

Activities related to the exhibition

- “Conflictes arreu. Com ens arriben?”. Workshop for families with children between 6 and 12 years of age accompanied by an adult. 1 € per child, prior inscription 971 908 201. Saturdays 2nd, 16th, 23rd and 30th April 2016 at 11.30. Project in collaboration with Fòrum Comunicació, Educació i Ciutadania de les Illes Balears.

English

WASTE LANDS

In collaboration with:



LIDA ABDUL / TAMARA ABDUL HADI / ZOULIKHA BOUABDELLAH /
AMINA BENBOUCHTA / GOHAR DASHTI / RENA EFFENDI /
YARA EL-SHERBINI / MARIAM GHANI / KINDA HASSAN / LARISSA SANSOUR

Exhibition dates: 19/03/2016-19/06/2016

Museum Opening Hours:

Tuesday to Saturday: 10 - 20 h

Sundays: 10 - 15 h

Mondays closed

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i contemporani de palma



A museum should not only present the aesthetical, or the singularity of pure artistic experience; a museum should promote essay exhibitions which reflect on current reality and its immediate surroundings, situating itself at the crossroads of the problems of a world in conflict, positioned so as to critique and stir up debate on them. The Mediterranean that surrounds us and the countries adjacent to it, with their unresolved crises and contradictions and political and social transformations, form part of a series of programmes and projects that Es Baluard conducts regularly. Using contemporary creation, we propose analysis and reconsideration of latent, unresolved crises, and as such with “Waste Lands”, we use the mechanism of the exhibition to present a narrative linked by Piedad Solans on these close and hidden problems, trenches and wounds we must learn to understand and decipher.

Waste Lands, text by Piedad Solans, curator of the exhibition

Waste Lands: devastated areas of land. Through the work of ten artists from countries like Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Iran, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine, the exhibition broaches the landscapes and the urban, social, anthropological and archaeological environments in countries destroyed and impoverished by wars, the post-colonial inheritance, the predatory voraciousness of the big oil and gas companies and the energy speculation of the world powers, state terrorism and violence and local, political and religious struggles, from the 2000s until the present day. Lands destroyed by powers and historical and structural conflicts, transformed into residual arms depots, camps where excluded populations and refugee families live perpetually, plundered ruins and abandoned places, sterile, intoxicated soil that has become desert, electrified border fences. Usurped lands and pillaged assets, places of blood, crimes and daily attacks.

The artists who make up this exhibition have different histories, cultures and narratives. They have witnessed, in their own living memory or that of their relatives and peoples, forced migrations, colonialism, war, exile, refugee and foreigner status. But they also have knowledge of great civilisations, the anthropological wealth of communities, the ancient cities and medinas, the great commercial routes and native and regional intersections, immense spaces and ethnic, anthropological and linguistic diversity. Border zones, migration, translation, transnationality, post-colonial subjects and post-conflict conditions are now recurrent concerns in their work. Their status, as Mariam Ghani indicates, is “borderline”: they inhabit the frontier between different worlds. They travel from Iraq to Berlin, from Palestine to Oslo, from Afghanistan to New York, from Cairo, Azerbaijan, Iran or Beirut to London. They were trained - not without tensions - amongst different languages, cultures, generations, countries, experiences. “The multiple identities we claim”, says Ghani, “always exist in a kind of tension, which is of course intensified when the places that contain them enter into conflict”. According to the Russian linguist M. M. Bakhtin, who described the condition of *borderline* as a confusing position, “the point of coincidence and contention”, this could be the ideal position from which to produce new languages. The ideal position from which to make art as outsiders and simultaneously as observers and participants.

In their videos and photographs Gohar Dashti, Rena Effendi, Mariam Ghani and Tamara Abdul Hadi set forth the consequences wars and abuse of economic power have on lands and populations, whilst Larissa Sansour and Yara El-Sherbini, with a certain amount of irony, denounce the “western” topics and occupation of living space and territory, conflict zones and the need for a home state through sculptures, publications, performances and videos. The criticism of dictatorships and archaisms and the call for freedom through artistic, cultural or curative practices is tackled simultaneously by Zoulikha Bouabdellah, Amina Benbouchta and Lida Abdul in video and installations, and the ideological and spectacular role of the communications media and of the “policies” of terror is revealed by Kinda Hassan, as is the solitude of people in inhospitable, desolate environments in the videos and photographs of Gohar Dashti.

However, these artists do not consent to being victims. Using their borderline positions and their experience of migration and conflicts, they show the inexhaustible stamina of their countries to remain, adapt and replace. They denounce violence and injustice, the exploitation and neglect of vulnerable people, the destruction of their cultures and their lands by local and world powers. And they show the inexhaustible capacity of resilience people have to survive, in solidarity with each other, in adverse conditions.