم حيدر، كانديس لين، سديرة كارنا، مادومالا ماندال، ريباتي ماندال، سيلو ياداف، سوميترا ياداف، كي يا تينغ وديفيد تان، مع مشروع "البيئة المهاجرة"، لين ماي سعيد، مارك سالفاتوس، مريم سهيل، محيي الدين اللباد، هبة يحيى أمين، هيف كهرمان، نور أبو عرفة، وليد رعد، وليد ستي



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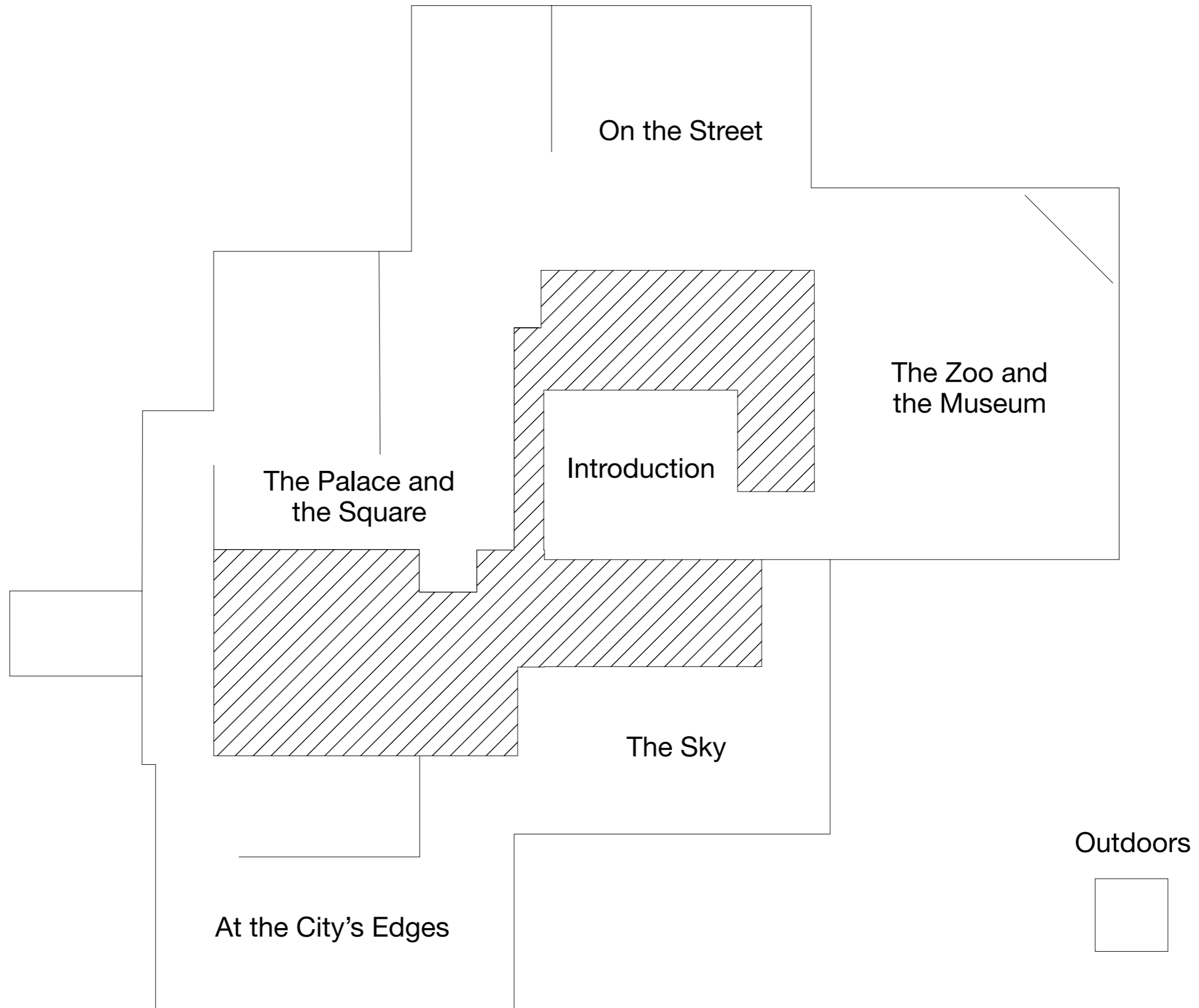
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In ‘Three Tired Tigers’, artists encourage us to view our cities and landscapes from a primarily four-legged perspective. Bringing together more than 40 artists and collectives, drawing from politics, history, economics and urbanism, the exhibition is a playful yet serious exploration of human-animal relationships in these shared geographies. In cities designed primarily for humans, radically separated from nature, kept captive for food or show, animals are often seen as either pets or pests. Despite this, animals find ways to prosper in urban gaps and find communities that welcome them. They resist control and management strategies, compelling us to think about what coexistence truly means.

Each of the exhibition’s five galleries will guide you through urban spaces where animals are encountered. You’ll start in the zoo and the museum – institutions that manage, control and classify animals. Next is the street, where many stray cats reveal surprising networks of care and coexistence. You’ll then visit the palace and the public square, where animals often embody power, values and history. At the city’s edges, dogs, pigeons and rats challenge humans’ monopoly on cities. Finally, you’ll reach the sky, the symbol of openness and freedom, yet a tightly controlled ecosystem dominated by human networks.

The exhibition is inspired by the street cats of Dubai – if you’re lucky, you might just see one playing or napping in the park near the Jameel Arts Centre. Many exhibited artists engage with the region’s urban animals, and the show extends to other geographies where animals disrupt human-centric landscapes. You’ll encounter bears atop Kurdish mountains, starving lions in Palestine, thriving cats in Pakistani museums, displaced dogs in Istanbul, parakeets taking over Beirut, and many more stories of struggle, survival and companionship. The exhibition asks: How can we view animal presence as integral to our cities and everyday geographies? What happens if we take rats, pigeons, street cats – or tigers – seriously?





Outdoors

Mark Salvatus, *Claws*, 2016/2024

Introduction

Jason Dodge
Khalid Jauffer, *Cats*, 2022
Sophia Balagamwala, *A Smart Cat's Guide to the National Museum*, 2024
Madhumala Mandal, Rebaty Mandal, Selo Yadav, Sudhira Karna and Sumitra Yadav, 2023-2024

The Zoo and the Museum

Where institutions control and classify

Lin May Saeed, *Serval*, 2018
Noor Abuarafteh, *Am I the ageless object at the museum?*, 2018
Abbas Akhavan, *If the first metaphor was an animal*, 2017
Kasper Bosmans, *The Critter Pavilion*, 2024
Shimabuku, *Gift: Exhibition for the Monkeys*, 1992
Khalil Rabah, *Palestine after Palestine: New sites for the
Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind departments, Structure Site:
Gaza Zoo Sculpture Garden (Eagles, Lions, Hide I, Trolley, Wood Lion)*, 2017

On the Street

Spaces of encounter, care and coexistence

Khalid Jauffer, *For Cats Only*, 2024
Atelier HOKO, *HABIT©AT*, 2014 & *CAT O'CLOCK*, 2021
Annika Eriksson, *The Community*, 2010
Ali Milad, *Objects in the Mirror are Closer Than They May Appear*, 2023
Mohieddine Ellabbad, 1974-1988

The Palace and the Square

Where animals meet power and history

Walid Siti, *The Troubled Bear and the Palace*, 2019
Asim Abu Shakra, *Beast*, 1986
Lin May Saeed, *Hammar Marshes*, 2020
Hayv Kahraman, *Asad Babil*, 2011
Pilar Quinteros, *Tigres Prestidigitadores*, 2019
Risham Syed, *Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians
(after Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians by George Stubbs, 1764)*, 2024
Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, *The Treachery of the Moon*, 2012
Kadhim Hayder, *Study for The Martyr's Epic*, undated
Fatigued Ten Horses Converse with Nothing (The Martyr's Epic), 1965



At the City's Edges

Spaces of rejection and relegation

Shimabuku, *Then, I Decided to Give a Tour of Tokyo to the Octopus from Akashi*, 2000
Cheng Xinhao, *March of the Elephants*, 2022
Benoît Piéron, *Peluches Psychopompes I, II, IV, IX, XIV, XVII*, 2022–2023
Sammy Baloji, *Essay on Urban Planning*, 2013
Candice Lin, *Sorting the Rats, Bureau of Rats*, 2020
Annika Eriksson, *I am the dog that was always here (loop)*, 2013
Mariam Suhail, *Pigeon as Metaphor*, 2020
Simryn Gill, *Naga Doodles #1-1, #1-3 (Sumatran Spitting Cobra)*, 2017
Bouie Choi, *Messenger from the Wild*, 2024
Robert Zhao Renhui (The Institute of Critical Zoologists), *A History of Cows*, 2024
Ali Cherri, *Dead Inside*, 2021
Chim↑Pom, *SUPER RAT Scrap & Build*, 2006/2011

The Sky

Spaces of surveillance and freedom

Anna Boghiguian, *Standing Bird*, 2023
Kee Ya Ting and David Tan in collaboration with
Migrant Ecologies Projects, *Feather Forensics: Avian Window Strikes*, 2016
Heba Y Amin, *As Birds Flying*, 2016
Farah Al Qasimi, *Falcon Hospital 2 (Blue Glove)*, 2016
Walid Raad in collaboration with the Atlas Group,
We have never been so populated, 1997/2020
Jumana Bayazid El Husseini, *Horses*, 1972



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Claws

Mark Salvatus

2016/2024

Site-specific installation (wooden tables, books, catnip)

Mark Salvatus's mother used to tie books around table legs, creating makeshift scratching pads for her cats while protecting the house's furniture.

Like much of Dubai, the Jaddaf area is home to many cats, who often wander through the courtyard of the Jameel Arts Centre. In this sculpture, first realised in the Netherlands in 2016, the artist gathers books and tables from second-hand shops to replicate his mother's gesture and create a playground for urban cats.

Reproducing the work in Dubai held particular meaning for Salvatus, who was born in the Philippines. A significant number of workers from his home country spend years in the UAE, often leaving their furniture and books behind when they depart.

Salvatus also draws a parallel between the theoretical act of sharpening one's intellect and the physical act of cats sharpening their claws – perhaps sharpening their minds as well.

Courtesy of the artist



A





Jason Dodge

Jason Dodge's artwork, often called a "tiger door," carries no official title or fixed date. It creates a pathway to an enclosed space while keeping it out of reach.

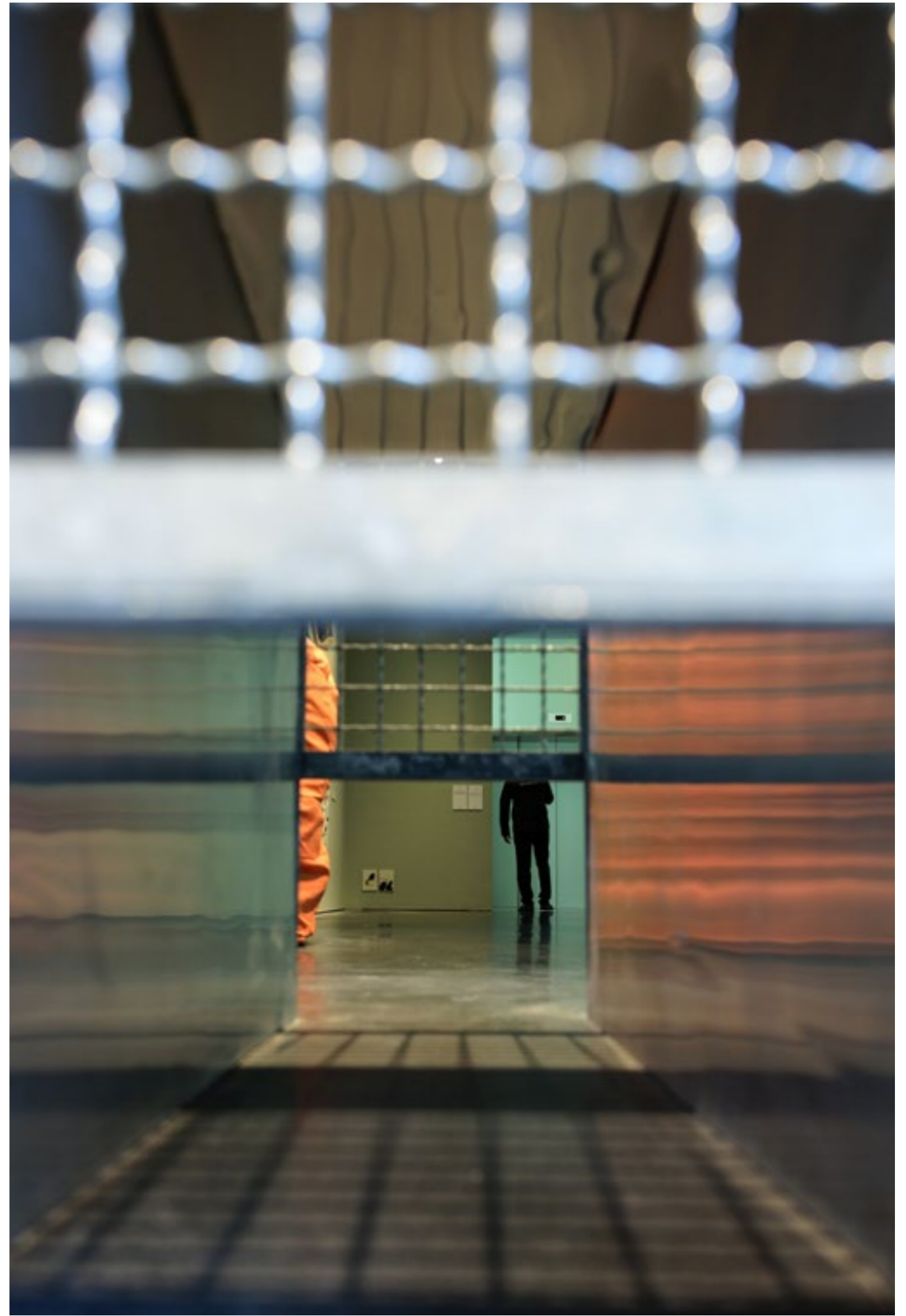
Positioned at the eye level of a large cat, Dodge's door hints at the presence of something wild and unseen, suggesting that the animal is lurking nearby.

Courtesy of the artist and Franco Noero



Noor Abuarafeh,
Atelier HOKO,
Anna Boghiguia,
Smappa!Group,
Simryn Gill, KA,
Madhumala Mar
David Tan, with
Pilar Quinteros, V
Mark Salvatus, V





Cats

Khalid Jauffer

2022

Graphite on paper
Dimensions variable

Khalid Jauffer portrayed street cats he encountered on his daily commute, many of them in Dubai and Sharjah. The artist describes the cats as companions of intimacy, with whom he shares brief yet profound moments in the bustle of the city.

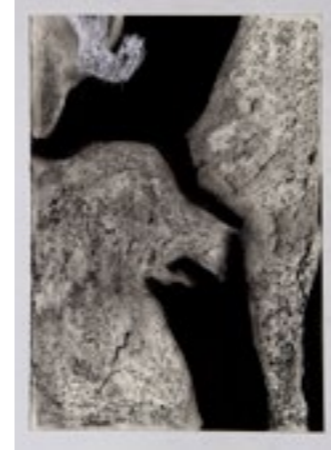
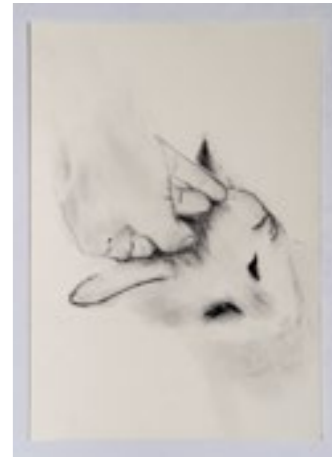
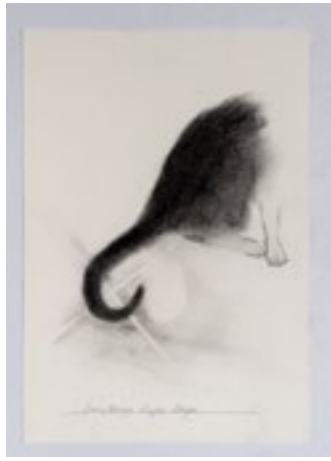
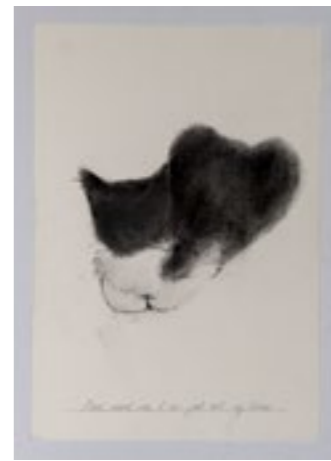
Real cats may be barred from entering museum galleries, but their presence is felt through these portraits. Strategically placed at cat eye level – some near the floor, others perched high – the portraits invite visitors to view the space from the perspective of these resilient urban dwellers.



Courtesy of the artist
Supported by 421







A Smart Cat's Guide to the National Museum

Sophia Balagamwala

2024

Book, 32 pp., English/Urdu
17.7 x 17.7 cm (closed)
Publication design by Aziza Ahmed

Sophia Balagamwala's artist book playfully celebrates the many cats living in and around one of her favourite museums in Karachi. Also a curator, Balagamwala observed the dynamics at play within the museum, where employees either tolerate, foster or abhor the cats' presence. Shaped like a travel guide, the book offers practical, day-to-day advice on prime locations for eating, sharpening claws, lounging, napping and more.

A Smart Cat's Guide to the National Museum takes the cats seriously as museum users yet highlights their struggle to maintain shelter within it. Beyond its humorous tone, the publication underscores the various disagreements and accommodations that come with sharing the museum space, as well as the fundamentally unequal power dynamics between humans and cats, who can be forcefully removed at any time. The book encourages readers to consider how humans can facilitate coexistence with animals and be mindful of their sensitivities, just as we hope they would be with ours, however odd they may find them.



Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by Art Jameel





Madhumala Mandal, Rebati Mandal, Selo Yadav, Sudhira Karna and Sumitra Yadav

2023-2024

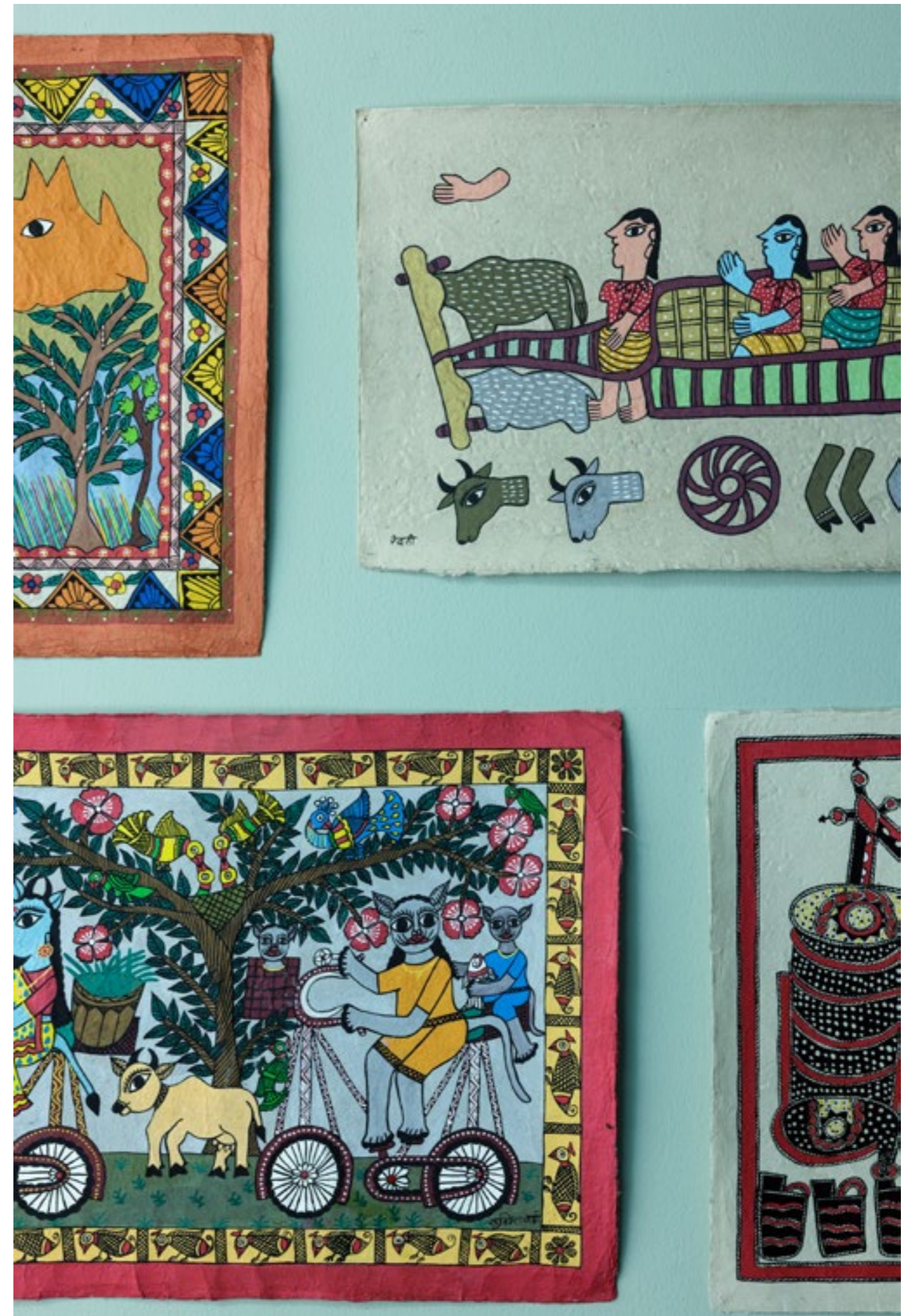
Distemper colour on handmade Lokta paper
51 × 76.5 cm (6) and 38 × 51 cm (2)

Part of a larger collective of women artists in Janakpur, in the Mithila region of Nepal, the five artists presented here use scenes of coexistence with animals to reflect critically on the dynamics of oppression they face due to their caste and gender. They also respond to the rapid transformations affecting their region at Nepal's border with India, notably deforestation, labour migration, shifts in farming techniques, and the extinction of many animal and plant species.

The whimsical compositions create a vibrant and altered universe where domestic and wild animals – some real, others imagined – become central characters in scenes of everyday life.

The featured works represent a continuation of a long tradition of expression, grounded in ritual art. Traditionally, artists displayed their creations through wall paintings and ground designs. To make their work more accessible and transportable, while preserving the core art form, the artists have transitioned to using handmade paper and distemper colours instead of the traditional vegetable dyes, soil, and pigments.

Courtesy of the artists
Private collection, Kathmandu
Commissioned by Colomboscope 2024 with the support of Art Jameel

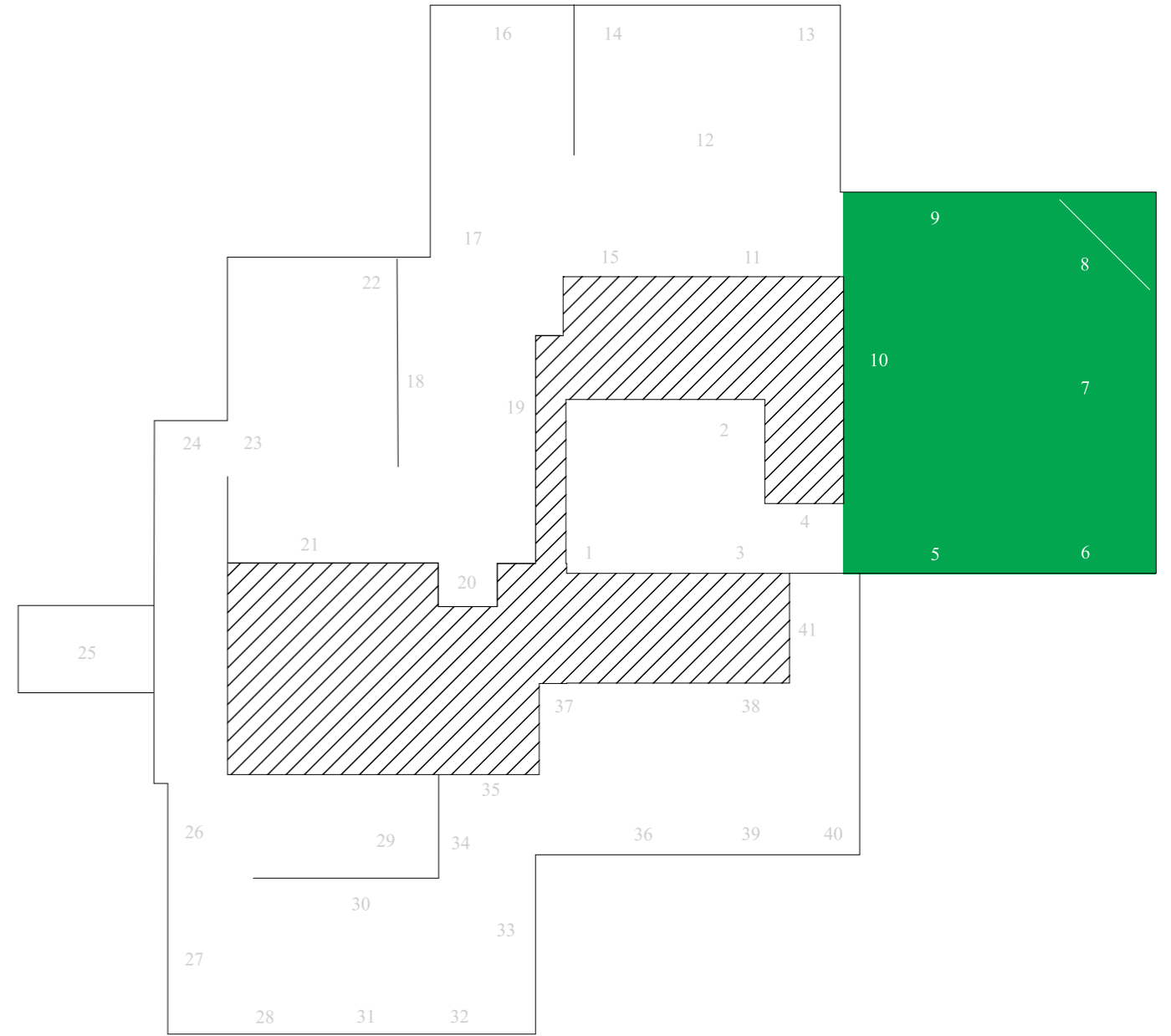




(From left to right)

Row 1: Rehati Mandal, Selo Yadav, Rehati Mandal
 Row 2: Sumitra Yadav, Rehati Mandal, Selo Yadav
 Row 3: Sudhira Karna, Madhumala Mandal

Images courtesy of the artists



حديقة الحيوان والمتحف
مؤسسات التحكم والتصنيف

The Zoo and the Museum
Where institutions control and classify

Works

Lin May Saeed, <i>Serval</i> , 2018	5
Noor Abuarafeh, <i>Am I the ageless object at the museum?</i> , 2018	6
Abbas Akhavan, <i>If the first metaphor was an animal</i> , 2017	7
Kasper Bosmans, <i>The Critter Pavilion</i> , 2024	8
Shimabuku, Gift: <i>Exhibition for the Monkeys</i> , 1992	9
Khalil Rabah, <i>Palestine after Palestine: New sites for the Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind departments, Structure Site: Gaza Zoo Sculpture Garden (Eagles, Lions, Hide I, Trolley, Wood Lion)</i> , 2017	10



Serval

Lin May Saeed

2018

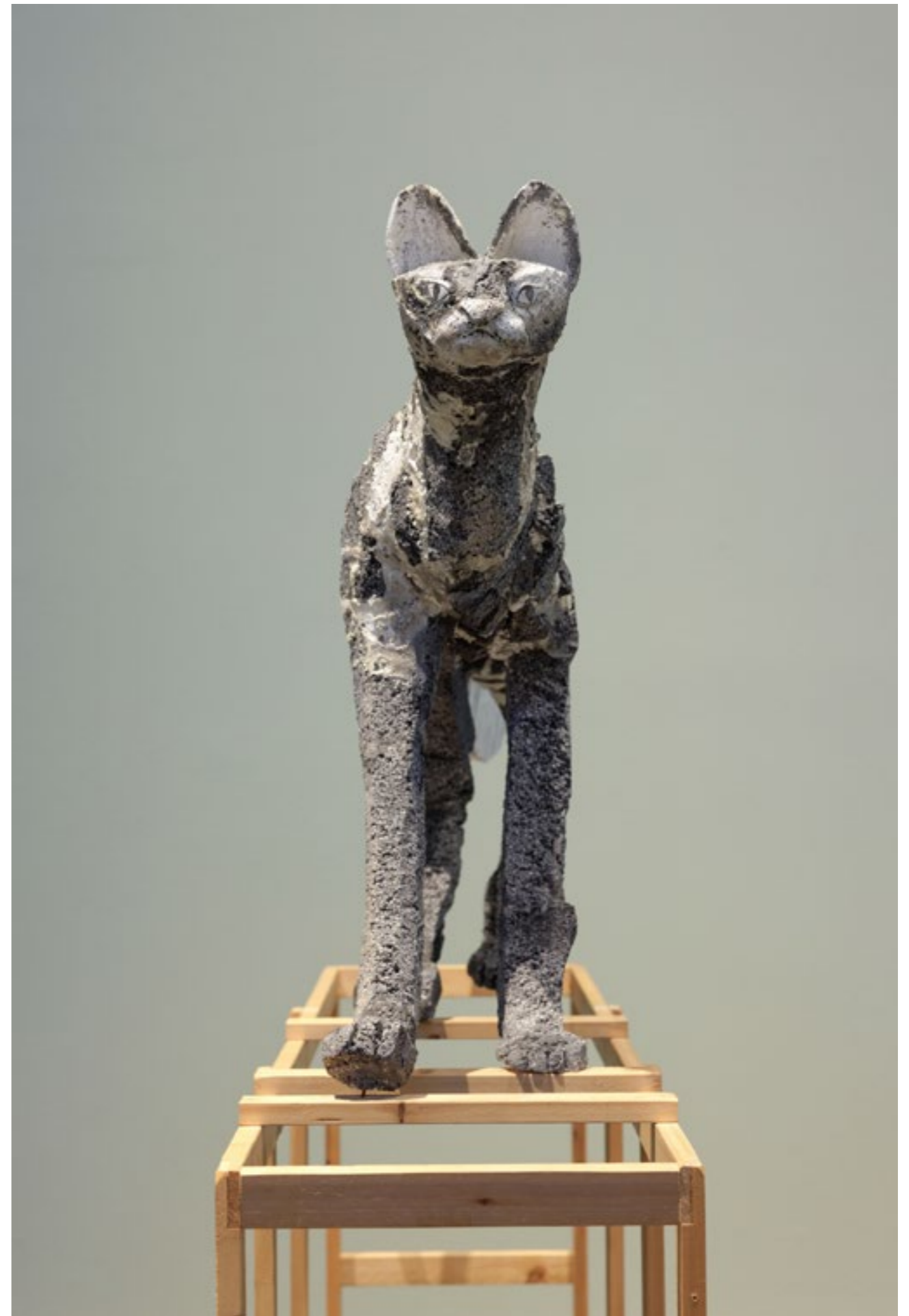
Styrofoam, steel, acrylic paint, charcoal, pencil and wood
154 × 155 × 34.5 cm

Serval is part of a series of animal sculptures by Lin May Saeed. The artist used Styrofoam, an everyday consumer material typically associated with disposable objects, yet resistant and easy to manipulate on a large scale – allowing Saeed to create lean, elongated figures.

The sculpture captures the serval's distinctive posture, highlighting its long neck and legs – which have earned the wild cat the nickname “giraffe cat.” These agile felines roam the African savannahs and wetlands, hunting for prey.

Saeed's work is dedicated to exploring the relationship between humans and other animals. It is informed by her deep personal commitment to animal liberation and environmental justice. In this series, she designed the pedestals to also serve as the sculptures' crates – as if the animals had just escaped their cages.

Despite being a wild feline, the serval has, in some cases, been subjected to domestication – often bred with domestic cats to create hybrids that become fashionable pets. This human exploitation through poaching, habitat destruction and commodification poses a significant threat to the serval's survival.



Courtesy of the Estate of Lin May Saeed and Jacky Strenz, Frankfurt/Main





Am I the ageless object at the museum?

Noor Abuarafeh

2018

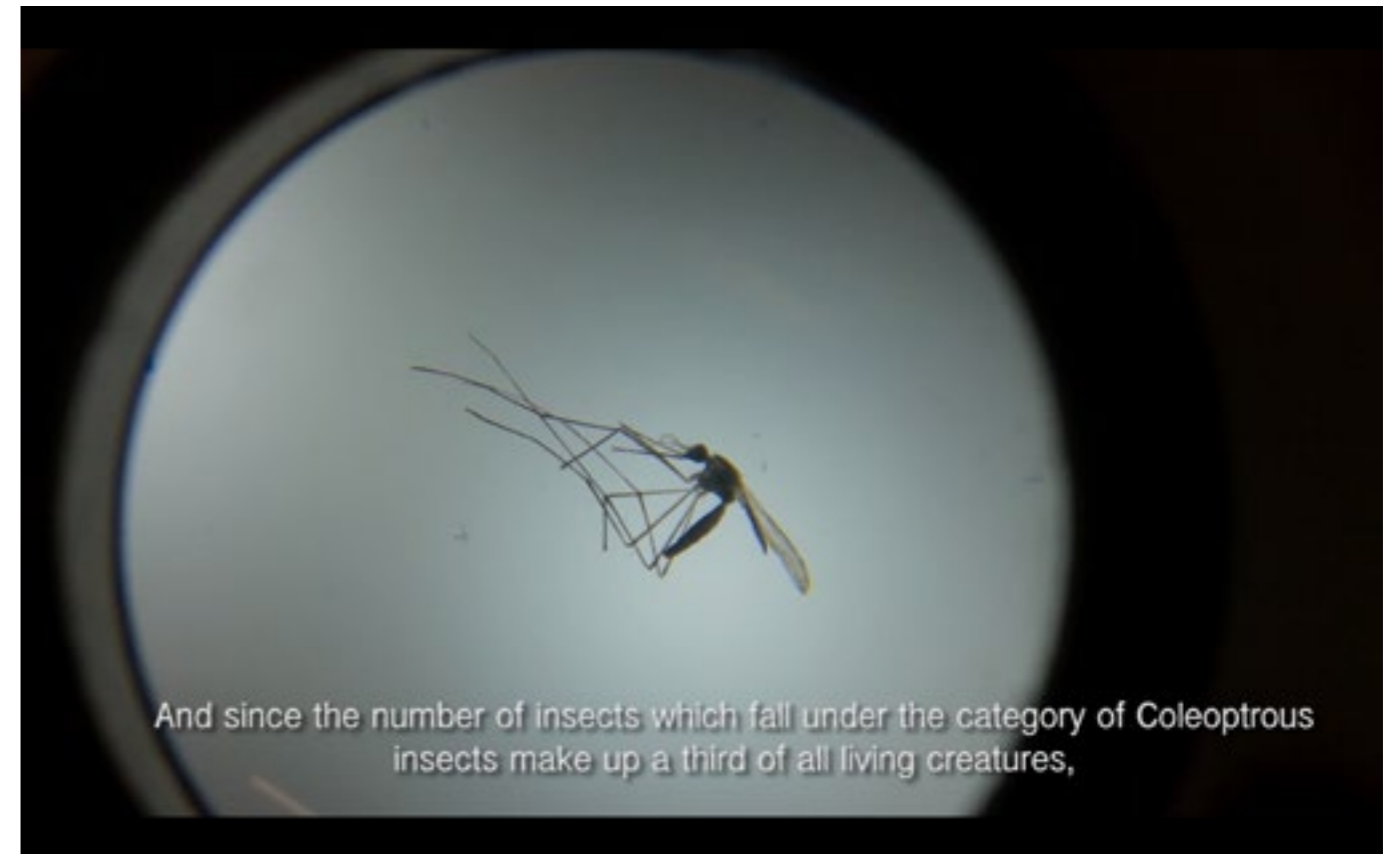
Single-channel video, colour, sound, 14 min. 59 s., Arabic with English subtitles

Noor Abuarafeh's film connects zoos, museums and cemeteries, which she sees as institutions that classify, preserve and display. Early European cabinets of curiosities often included both dead and live animals, and most contemporary zoos evolved from natural history museums, rooted in colonial systems of domination and knowledge production.

The film weaves together images of zoos in Palestine, Egypt and Switzerland – where the artist has lived – focusing on how live animals, once displayed in zoos, are turned into objects, symbols of themselves, much like the taxidermied ones found in museums. She also offers a moving portrait of zoos as public spaces.

Abuarafeh began questioning museum practices around the time of the Palestinian Museum's opening in Birzeit in 2016.

Written, directed and produced by: Noor Abuarafeh
Camera: Noor Abuarafeh, Mohamed Abdelkarim, Tariq Qadamani
Editing: Noor Abuarafeh, Louly Sief
Color Grading: Louly Sief
Sound Design: Louly Sief
Voice Over: Hussam Jadoo



Film stills courtesy of the artist

Courtesy of the artist
Supported by the AM Qattan Foundation



If the first metaphor was an animal,

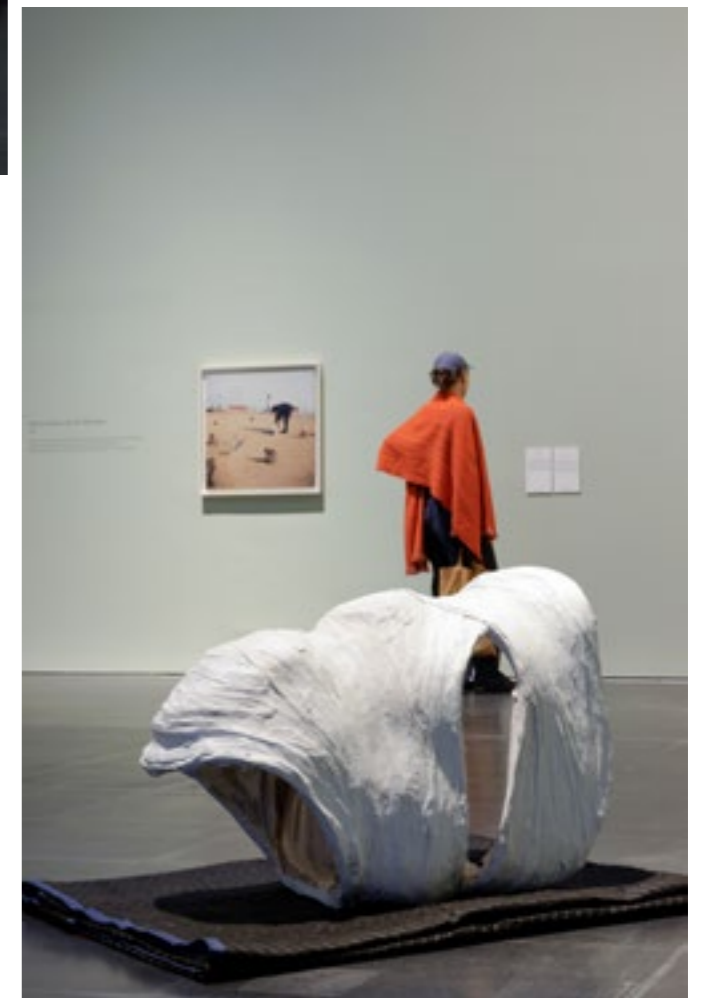
Abbas Akhavan

2017

Cotton elastic bandage, plastic, fibreglass
63 × 56 × 78 cm

Abbas Akhavan's sculpture replicates the plaster bandaging used on poached rhinoceroses after their horns have been forcefully removed. This work simultaneously evokes an act of care and the brutality of the animal's treatment.

Adding to the paradox, rhinoceros horns are highly sought after for their supposed medicinal properties. Without the injured animal, the bandage remains a hollow cast.



Courtesy of the artist and The Third Line, Dubai



The Critter Pavilion

Kasper Bosmans

2024

Site-specific mural, gouache and silver point on wood

Mural: 400 x 600 cm

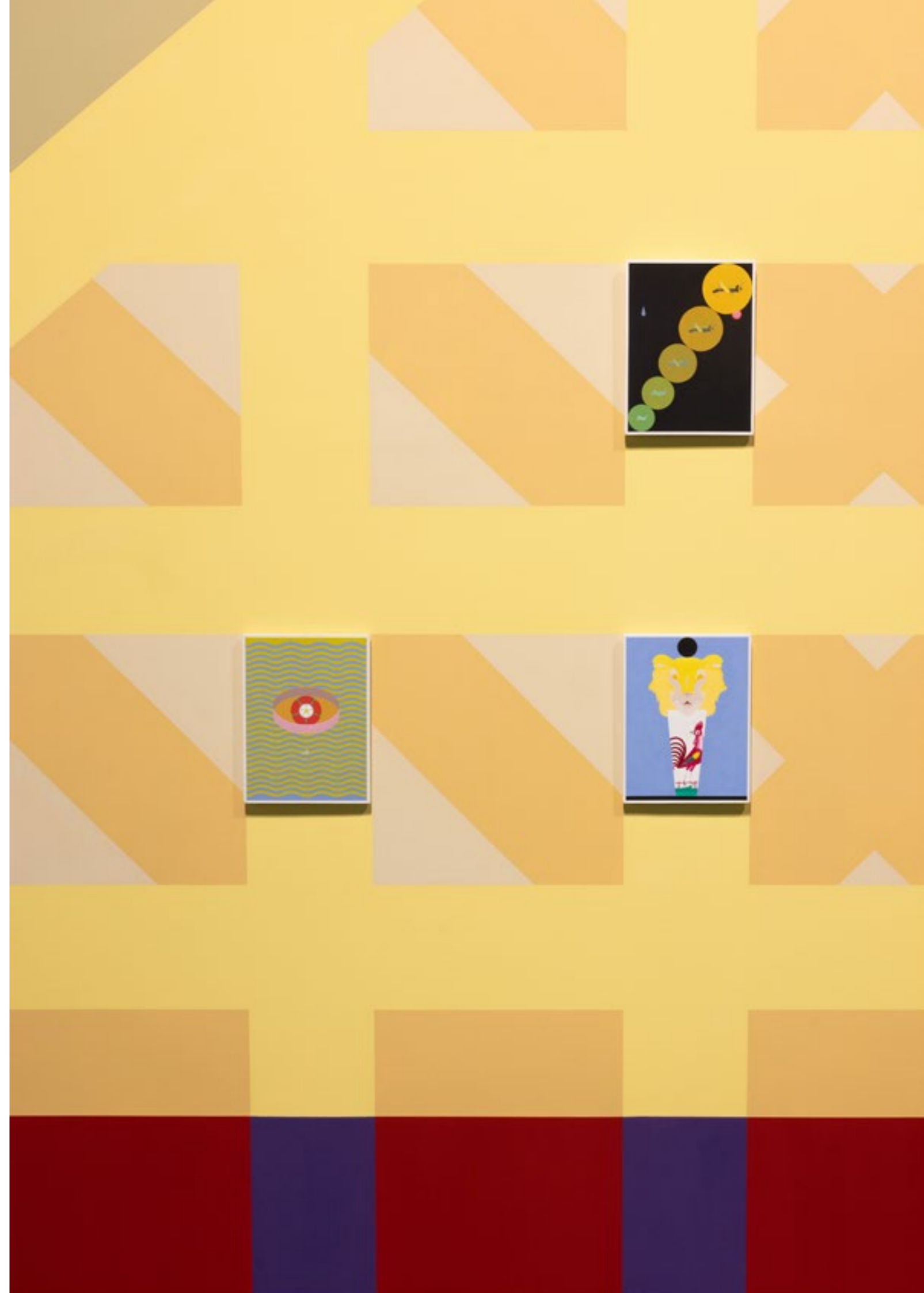
Paintings: 29 x 21 cm

In this mural, Kasper Bosmans looks at locusts to explore the colonial roots of entomology – the study of insects. The mural includes an architectural feature that refers to the 1878 Paris Exposition, the first world fair to showcase an ‘Insect Pavilion’ as part of European scientific and colonial achievements.

By the late 19th century, European nations were paying more attention to insects as they faced challenges in their colonies. Mosquitoes spread deadly diseases, which slowed down European expansion, and swarms of locusts destroyed important export crops like cotton.

In West Asia, locusts travelled thousands of kilometres from the Indus plains to East Africa, passing through the Arabian Peninsula. This made controlling locusts a major concern for the British Empire, which ruled the region. During World War II, the British army began the first locust control efforts in what is now the UAE, using chemical poisons. To this day, locust swarms occasionally appear in the region.

Courtesy of the artist, Gladstone Gallery and Mendes Wood DM
Commissioned by Art Jameel





Gift: Exhibition for the Monkeys

Shimabuku

1992

Cibachrome mounted on aluminium, text on vinyl
70 × 70 cm (unframed), 77 × 77 × 4.6 cm (framed)

In 1992, while visiting the renowned Arashiyama Monkey Park in Kyoto, Japan, Shimabuku heard the story of a wild monkey who picked up shiny objects and stared at them.

Inspired by the monkey's appreciation for these objects and their exhibit-like posture, the artist collected items from his friends, including roses and a monkey puppet, and returned to the park with the gift of an exhibit.

By organising this exhibition, Shimabuku playfully reversed the logic of the zoo, transforming the animals from observed objects and mere attractions into active, aware viewers.



Courtesy of the artist



Gift: Exhibition for the Monkeys

1992

When I went to Monkey Mountain in Kyoto, I heard that one of the monkeys would occasionally pick up a fragment of glass and gaze at it. That's why I held an exhibition on Monkey Mountain - for the monkeys.



Palestine after Palestine:
New sites for the Palestinian Museum of Natural
History and Humankind departments
Structure Site: Gaza Zoo Sculpture Garden
(Eagles, Lions, Hide I, Trolley, Wood Lion)

Khalil Rabah

2017

Mixed Media
Eagles, 100 × 140 cm
Lions, 100 × 140 cm
Hide I, 240 × 240 cm
Trolley, dimensions variable
Wood Lion, dimensions variable

Khalil Rabah's *Gaza Zoo Sculpture Garden* is one of the sites of his long-term project, *The Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind*. Through this work, Rabah creates displays that resemble those found in museums but infuses them with speculation and fiction to challenge official depictions of nature, culture and history.

The sculpture *Wooden Lion* represents one of the lions from Gaza Zoo, which opened in 2010 to provide entertainment and a sense of normalcy in a city under siege. Lions and other exotic animals were smuggled from Egypt to Gaza through underground tunnels. Often associated with armed conflict, these tunnels also served as vital lifelines, allowing goods to bypass Israeli blockades. The zoo closed in 2016 after an Israeli bombardment killed many animals. Others were left to starve, prompting international campaigns to remove them from Gaza.

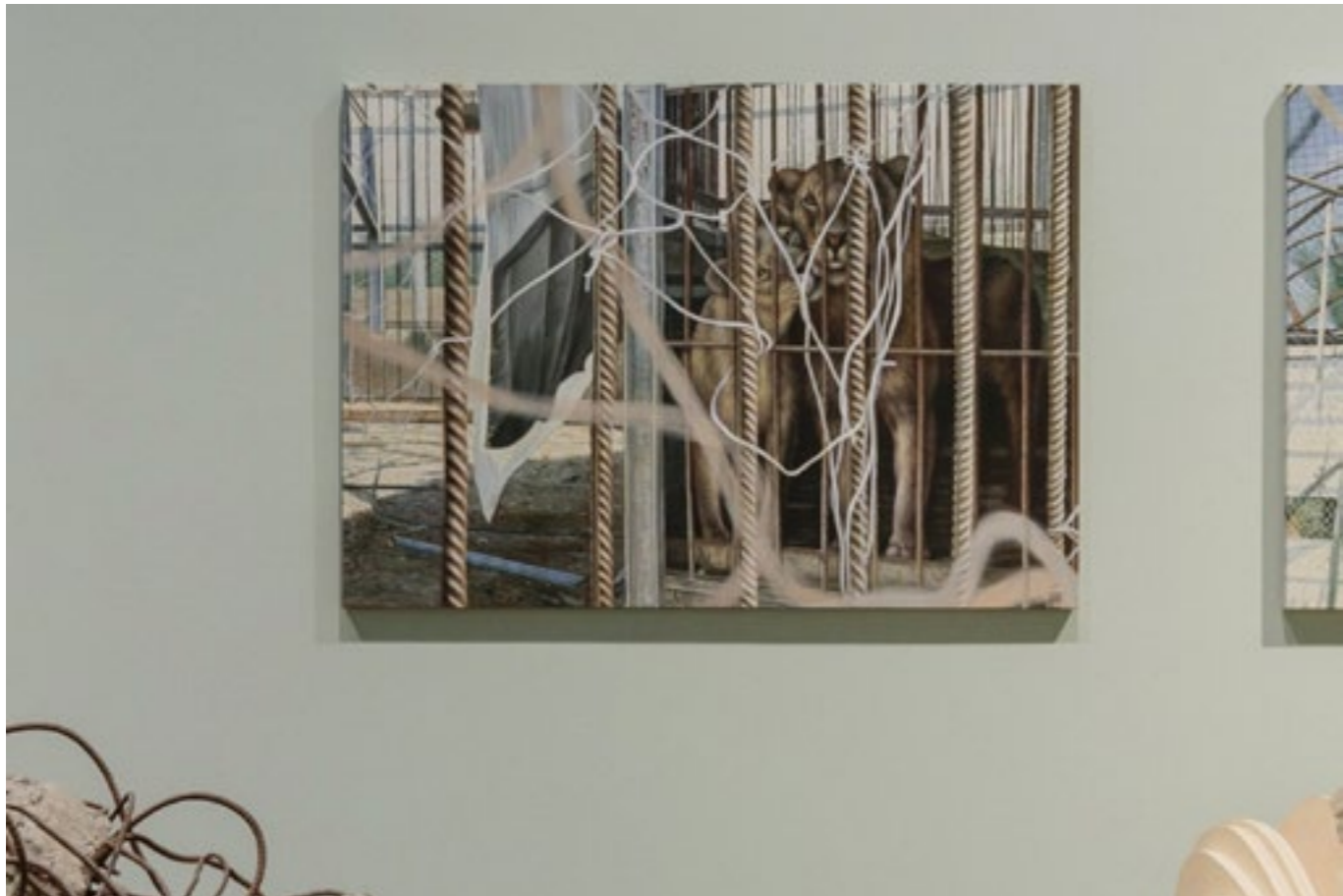
On the wall, a lion hide, traditionally a hunting trophy, reveals a patchwork of *tatreez* embroidery, a technique used by Palestinians to convey history and memory.

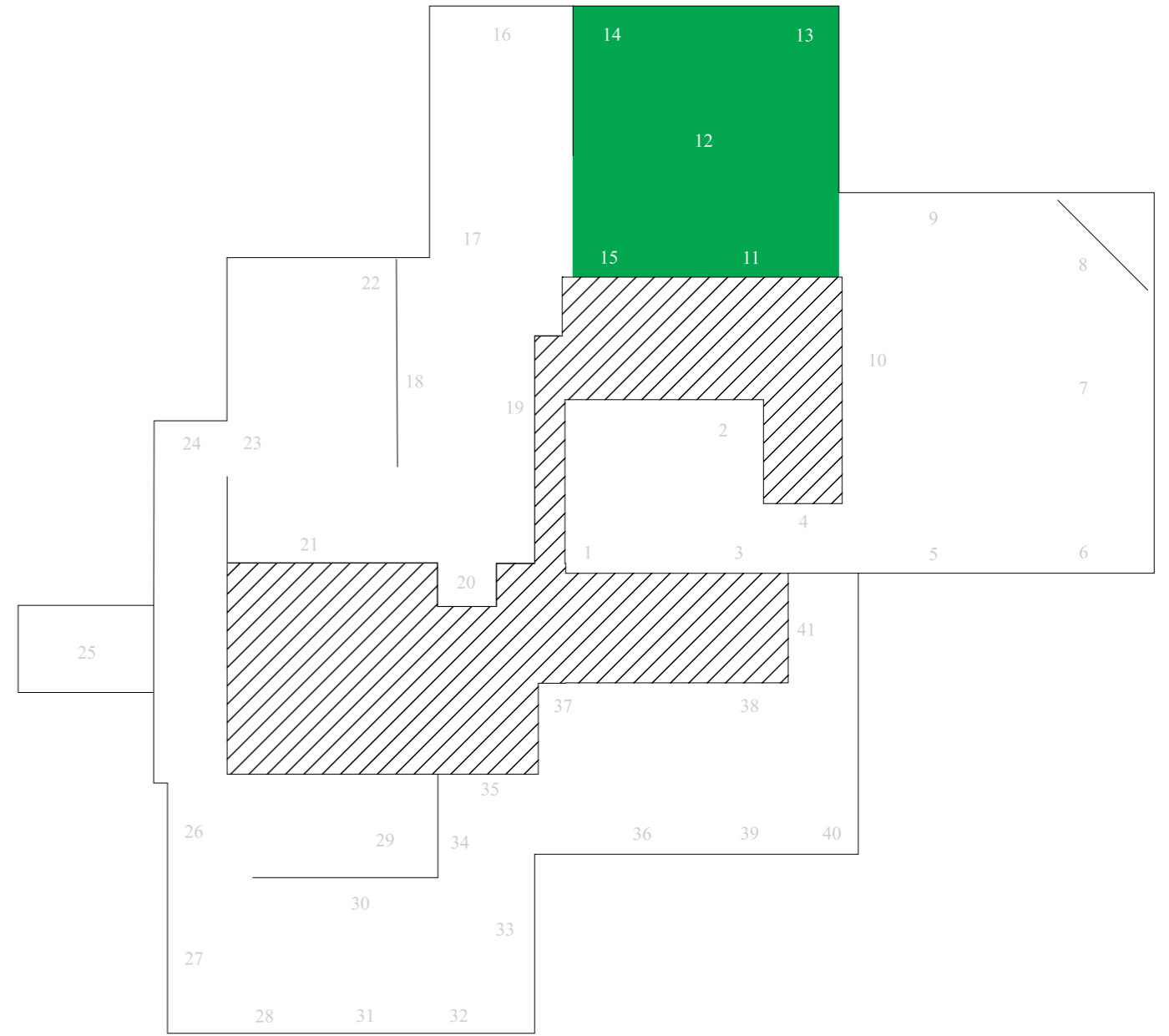
Rabah's paintings *Eagles and Lions* were inspired by images of Gaza's zoos that circulated on WhatsApp around this time, emphasising the architecture of captivity – cages and fences.

With irony, Rabah highlights the paradoxes of this situation. Exotic animals are caged in a territory that is itself held in cruel captivity and under constant surveillance. Media attention, empathy and public relations efforts focused on the starving lions while Gaza's population remained under brutal siege.

Courtesy of the artist
Sharjah Art Foundation Collection







في الشوارع
 فضاءات اللقاء والرعاية والتعايش
 On the Street
 Spaces of encounter, care and coexistence

Works

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Annika Eriksson, <i>The Community</i> , 2010	13
Ali Milad, <i>Objects in the Mirror are Closer Than They May Appear</i> , 2023	14
Mohieddine Ellabbad, 1974-1988	15



For Cats Only

Khalid Jauffer

2024

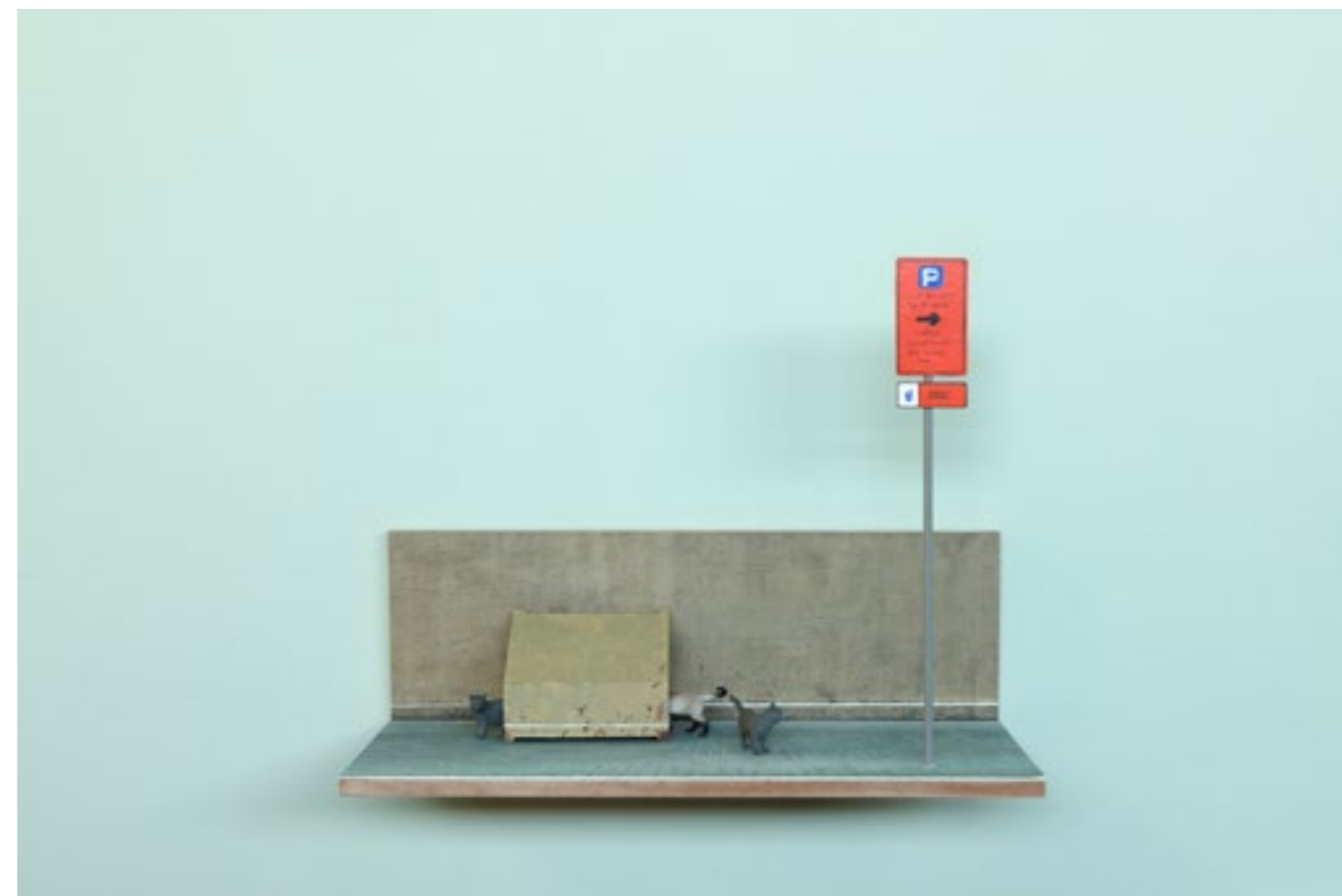
Mixed media

Booklet: 21 × 29.7 cm
Shelf 1 : 60 × 24 × 21 cm
Shelf 2: 67 × 25 × 8 cm

Khalid Jauffer closely observes the street cats of the UAE and the communities striving to create more suitable environments for them, at times in contradiction with authorities. In Dubai, members of the public are blamed for providing food and shelter, leading to threats of fines for feeding strays. Despite these measures, the UAE's stray cat population remains significant, with Abu Dhabi alone estimated to have 100,000 stray cats.

Jauffer's approach to helping stray cats requires subtlety and discretion. His project, For Cats Only, offers a creative solution: designing invisible shelters for stray cats camouflaged as street furniture. This invisibility not only protects the cats but also avoids drawing unwanted attention.

Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by Art Jameel



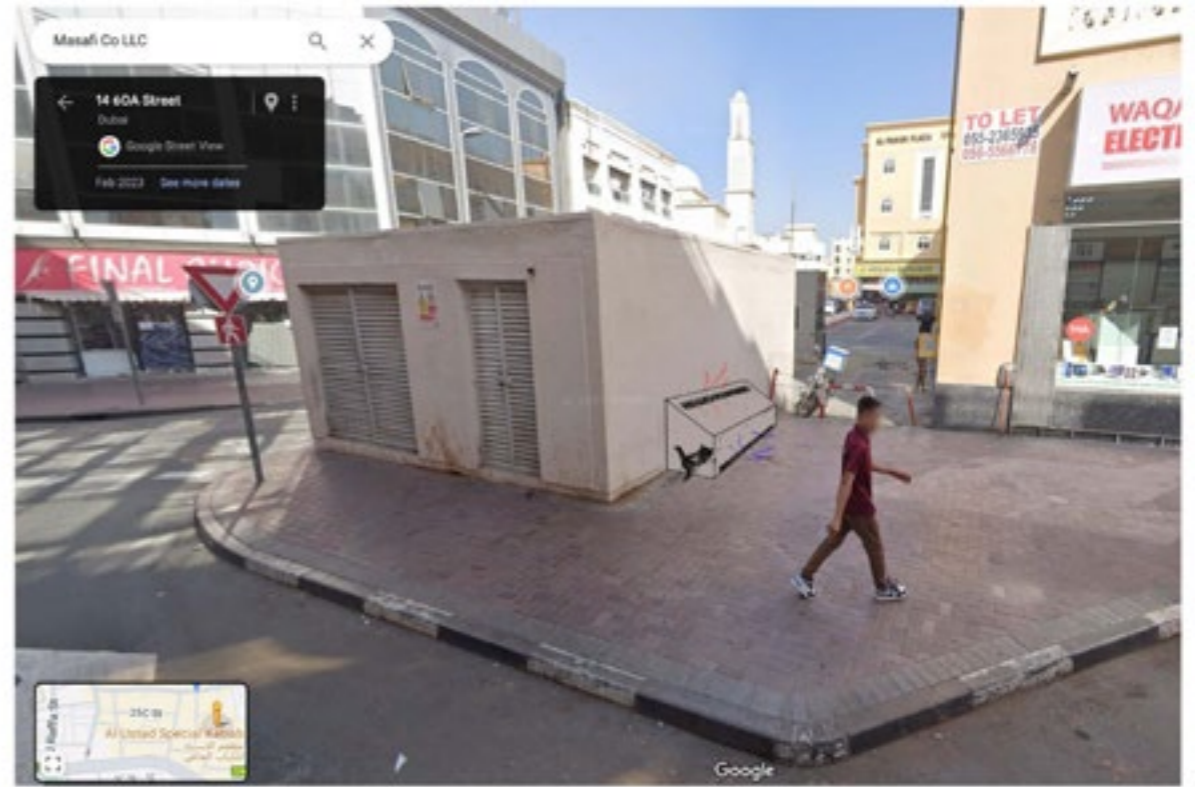
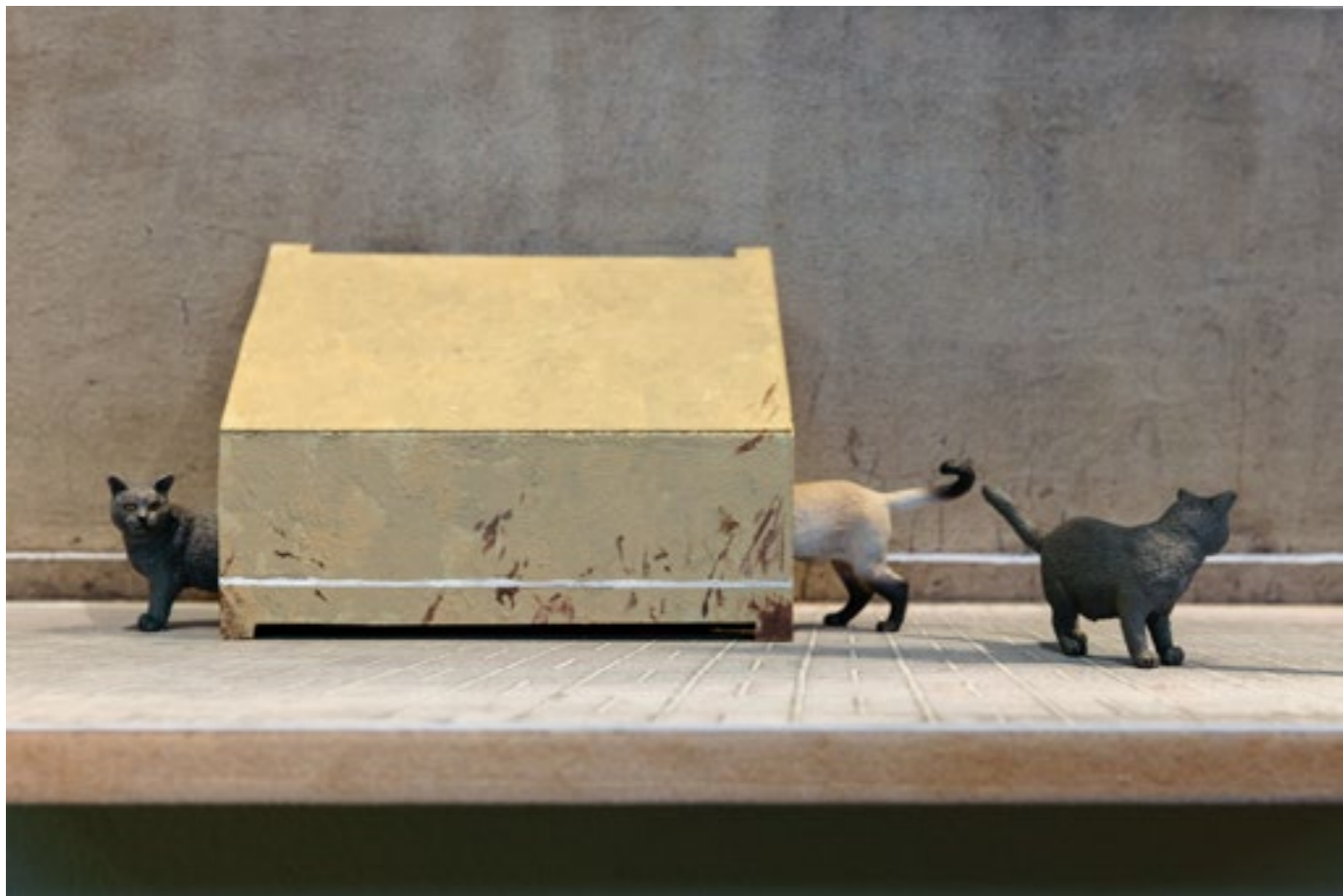


Image courtesy of the artist



Atelier HOKO

2024

Paperback book, 140 pp.
17.5 × 25.1 × 1 cm

2021

Video animation, colour, 15 min. 31 s.

Commissioned by URA Singapore for the Mostra di
Architettura di Venezia, Italy

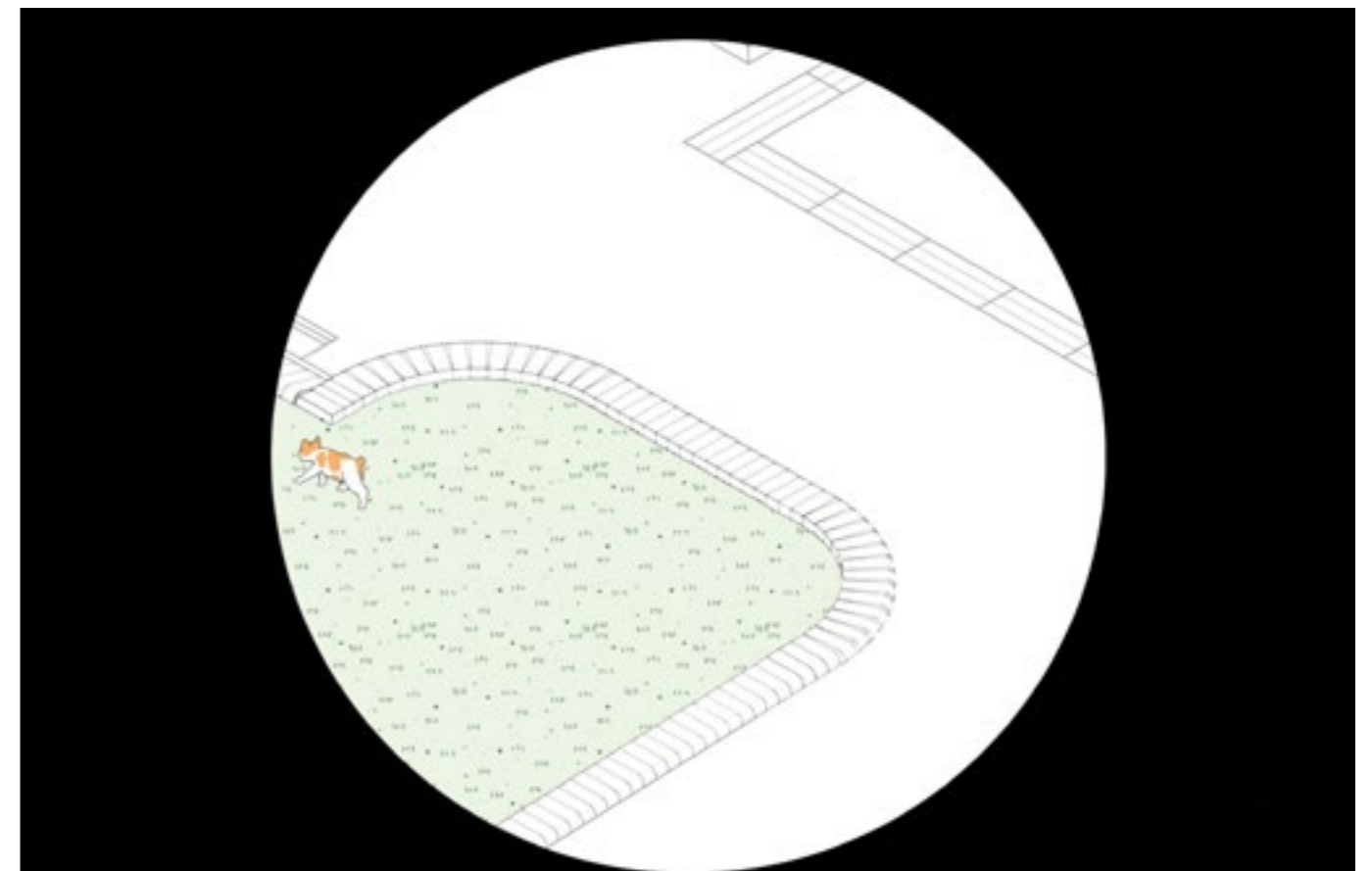
HABIT©AT is a study of Singapore's urban landscape through the perspective of four community cats: Sister, Hua Mao, Friend and Goma.

Singapore housing estates typically ban indoor pets, leading residents to form strong bonds with outdoor cats. The publication explores the design practices of these felines and how they transform public areas in the housing blocks where most Singaporeans live.

Schematics, photographs and sketches depict the cats' ingenious use of urban architecture. Locations overlooked by humans become safe territories and refuges: L-shaped pillars turn into napping spots, and concrete drains prove perfect for belly-scratching.

The project began when Atelier HOKO was commissioned to design urban amenities for cats. However, observing the cats, they quickly realised that the felines thrived in the public-minded city and needed little extra infrastructure. In essence, smart public spaces that foster community work equally well for cats and humans.

Inspired by the cats' creative process, Atelier HOKO developed five speculative proposals for cat housing that consider urban space beyond conventional human-centred design.



Courtesy of the artists





The Community

Annika Eriksson

2010

Single-channel video, colour, sound, 6 min. 26 s.

In this video, Annika Eriksson filmed a group of abandoned domestic cats gathering at night in a public park in Istanbul.

The Turkish city is famed for its vibrant feline life, but the place of animals is often challenged by gentrification and conflicting notions of what a modern city should look like. In a rapidly changing urban environment, cats may find it increasingly difficult to survive.

The street cats' absence is keenly felt as they are removed from the city and moved to the outskirts, forced to occupy remote dumpsters or, as shown in the video, public parks that become transitional stations. The community referenced in the artwork includes both the cats and the many people who welcome and care for them.

Film stills courtesy of the artist



Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by the 13th Istanbul Biennial



Objects in the Mirror are Closer Than They May Appear

Ali Milad

2023

Mixed-media installation
Dimensions variable

Stray cats thrive in cities where they can find food, shelter and community, and dumpsters provide a key part of this welcoming infrastructure.

During long walks around his neighbourhood, Ali Milad began to closely observe the dumpster cats of Bahrain. In Manama, as elsewhere in the Gulf, there is tension between the presence of street cats – who are beloved and cared for by diverse communities – and conflicting ideas about what cities should look like and who they are for.

Milad chose to consider the stray cats seriously and to offer insights into their ecosystem. In his view, the dumpsters are a focal point where business interests, public administration, real estate and civil society intersect.

Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by Al Riwaq Art Space





Mohieddine Ellabbad

Mohieddine Ellabbad, a leading Egyptian illustrator and bookmaker, co-founded Dar al-Fata al-Arabi, a children's book publisher established in Beirut in 1974 in connection with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Ellabbad oversaw the art direction, design and visual aesthetics of the publisher's primary works. Between 1974 and 1976, he and a team of artists, designers and writers published sixty-seven books, though their activities slowed with the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War.

Ellabbad frequently included animals in his illustrations, focusing on those familiar to children in Beirut and Cairo rather than exotic or imagined creatures.

At the centre of this display is his depiction of street cats. The most recognisable is a chain-smoking cat, the central character of *The Cat's Banquet* by Zakareya Tamer. Dressed in a suit, this cat symbolises Western capitalism. As Ellabbad noted: "This was the image of the enemy: extremely well dressed but with claws, like the West." This portrayal builds on earlier caricatures of greedy businessmen as fat cats, a critique of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat's open-door policy, which enriched a small number of opportunist businessmen.

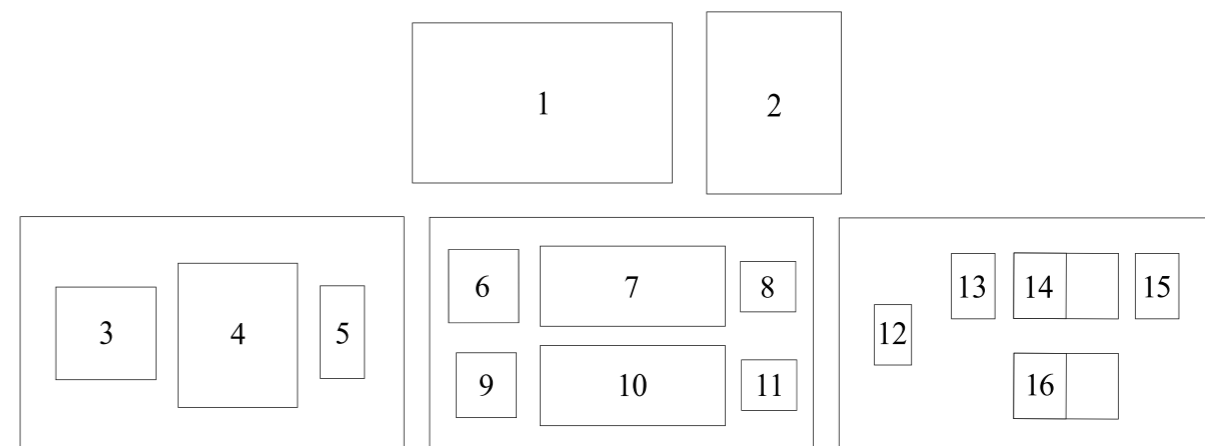
Other works in the display also prominently feature felines, including promotional materials for Dar al-Fata al-Arabi, posters for design exhibitions and affordable school notebooks

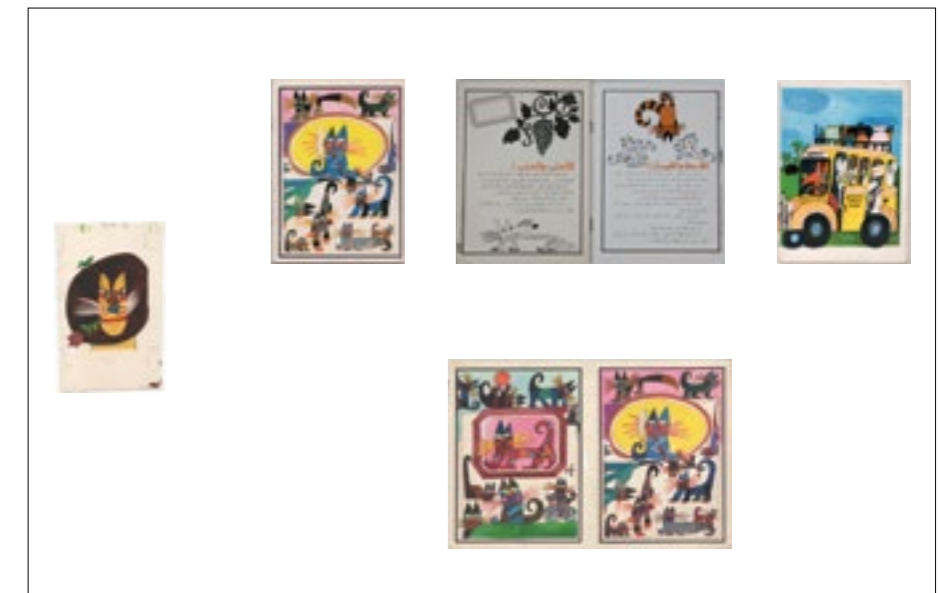
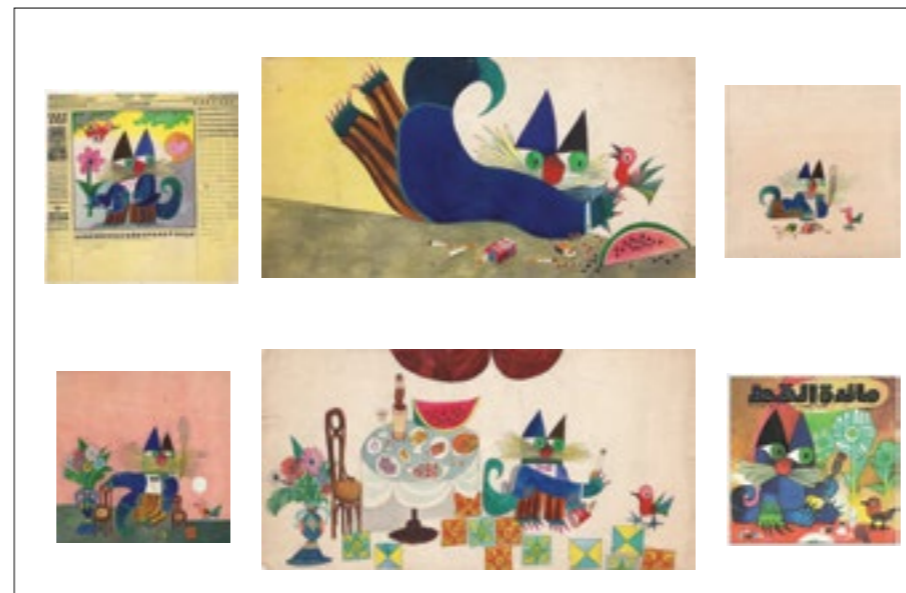


Courtesy of the estate of Mohieddine Ellabbad,
with the collaboration of the Arabic Design Archive
Collection of Ahmed Ellabbad, Cairo

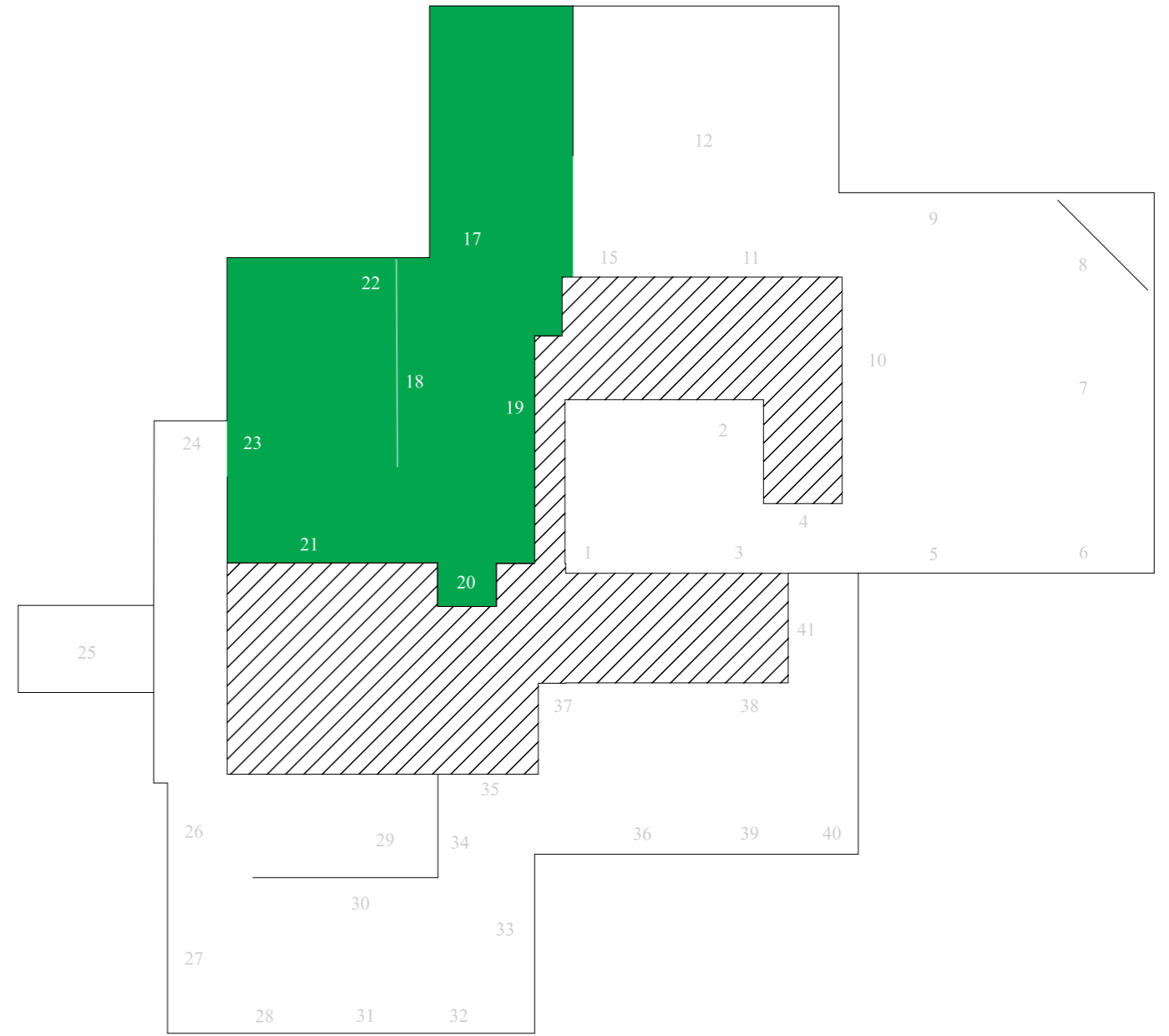


- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Dar al-Fata al-Arabi Educational Classroom Poster, no. 1
Print (Wall Poster)
Published by Dar al-Fata al-Arabi, Beirut/Cairo, with 1 ¹ Children's Publications Publishing House, Cairo | 1988 |
| 2. Poster for the Exhibition of Arab Illustrators prepared
and organized by the Arab Workshop for Children's Books at the 1981 Bologna Children's Book Fair
Print (Poster)
Arab Workshop for Children's Books, Cairo | 1981 |
| 3. Caricatures for <i>Sabah al-Khair</i> magazine featuring 'Fat Cats'
Ink on paper | Ca. 1974 |
| 4. Maquette for the cover of Dar al-Fata al-Arabi's
first publications catalogue
Acrylic on paper | 1975 |
| 5. Dar al-Fata al-Arabi's first publications catalogue Print (Folded Cover)
Published by Dar al-Fata al-Arabi, Beirut | 1975 |
| 6. Drawing for <i>The Cat's Banquet</i> p. 1
Pencil and Ecoline ink on paper | |
| 7. Drawing for <i>The Cat's Banquet</i> pp. 6-7
Pencil and Ecoline ink on paper | 1974-1975 |
| 8. Drawing for <i>The Cat's Banquet</i>
Pencil and Ecoline ink on paper | 1974-1975 |
| 9. Drawing for <i>The Cat's Banquet</i>
Pencil and Ecoline ink on paper | 1974-1975 |
| 10. Drawing for <i>The Cat's Banquet</i> pp. 4-5
Pencil and Ecoline ink on paper | 1974-1975 |
| 11. <i>The Cat's Banquet</i>
Hardback, first edition
Illustration by Mohieddine Ellabbad, story by Zakaria Tamer. Published by Dar al-Fata al-Arabi, Beirut | 1974-1975 |
| 12. Untitled (Lion Drawing)
Watercolour, Indian ink and Ecoline on paper | 1975 |
| 13. Notebook (1)
Print (Notebook) | Ca. 1977-1979 |
| 14. Notebook (2)
Print (Notebook) | 1977 |
| 15. Notebook (3)
Print (Notebook) | 1977 |
| 16. Maquette for a notebook titled <i>Five Cats</i>
Watercolour, ink and Ecoline on paper | 1977 |





Images courtesy of the estate of Mohieddine Ellabbad, with the collaboration of the Arabic Design Archive



القصر والساحة العامة حيث يلتقي الحيوان بالقوة والتاريخ

The Palace and the Square Where animals meet power and history

Works

Walid Siti, <i>The Troubled Bear and the Palace</i> , 2019	16
Asim Abu Shakra, <i>Beast</i> , 1986	17
Lin May Saeed, <i>Hammar Marshes</i> , 2020	18
Hayv Kahraman, <i>Asad Babil</i> , 2011	19
Pilar Quinteros, <i>Tigres Prestidigitadores</i> , 2019	20
Risham Syed, <i>Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians</i> (after <i>Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians</i> by George Stubbs, 1764), 2024	21
Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, <i>The Treachery of the Moon</i> , 2012	22
Kadhim Hayder, <i>Study for The Martyr's Epic</i> , undated	23
<i>Fatigued Ten Horses Converse with Nothing (The Martyr's Epic)</i> , 1965	



The Troubled Bear and the Palace

Walid Siti

2019

Single-channel video, colour, sound, 10 min. 46 s.

Walid Siti's video begins with the ceremonial release of illegally caged bears by Kurdish authorities in the Gara mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan, near one of Saddam Hussein's many palaces, built atop a mountain to assert his control over the region.

Struggling to survive in the wild, one of the bears sought shelter in the palace ruins. Siti filmed the bear against the eerie, majestic landscape, capturing the troubled outcome of this act of liberation. Though intended as an act of historical revenge, the release highlighted the distance between the bear's symbolic strength and the harsh realities of survival.

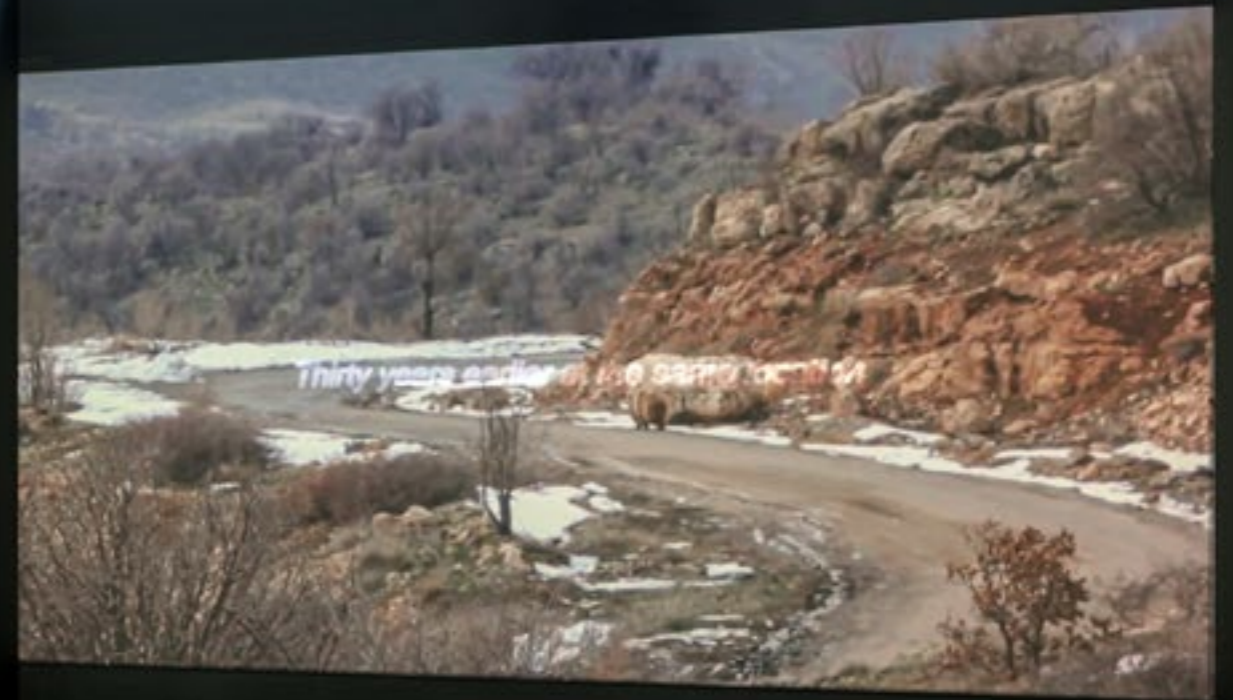
The video's text borrows from the Epic of Gilgamesh, a major poem from ancient Mesopotamia, alluding to the long history of power and tragedy encoded in the landscape filmed by Siti.



Film stills courtesy of the artist

Courtesy of the Artist





Beast

Asim Abu Shakra

1986

Oil and pastel on paper
70 × 100 cm

Asim Abu Shakra is best known for his depictions of cacti as embodiments of Palestinian resistance. He also had a particular interest in animals, painting cats, dogs, and monster-like creatures. *Beast* is part of a series illustrating animals howling or barking at military planes. In the 1980s, Israeli jet fighters frequently flew over the artist's native, occupied Galilee en route to Lebanon.

The rough, child-like sketch of the ambiguous animal – perhaps a tiger, depicted in bright yellow and black lines – hints at animals' abilities of instinctive resistance to the forces of oppression, even when human resistance is suppressed.



Image courtesy of the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah

Courtesy of Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah



Hammar Marshes

Lin May Saeed

2020

Cardboard, paper, wood, fluorescent lights
260 × 508 cm

This large-scale work by Lin May Saeed portrays the Hammar Marshes, a vital wetland ecosystem in southeastern Iraq often linked to the biblical Garden of Eden and regarded as the cradle of human civilisation. Saeed captures the region's rich history, where humans and non-human species have coexisted for millennia.

In the 1990s, under Saddam Hussein's orders, the marshes were systematically dammed and drained as punishment for an uprising, leading to severe environmental devastation. Although partial restoration efforts began in 2003, the marshes remain threatened by climate change and pollution.

Saeed depicts the marshes as lush and overflowing with water, emphasising a fragile but enduring history of cohabitation and cooperation between humans – represented by the region's typical straw architecture – and other animals.



Courtesy of the Estate of Lin May Saeed and Jacky Strenz, Frankfurt/Main





Asad Babil

Hayv Kahraman

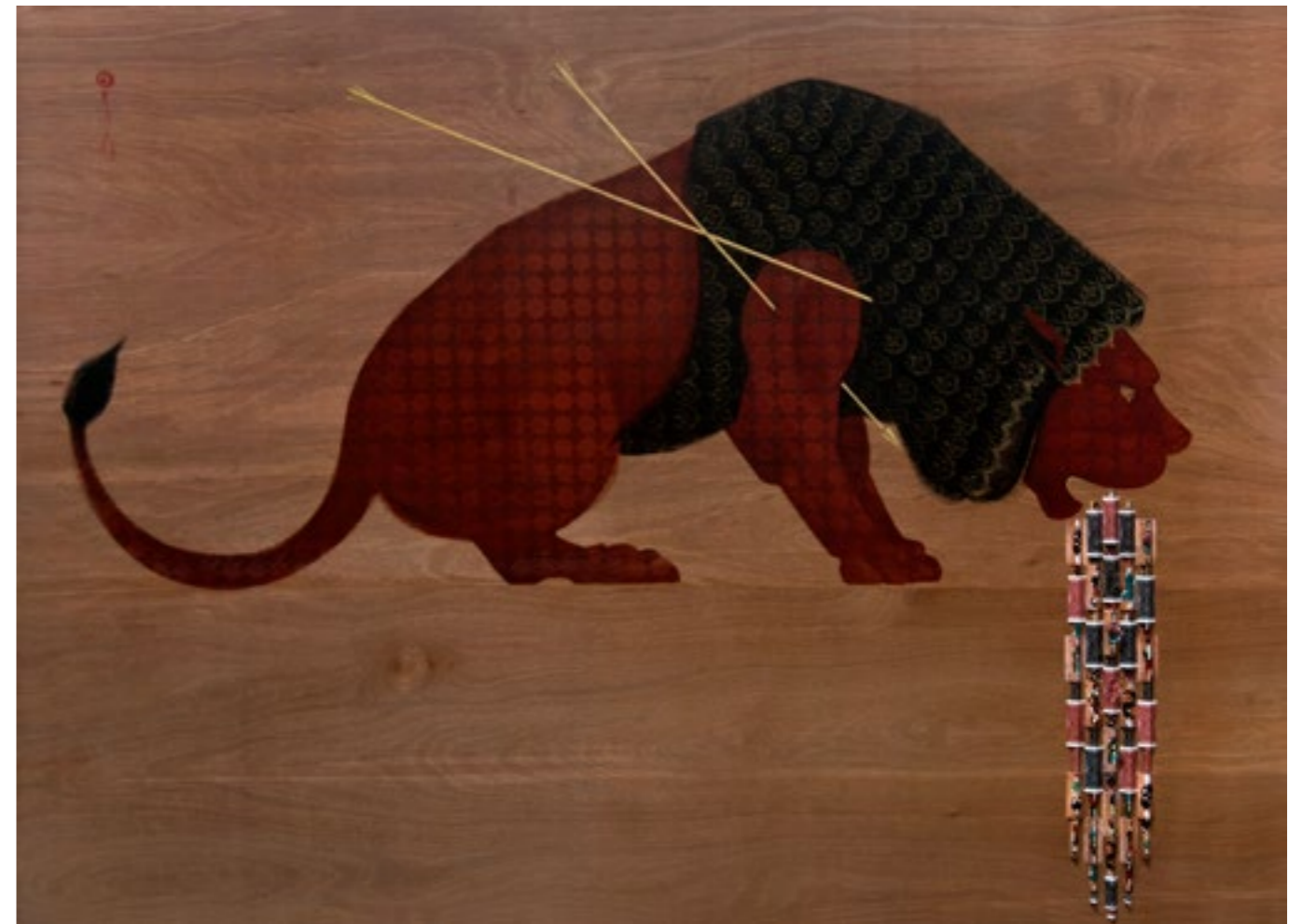
2011

Oil and playing cards mounted on panel
178 × 244 cm

In this painting, Hayv Kahraman reflects on Iraq's history through a wounded lion that appears humiliated and hurt. The title *Asad Babil* (Lion of Babylon) refers to the name given by Saddam Hussein to Iraq's locally produced variant of the Soviet T-72 tanks. The lion also echoes the artistic heritage of ancient Mesopotamia, which was reappropriated by successive dynasties and rulers across Iraq and Iran to establish a connection to ancient Babylon.

Two arrows make the lion spew playing cards showcasing Iraqi characters. The cards, meshed in shapes that evoke Islamic geometry, are miniature versions of Kahraman's series *Waraq* (Arabic for paper), where the artist illustrated her migration journey from Baghdad, exploring themes of homeland, identity and displacement.

Besides symbolising might and power, Asiatic lions lived in West Asia until the early 20th century. Nowadays, only a few dozen remain in a small area in Gujarat, India.



Art Jameel Collection



Tigres Prestidigitadores

Pilar Quinteros

2019

Inflatable sculpture, video,
180 × 180 × 140 cm
Spanish with English subtitles

In *Tigres Prestidigitadores* (Conjuror Tigers), Pilar Quinteros focuses on bronze lion statues displayed in Chile's capital city. These sculptures are rumoured to be war trophies looted from neighbouring Peru after the 1879 War of the Pacific. In a humorous magic trick, the Chilean artist seizes the bronze lion statues, flies to Lima, and returns them.

The tigers evoked in the title are not the bronze animals but refer to Chile, which was responsible for their disappearance in the first place. After the 1973 coup, General Pinochet turned Chile into a laboratory for neoliberal economic policies, and the country was nicknamed 'The Latin Tiger' in reference to the rapidly developing Four Asian Tigers.

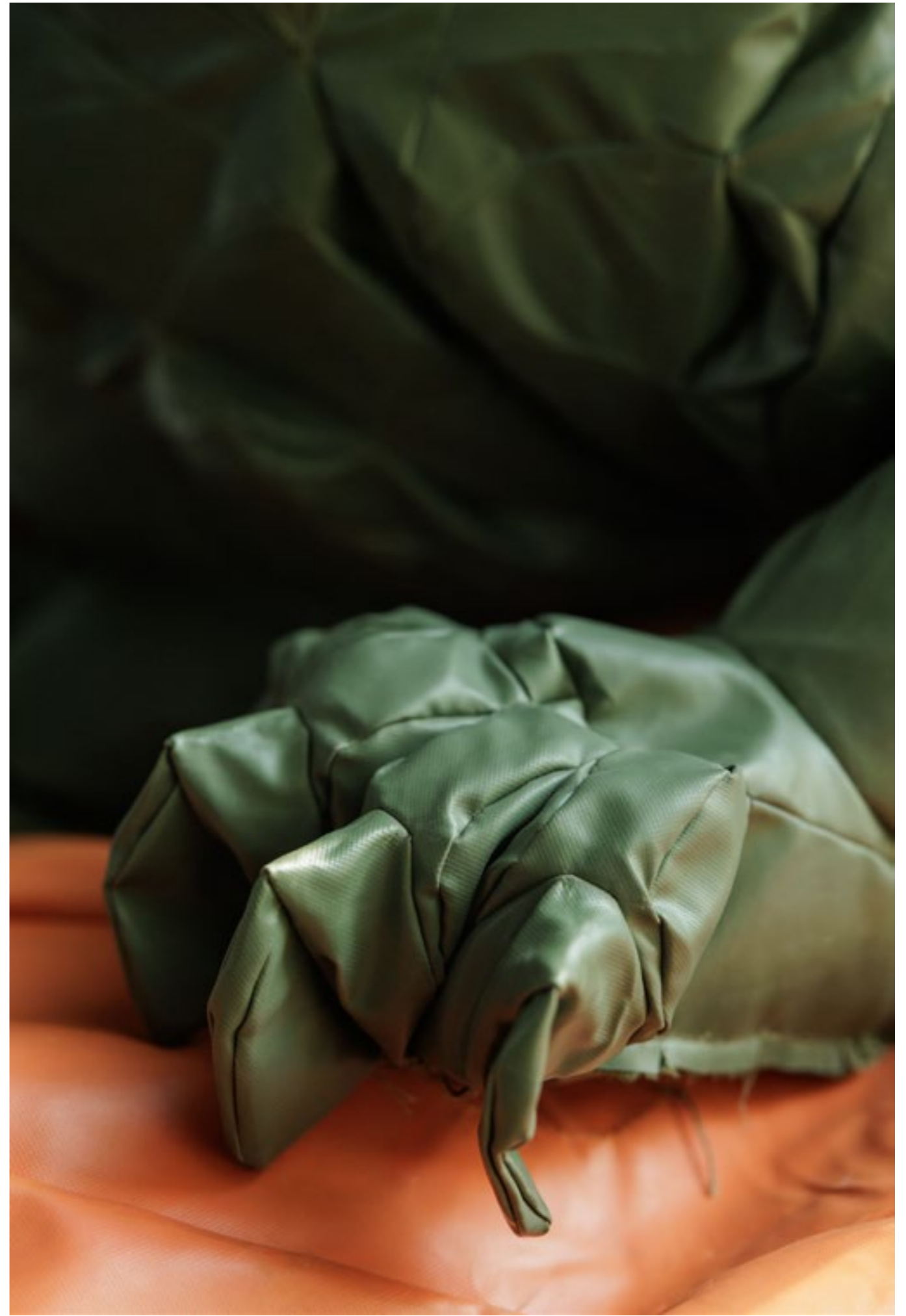
Lions, foreign to the Americas, are images of power introduced by Spanish colonists. In her playful act of restitution, Quinteros transforms them into wobbly, unthreatening creatures, imagining new relationships with authority and history.



Courtesy of the artist



Film stills courtesy of the artist



Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians (after Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians by George Stubbs, 1764)

Risham Syed

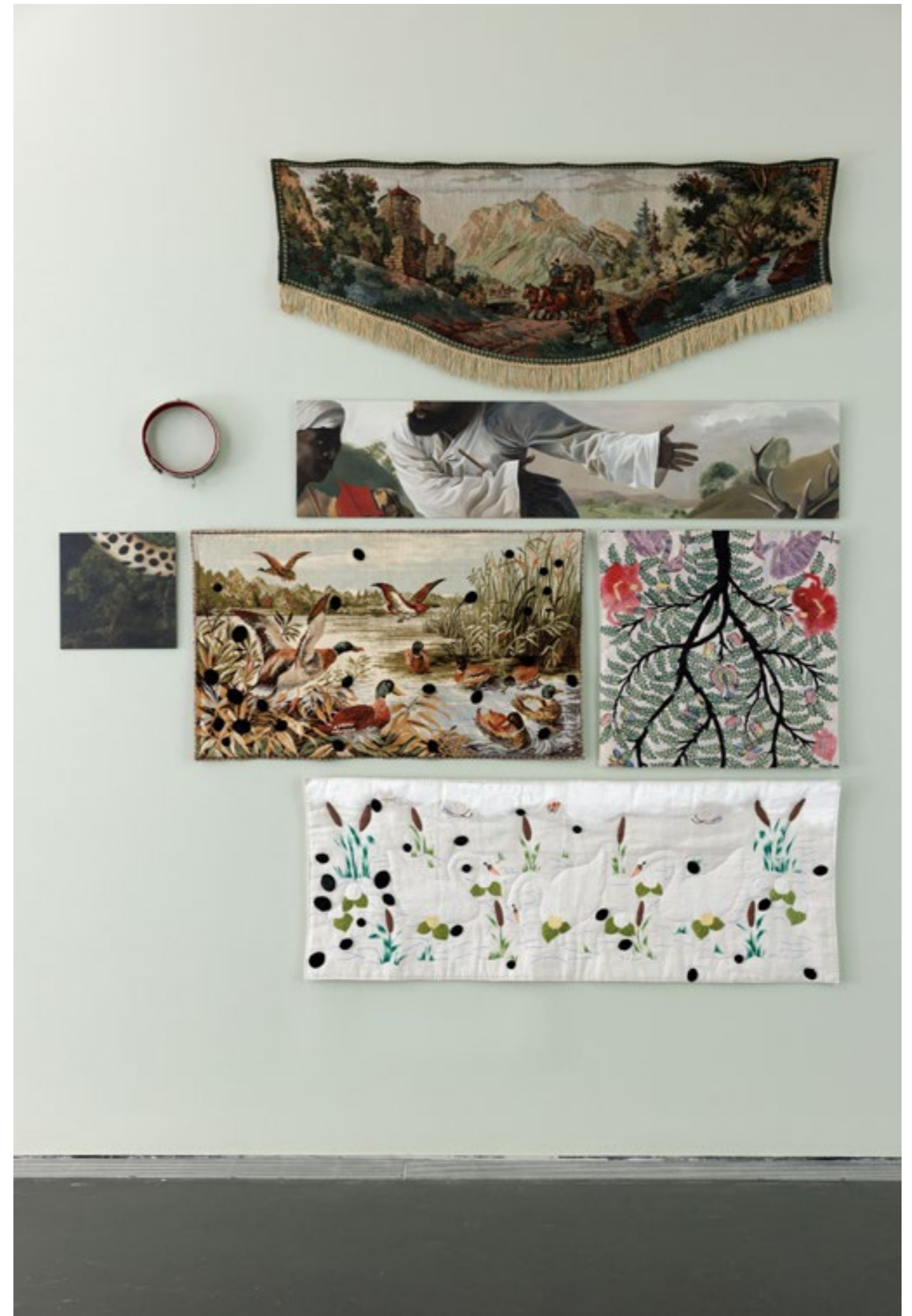
2024

Mixed media installation
244 × 244 cm

Risham Syed's installation is inspired by George Stubbs's painting *Cheetah and a Stag with Two Indians*, 1764. Stubbs, a British animal painter, recorded animals arriving in royal menageries and studied colonial finds. The painting depicts an event where an Indian cheetah, gifted to King George III, was released to hunt a stag in a staged hunt. The cheetah's refusal to attack the stag was seen by contemporaries as cowardice, reinforcing colonial notions of superiority.

Syed views the painting as a representation of imperial power and colonial dominance, where a free animal was compelled to perform on cue, controlled by two handlers who were also colonial subjects. She first encountered the artwork as a print at her grandparents' home in Lahore. In 2017, seeing the original at the Manchester Art Gallery revealed discrepancies that led her to explore the painting's history further.

In her installation, Syed deconstructs the painting to offer an alternate reading. She retains minimal elements of the original, hinting at the cheetah with its spotted tail and focusing on the Indian handlers' gestures as they release the big cat. Syed incorporates textile pieces that reflect colonial obsessions with controlling and representing nature, highlighting the often destructive impact of these impulses, as well as block print textiles from Pakistan, demonstrating an alternative relationship with the environment.



Art Jameel Collection



The Treachery of the Moon

Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook

2012

Single-channel video, colour, sound, 12 min. 37 s.

In this video, artist Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook sits on a floor mattress, watching a medley of Thai soap operas and political newscasts with two street dogs she rescued. This domestic setting, drawn from her daily life, alludes to what she calls “family time” with the dogs.

The work also interrogates gendered norms and representations. Archival footage of Thailand’s 2010 large-scale protests, where men dominate the urban space, contrasts with Thai soap operas, where female protagonists are portrayed as constantly negotiating for the love and presence of men.

In Thailand, street dogs are ubiquitous, and Rasdjarmrearnsook has transformed her home in Chiang Mai into a dog shelter. Her affection for these animals is a recurring motif in her work as she seeks new ways to connect with them.



Film stills courtesy of the artist



Courtesy of the artist



Fatigued Ten Horses Converse with Nothing (The Martyr's Epic)

Kadhim Hayder

1965

Oil on canvas
91 × 127 cm (unframed),
95 × 130 × 3.5 cm (framed)

Study for The Martyr's Epic

Undated

Ink on paper
24 x 34 cm (unframed),
33 x 43 (framed)

In his series of paintings *The Martyr's Epic*, the pioneering Iraqi artist Kadhim Hayder addressed themes of grief, struggle and tragedy through the death of Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of the Prophet (SWT), at the Battle of Karbala. Hayder's work responded to the political context of Iraq following the first Ba'th coup of 1963, during which many artists, intellectuals and left-leaning political opponents were executed.

In *Fatigued Ten Horses Converse with Nothing*, the artist shifted focus from centring the men to centring the horses – a choice repeated throughout the series. The horses here serve as symbols, reflecting the popular belief, according to the artist, that the horse represents the knight after his martyrdom. Their central role in the paintings makes the direct political meaning of the work more ambiguous, allowing the artist to convey a poignant political message in times of adversity.

The accompanying sketch is possibly a study for another painting of the same series, *How He Wandered with the Heart of a Martyr*.

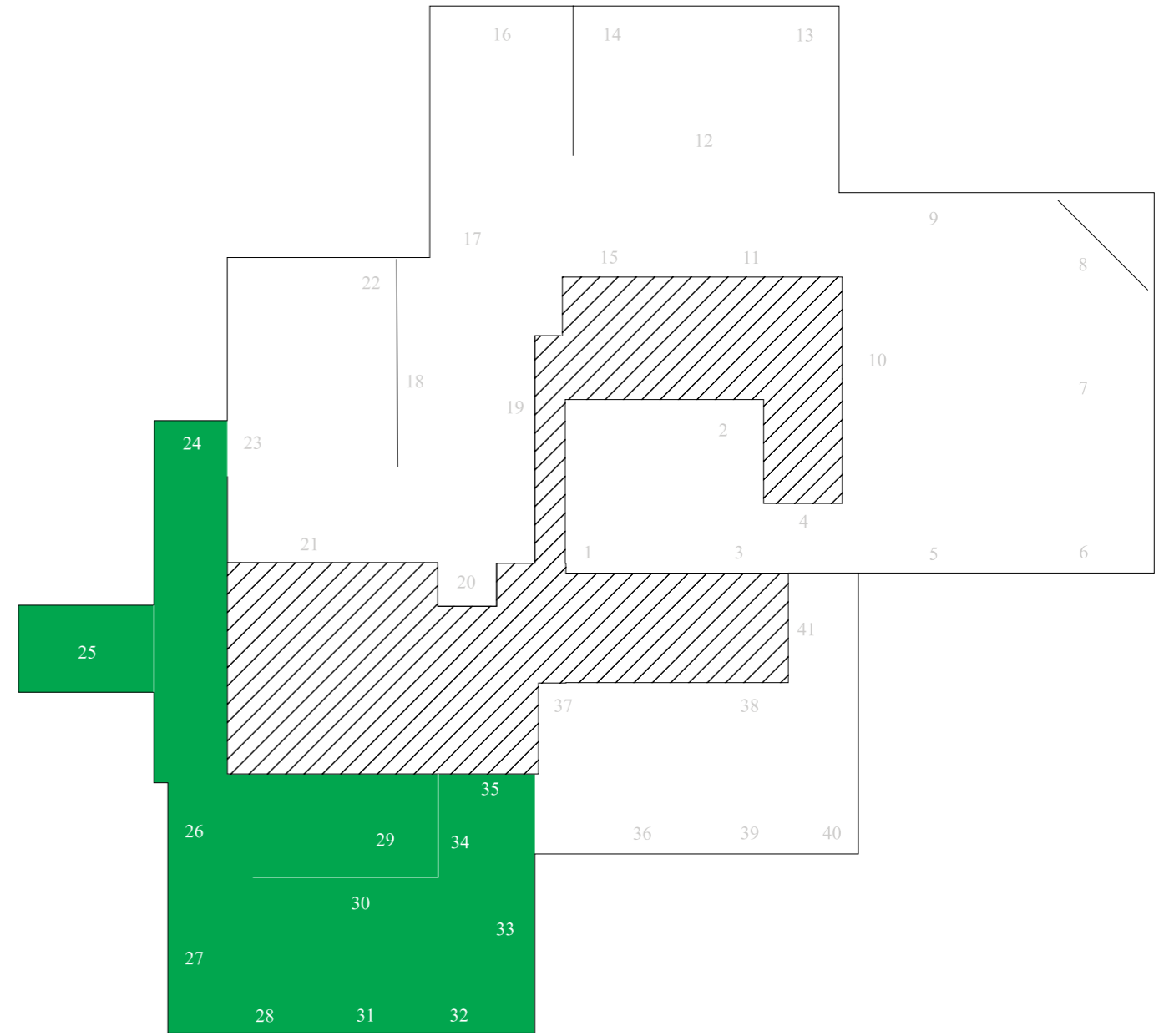


Image courtesy of the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah



Courtesy of Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah





على أطراف المدينة فضاءات الرفض والإقصاء

At the City's Edges Spaces of rejection and relegation

Works by

Shimabuku, <i>Then, I Decided to Give a Tour of Tokyo to the Octopus from Akashi</i> , 2000	24
Cheng Xinhao, <i>March of the Elephants</i> , 2022	25
Benoît Piéron, <i>Peluches Psychopompes I, II, IV, IX, XIV, XVII</i> , 2022–2023	26
Sammy Balaji, <i>Essay on Urban Planning</i> , 2013	27
Candice Lin, <i>Sorting the Rats, Bureau of Rats</i> , 2020	28
Annika Eriksson, <i>I am the dog that was always here (loop)</i> , 2013	29
Mariam Suhail, <i>Pigeon as Metaphor</i> , 2020	30
Simryn Gill, <i>Naga Doodles #1-1, #1-3 (Sumatran Spitting Cobra)</i> , 2017	31
Bouie Choi, <i>Messenger from the Wild</i> , 2024	32
Robert Zhao Renhui (The Institute of Critical Zoologists), <i>A History of Cows</i> , 2024	33
Ali Cherri, <i>Dead Inside</i> , 2021	34
Chim↑Pom, <i>SUPER RAT Scrap & Build</i> , 2006/2011	35



Then, I Decided to Give a Tour of Tokyo to the Octopus from Akashi

Shimabuku

2000

Single-channel video, colour, sound, 6 min. 56 s.
Japanese with English subtitles

In this video, Shimabuku embarks on a quirky expedition, taking an octopus from the sea in the fishing town of Akashi on a day trip to Tokyo, Japan's capital city.

The artist and the octopus begin their adventure on a bullet train to Tokyo, sightseeing iconic landmarks such as Tokyo Tower before reaching their main destination: the famous Tsukiji Fish Market, where octopi usually end up on a plate. At the end of the day, the octopus is returned to the sea from which it came.

Since reciprocity and communication are impossible, the artist is left wondering if this gift of tourism will ever hold meaning for the octopus.



Film stills courtesy of the artist

Courtesy of the artist





Peluches Psychopompes I, II, IV, IX, XIV, XVII

Benoît Piéron

2022–2023

Patchwork of repurposed hospital sheets, sewing pattern by BeeZee art.
20 × 43 × 8.5 cm (6)

Benoît Piéron’s pastel bats emerge from his personal experience of spending most of his childhood in the sterile and isolating environment of a hospital. He uses bats as a stand-in for blood transfusions and the pervasive fear of contamination, portraying illness not only as a threat but also as a constant companion.

The bats’ comforting and colourful fabric evokes childhood memories and tenderness, yet contrasts sharply with their association with loss and mortality. Piéron incorporates recycled hospital bed linen in this work. These linens, no longer suitable for medical use, are often repurposed into cleaning rags and can still bear the literal mark of their original hospitals – such as “Hospitals of Paris.”

The soft sculptures also reference bats’ biological role as virus carriers. Typically harmless in their natural habitats, these viruses can become dangerous when bats are displaced by climate change, deforestation, or human activity, leading to outbreaks like the Sars and Mers coronaviruses.

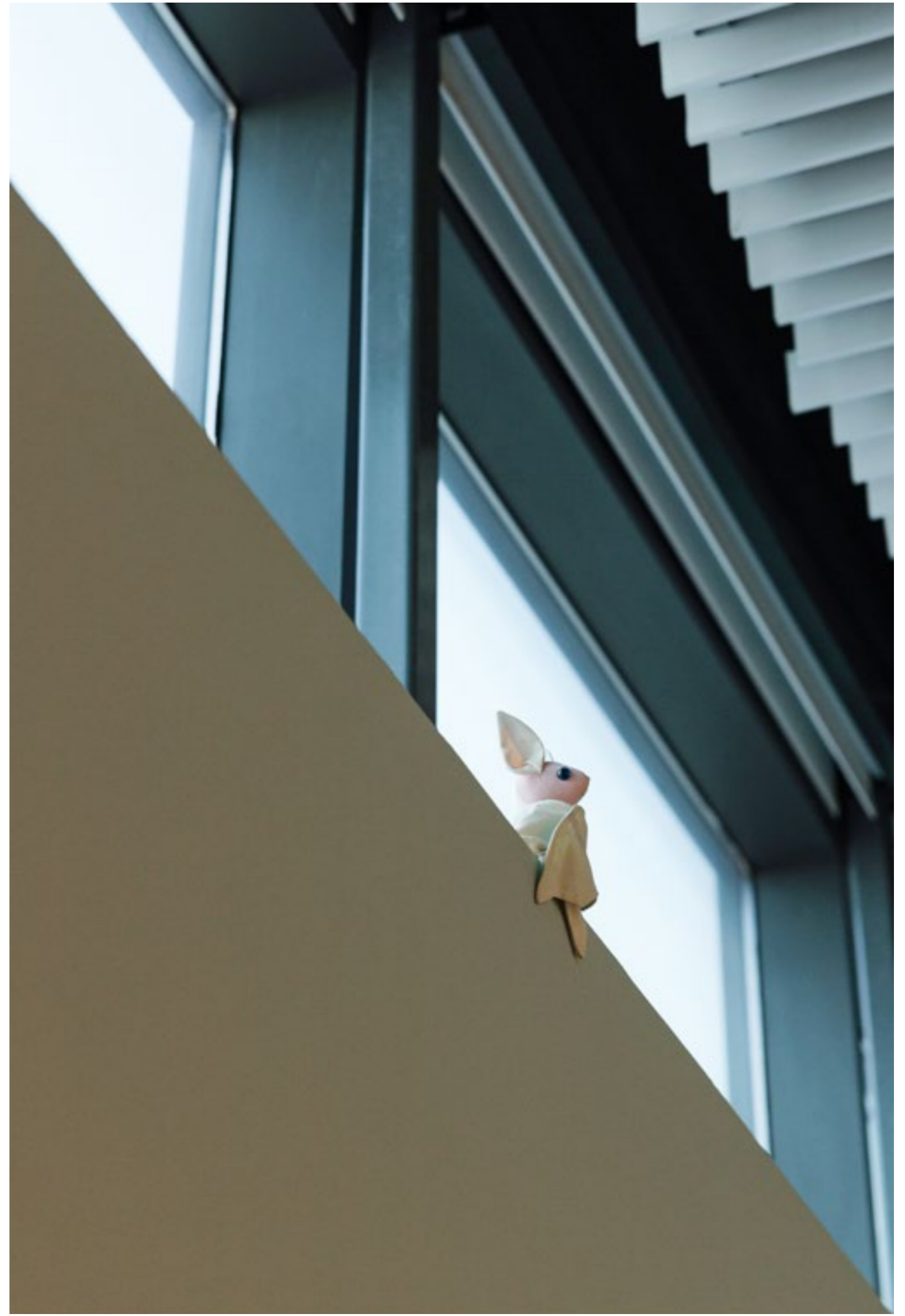
The bats parallel what Piéron calls the “pyjamas people” – those children, like him, confined to hospital beds and often isolated from social contact. He names these figures Monique, in homage to theorist Monique Wittig, who explored how society marginalises and invalidates certain bodies, rendering them invisible or objectified.



Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Sultana, Paris

Collections of Caroline Bourgeois (I); Brigitte Saby (II); Isabelle Alfonsi (IV); Robert Bridger (IX); Matteo Lovadina (XIV); Private collection (XVII).





Essay on Urban Planning

Sammy Baloji

2013

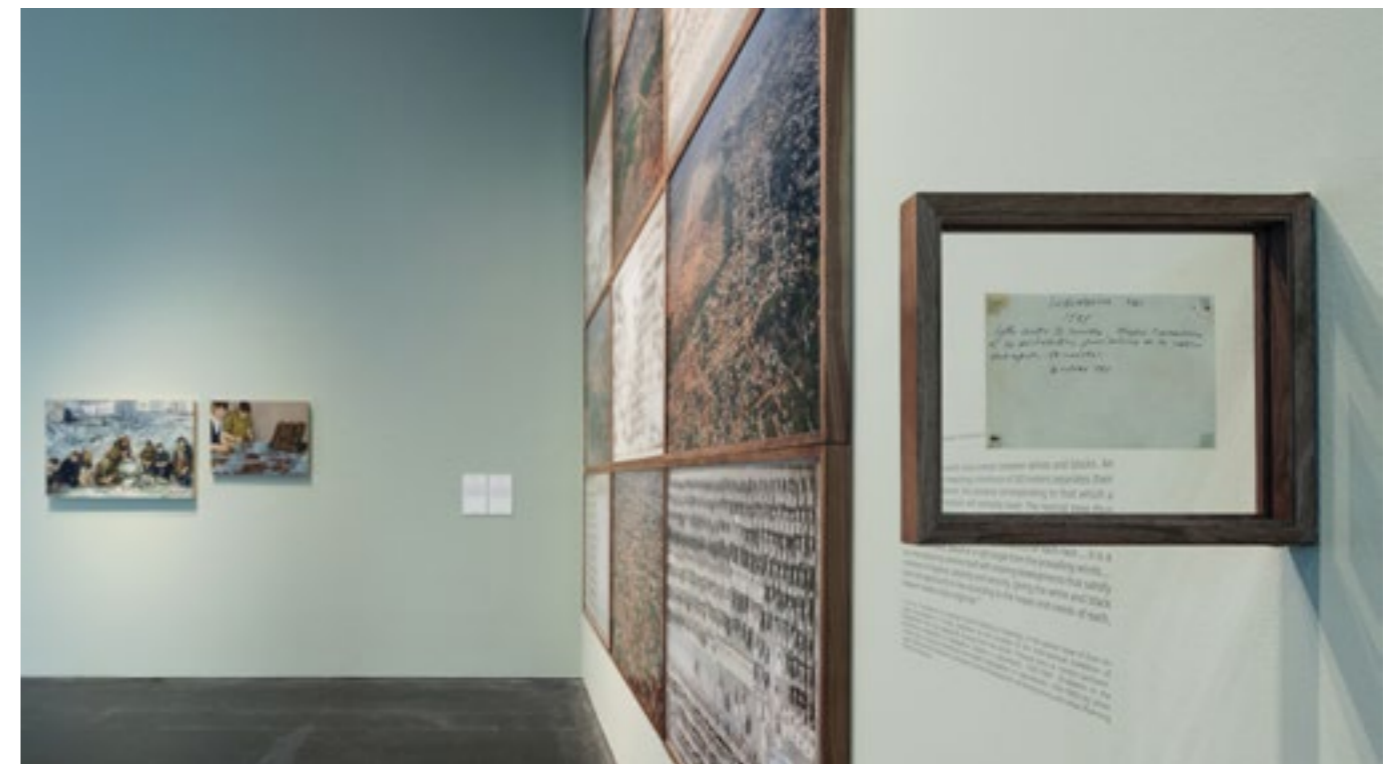
Digital inkjet prints
307.3 × 360 cm

In this photography installation, Sammy Baloji explores the lasting impact of colonialism on the urban landscape and social structure of his hometown, Lubumbashi, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The installation features 12 colour photographs of aerial views of the city, arranged in a grid alongside detailed images of mosquito specimens from the National Museum of Lubumbashi.

At the heart of the work is the “sanitary belt,” a 500-metre strip of unbuilt land established by Belgian colonists in 1910. This green barrier was intended to physically and socially separate the white European population from the black Congolese residents under the guise of preventing malaria. The width of the strip was determined by the flight range of a mosquito, with the aim of confining malaria outbreaks to the African quarters of the city.

Together, the aerial photographs and mosquito specimens reveal patterns of urban segregation inherited from the Belgian colonial era. The work emphasises how perceptions of animals can shape policy and urban design, leaving a lasting influence on city planning.



Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès Gallery, Paris





Lubumbashi 1921-1922
Fly control campaign: Each worker must bring 50 flies in order to receive his daily ration
October 18, 1922

"The neutral zone avoids close contact between whites and blacks. An almost empty area measuring a minimum of 500 meters separates their two areas of settlement, this distance corresponding to that which a malaria-carrying mosquito will normally cover. The neutral zone thus divides the lives of blacks from those of whites: it keeps the latter safe from the sources of malaria, and from the rowdy activities of blacks, so creating completely independent living conditions for each race ... it is a true *cordon sanitaire*, placed at a right angle from the prevailing winds ... our urban planning contents itself with creating developments that satisfy conditions of hygiene, salubrity and security, giving the white and black races the opportunity to live according to the hopes and needs of each, however modest these might be."

J. Hirtz, R., "L'Urbanisme au Katanga" (Urban Planning in Katanga), in the special issue of *Journal de l'Association des Architectes de Belgique* (Journal of the Association of Belgian Architects), 1931 (non paginated); Excerpt from the article: "Mesures d'hygiène et de salubrité: Architecture hospitalière et ségrégation urbaine à Lubumbashi, 1920-1922" (Measures of hygiene and salubrity: Hospital Architecture and Urban Segregation in Lubumbashi, 1920-1922) by Joris Lagae, Sofie Boonen & Maarten Leloucqer from the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning of Ghent University.



Candice Lin

2020

Oil paint and lard on wood panel
63 x 46 cm cm

Collection of Laurie Ziegler

2021

Oil paint, encaustic wax,
lard on wood panel
63 x 46 cm

Collection of Shahin Tabassi

Candice Lin's practice looks at how subaltern groups have historically been excluded from humanity and linked to animality and disease.

In this series of paintings, Lin reinterpreted photographs documenting mass autopsies of rats during San Francisco's bubonic plague epidemic in the early 1900s. During this period, the city's large Chinese community, already under scrutiny due to tensions surrounding their migration and labour, was scapegoated for the spread of the disease and subsequently quarantined, as they were associated with rat proliferation.

At that time, the bacteria causing the plague (*Yersinia pestis*) had just been identified, revolutionising medical understanding. As colonialism and early globalisation facilitated the rapid spread of pandemics, many nations launched campaigns against rats – often unfairly targeting urban sewer rats, which were culturally associated with filth but did not carry the disease.

To Lin, the rats were both literal carriers of epidemics and a metaphor for the racialisation of pathology.



Courtesy of the artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles/New York

Images courtesy of the artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles/New York





I am the dog that was always here (loop)

Annika Eriksson

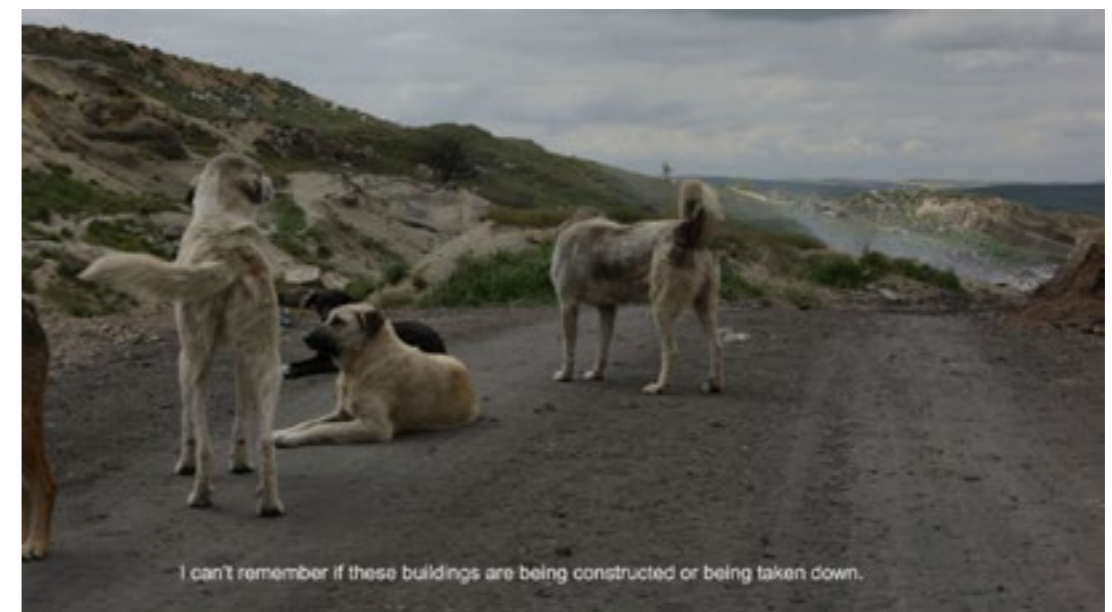
2013

Single-channel video, colour, sound, 9 min. 8 s.,
Turkish with English subtitles

Through the perspective of a street dog, Annika Eriksson's video chronicles the marginalisation of dogs forcibly moved to Istanbul's periphery.

The Turkish city's many street cats garner sympathy and networks of care due to deeply ingrained cultural and religious preferences— in some areas, they have even become a postcard animal to boost tourism. In contrast, dogs are largely vilified and pushed further out of the rapidly expanding city, following the flows of real estate and gentrification.

Stray dogs are a recurring motif in the urban history of Istanbul, with campaigns to displace or eradicate them dating back to the Ottoman era. The most infamous episode, in 1910, involved moving all street dogs to an island where they were left to die. More recently, a 2024 law aimed at removing millions of stray dogs elicited outrage from civil society. These attempts have consistently proven unsuccessful, due to the resilience of both dogs and citizens against a city determined to forget them.



Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by the 13th Istanbul Biennial



Film stills courtesy of the artist

Pigeon as Metaphor

Mariam Suhail

2020

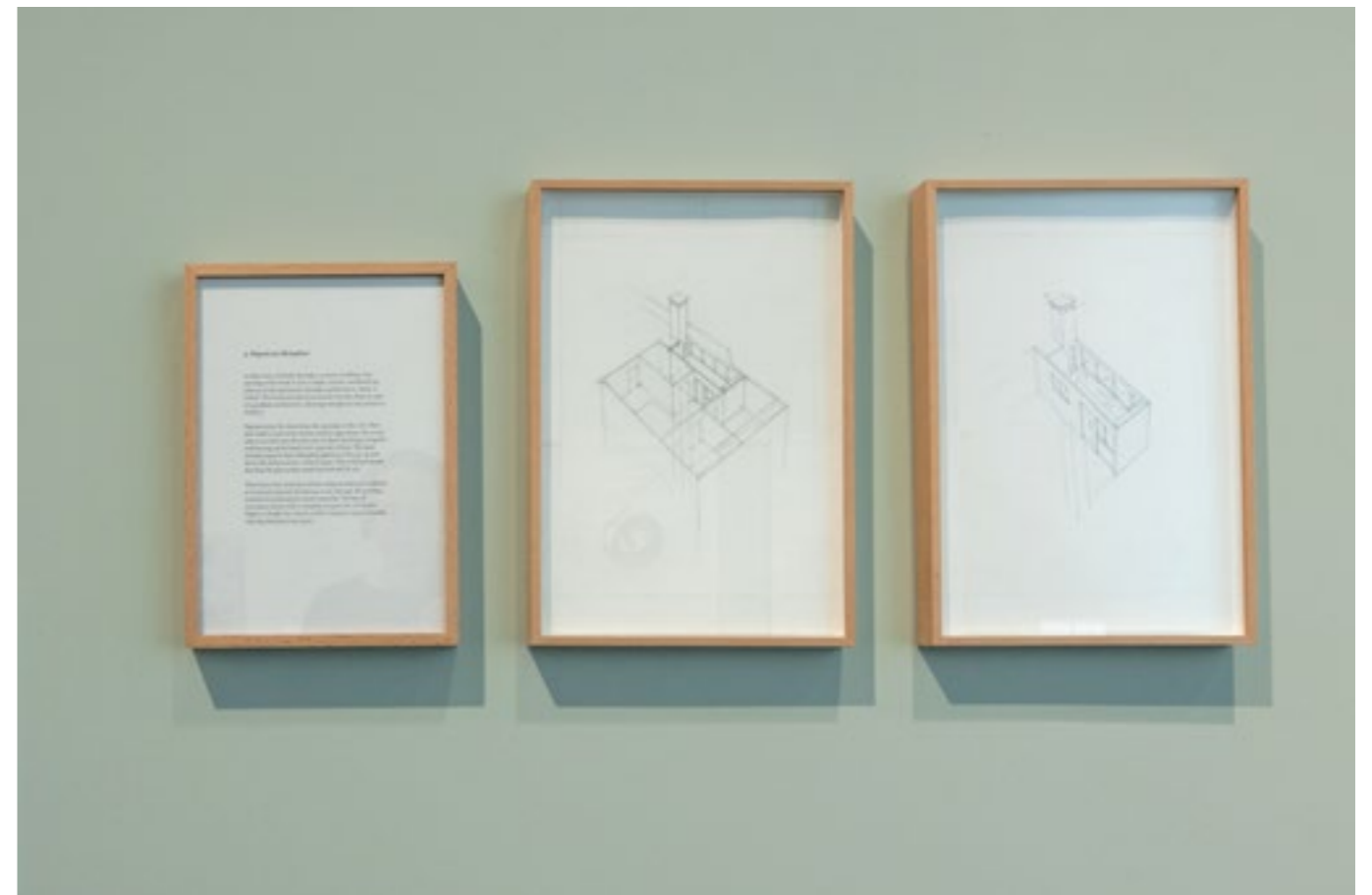
Print on archival paper, pencil on paper

29.7 × 21 cm (text) / 31.3 × 22.9 cm (framed) 35.5 x 23.9 cm (2 drawings) / 37.7 × 26.2 cm (framed),
179 × 75 cm (3), 75 × 179 cm (4) cm

Mariam Suhail's works on paper stem from her experience of cohabitating with a nesting pigeon family at her home in Bangalore. Thriving in a collective chute typical of modernist colonial homes in South Asia, the pigeons were largely invisible and unreachable, but the noise of their flapping wings and the cries of their squabs echoed throughout the apartment. The pencil drawings juxtapose architectural features with the artist's imagined rendition of the pigeons' flights in the chute, based solely on the sounds they made.

Trained in Karachi, Suhail developed a particular interest in pigeons, a recurring symbol in modernist Pakistani painting, notably in the works of Jamil Naqsh, where they are associated with notions of freedom and purity. In contrast, Suhail focuses on actual pigeons beyond the metaphor, exploring the everyday complexities and drama of interspecies cohabitation.

Pigeons, often depicted as agents of nature squatting in human cities, are, in fact, a result of human activity. Domesticated as early as 4,500 BCE in Mesopotamia for food and entertainment, feral populations emerged over time, conditioned to live close to humans and thriving wherever food and shelter were abundant, forming populations in virtually every city in the world.



Courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise



Naga Doodles #1-1, #1-3 (Sumatran Spitting Cobra)

Simryn Gill

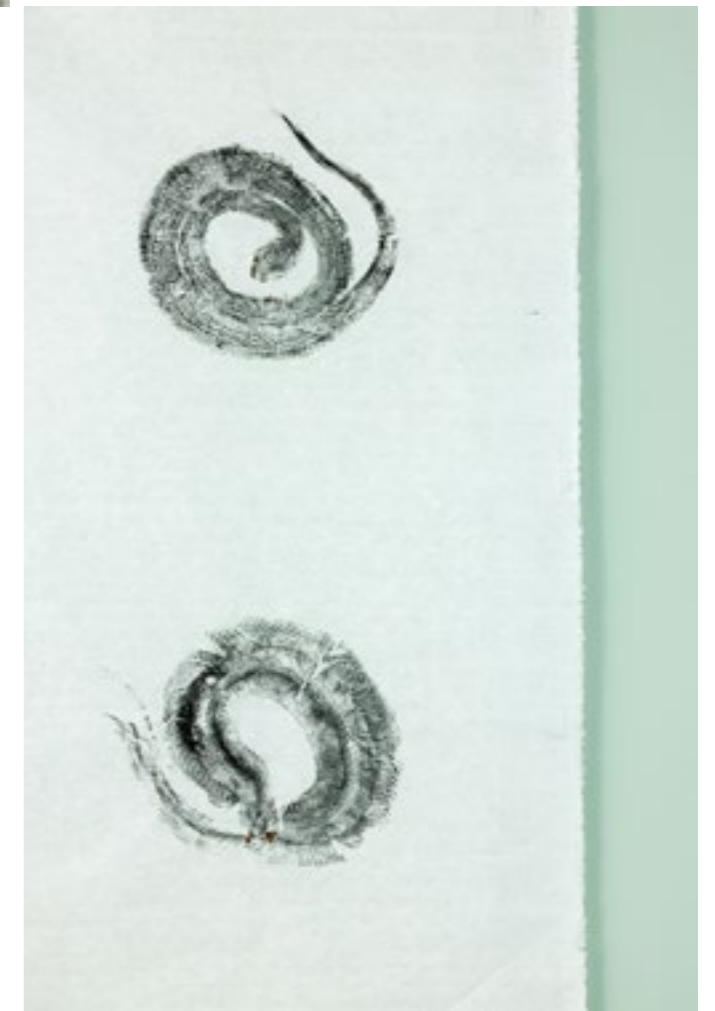
2017

Ink on paper, direct print
75 × 140 cm

These two works are part of a series of 76 prints made from the carcasses of roadkill snakes that the artist collected, brought back to her studio, covered with ink, and rubbed onto sheets of paper.

The word Naga is Sanskrit for snake and refers to Hindu and Buddhist protector deities. Doodles evokes Gill's production process, as she started considering the flattened snakes as "found drawings."

Roadkill is a brutal yet everyday encounter between humans and wildlife, usually occurring where infrastructure encroaches on nonhuman territories without offering safe alternative routes. In Gill's prints, the delicacy of the paper and ink, along with the artist's composition, allude to a quiet stillness. In contrast, patches of lacerated skin and barely visible stains of blood at the mouth hint at the animals' violent deaths.



Courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise





Messenger from the Wild

Bouie Choi

2024

Acrylic on upcycled wood
34.6 × 41 cm

Bouie Choi often depicts urban landscapes on wood, using a layering technique to reveal hidden details within larger scenes. In this new commission, she presents eight wooden postcards she sent to herself as a gesture of remembrance. Assembled, these individual landscapes and details form the head of a wild boar – an ubiquitous urban animal in Hong Kong, the artist's home city.

Choi reflects on the city's ongoing encroachment on wild boar habitats. In response, boars have become emboldened, reclaiming urban spaces – using escalators, swimming in the harbour, frequenting fountains in the financial district, and visiting malls where food is plentiful.

Since 2021, Hong Kong has enforced a culling order against wild boars – a move criticised by animal rights organisations. In the context of Hong Kong's rapidly changing security landscape, many citizens feel solidarity with the boars' freedom and bravery.



Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by Art Jameel



A History of Cows

Robert Zhao Renhui
(The Institute of Critical Zoologists)

2024

Installation of printed wallpaper, framed archival images and artist images
Dimensions variable

In this display adapted from a publication, Robert Zhao Renhui's semi-fictional research organisation, the Institute of Critical Zoologists, retraces the history of urban cows in Singapore. The work was prompted by the death of Singapore's last wild cow in 2016.

The story may seem surprising considering the current image of Singapore – a densely populated “garden city” where nature is tightly domesticated and engineered. Yet, Zhao's account tells of a more fluid coexistence with the animals, who were part and parcel of urban landscapes. The animals' history is also a social history, as they were associated with minority groups in Singapore, notably Malay farmers and Tamil communities. The regulation of cattle, enacted in 1965 on the eve of the city-state's independence, can be read as an act of nation-building aimed at invisibilising both the animals and these communities from public space.



Courtesy of the artist
Supported by Art Jameel







Dead Inside

Ali Cherri

2021

Diptych, watercolour and graphite on paper
41.5 × 50 cm (each)

During the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020, when Ali Cherri was unable to access his studio, the artist shifted from his usual sculptural work featuring taxidermied animals to painting. He created watercolour images of dead animals – foxes, does, birds and fish – captured in postures suggesting the brutal interruption of their lives. Inspired by roadkill seen along highways, Cherri didn't aim for full realism, as the animals sometimes appear asleep despite the contortions of their bodies.

In these paintings, Cherri paired the animals with images of damaged cars. At first glance, one might assume the cars caused the animals' deaths, but the damage depicted is far too severe for a roadkill incident. In fact, both the animals and the cars were victims of an external shock – the vehicles were damaged in the August 4, 2020, Beirut port explosion. Some of the images were based on photographs circulating on social media, while others were inspired by cars Cherri saw when visiting his hometown. Each work in this series reflects moments of dread and grief experienced by the artist.



Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès Gallery, Paris



SUPER RAT Scrap & Build

Chim↑Pom

2006/2011

Single-channel video, colour, sound, 3 min. 13 s.; stuffed rat named “建/Ken” caught in Kabukicho, Shinjuku, in 2017, mixed media
31 × 35 × 38 cm

The sculpture features taxidermied rats painted in vibrant yellow to resemble Japan’s most famous rodent, Pikachu, the iconic character from the Pokémon franchise.

The cheeky artist collective Chim↑Pom from Smappa!Group questions the polished facade of Tokyo’s urban cleanliness and Japanese corporate aesthetics.

With *Super Rat*, they critique a commodified vision of Japanese pop culture while invoking the often invisible underclass of urban life. The term “super rat” refers to rats that emerged in Tokyo’s urban sprawl, evolving to withstand and thrive in a toxic urban environment. Resistant to conventional poisons, these rats embody the paradox of survival in a landscape designed to exterminate them.

Reclaimed by the artists, *Super Rat* became an emblem of survival in the face of environmental and societal hostility, mirroring the collective’s defiant stance within Japan’s contemporary art scene—operating on the fringes, unafraid to confront uncomfortable truths.

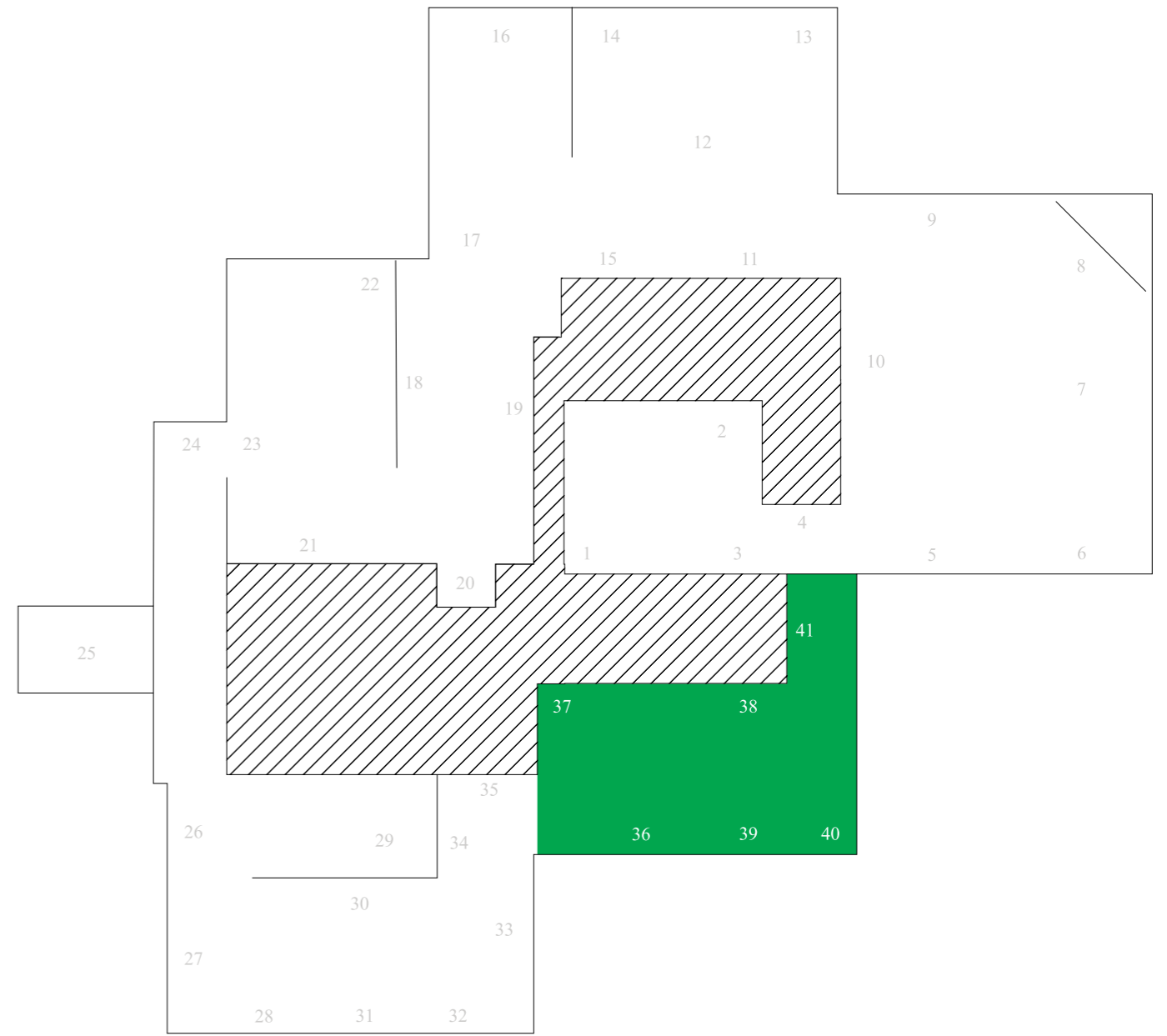
Courtesy of the artists, ANOMALY and MUJIN-TO Production
Collection of Mizuno Art Foundation, Tokyo





Image courtesy of the artists, ANOMALY and MUJIN-TO Production





السماء
فضاءات المراقبة والحرية

The Sky
Spaces of surveillance and freedom

Works by

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Two small informational text panels on the wall.



Standing Bird

Anna Boghiguian

2023

Blue glass
19 × 32.5 × 16 cm

To Anna Boghiguian, birds express freedom to migrate, to explore vast skies and distant lands.

Her Standing Bird, crafted entirely of blue glass, is part of an ongoing body of work dedicated to birds that she began in 2013. Initially working with papier mâché, Boghiguian later started crafting her birds in translucent glass.

When brought together, they form a disquieting flock of paper mâché and glass.
On their own, they evoke pause and stillness, appearing fragile and vulnerable.



Art Jameel Collection



Feather Forensics: Avian Window Strikes

Kee Ya Ting and David Tan in collaboration with
Migrant Ecologies Projects

2016

Mixed-media installation, design by Dennice Juwono
Dimensions variable

Located on a strait, Singapore is an important pathway for migratory birds, much like Dubai, which lies on avian routes from central Asia to the Horn of Africa. The collaborative installation addresses the threats migratory birds face as they navigate the urban landscape of the city-state – notably the bird-window collisions that often occur with the city's glass buildings.

In a mapping exercise, avian biologist David Tan traced the migration routes and pinpointed the exact locations of these fatal collisions. Photographer Kee Ya Ting took portraits of the deceased birds, aiming to restore their individuality, specificity, and history. She displayed the images in viewfinders, reminiscent of birdwatcher tools, creating a close, intimate encounter.



Courtesy of the artists





As Birds Flying

Heba Y Amin

2016

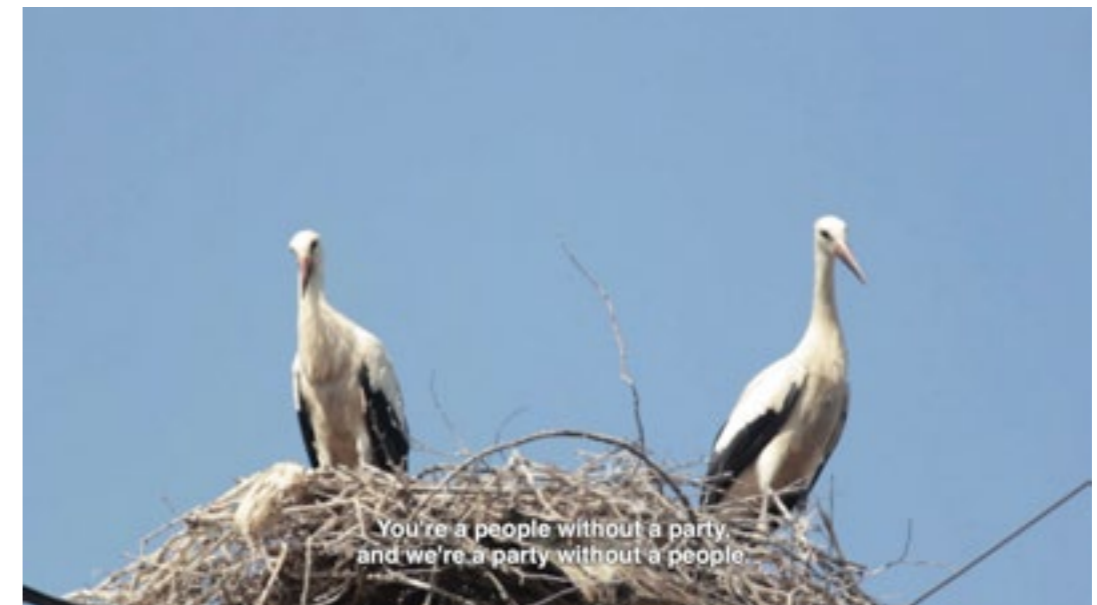
Single-channel video, colour, sound, 7 min. 11 s.,
Arabic (Egypt) with English subtitles

In 2013, a fisherman along the Nile River spotted a wild stork with a suspicious electronic device fixed to its wing, fearing it was an Israeli spy. The stork was caught and briefly detained for espionage, but the device was later revealed to be a tracker used by Hungarian scientists to monitor the bird's migration across Africa.

Heba Y Amin's *As Birds Flying* responds to this peculiar story, which was sensationally covered by the media amid a context of widespread paranoia and surveillance in post-2011 Egypt.

In her film, Amin blends reworked and edited excerpts from Adel Imam's social satire *Birds of Darkness* (1995) with bird's-eye view drone footage of migrating storks flying over contested wetlands in occupied Galilee.

Typically seen as symbols of freedom, soaring above borders and divisions, the birds' fates reveal the sky as a tightly controlled political space.



Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman, Istanbul/Berlin/Miami

Film stills courtesy of the artist and Zilberman, Istanbul/Berlin/Miami





Falcon Hospital 2 (Blue Glove)

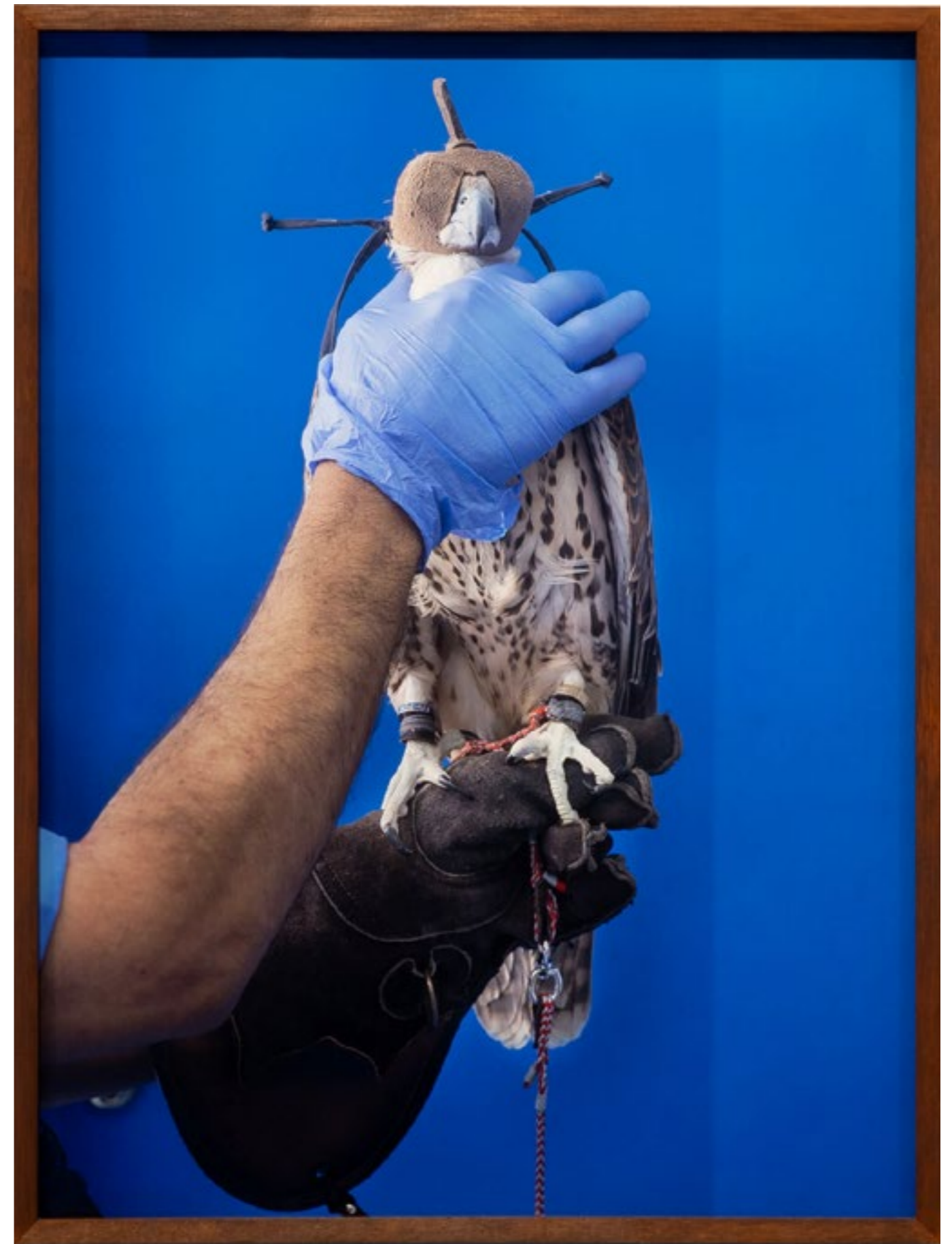
Farah Al Qasimi

2016

Archival inkjet print
68.6 × 50.8 cm

Farah Al Qasimi's photographs are deeply personal portraits of life in the United Arab Emirates, exploring its symbols, tropes and visual culture. One of the main national symbols of the UAE, falcons are also highly popular in hunting sports. The demand is so high that the UAE is the world's leading importer of raptors, usually bred in Europe. Although they symbolise an ancestral link to the wilderness, the birds are part of a large infrastructure of trade, care and human-made ecologies.

This frontal portrait of a falcon held by a veterinarian was taken at a specialised falcon hospital in Abu Dhabi. Kept quiet by its hood and unable to look back, the raptor is captured in a rare moment of vulnerability.



Art Jameel Collection





We have never been so populated

Walid Raad in collaboration
with the Atlas Group

1997/2020

Set of seven pigmented inkjet prints
84 × 60.5 cm each (Series of 7)

Bird species such as parakeets, originally from South Asia, were dispersed as pets in cities around the world, including Dubai. They thrive in urban environments where they face no predators and are often labelled invasive as they threaten to replace local ecosystems.

These prints and accompanying notes recount the stories of invasive bird species during the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), allegedly bred by a left-wing militia to decimate their enemies' ecosystems in various parts of Lebanon. They highlight the different species of birds that supposedly took part in biological warfare, alongside a collage of records from the documentation of that operation.

We have never been so populated is part of Walid Raad's long-term project, The Atlas Group. Documenting the Civil War period and its aftermath through historical research and storytelling, the project challenges the authority of archival records and examines how truth is produced.



Courtesy of the artist and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut/Hamburg





Horses

Jumana Bayazid El Husseini

1972

Oil on canvas
65 × 95 cm

A member of a prominent Jerusalem family, Jumana Bayazid El Husseini was exiled to Beirut as a teenager after the Nakba. Many of her works express her longing for home, resonating deeply with Palestinian cultural symbols and landscapes.

In this piece, El Husseini depicts three horses set against a dream-like background of her native Jerusalem.

The horse, a symbol of rebellion when untamed, is a recurring figure in her works. El Husseini also described horses as animals with a profound connection to home, stating, “Wherever you put him, he goes back home; he smells the land.”



Image courtesy of the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah

Courtesy of Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah





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All images courtesy of Art Jameel
Photography by Daniella Baptista