

PRESS RELEASE

**FRAGMENTS**

**Meeting Architecture III**

A programme of lectures and exhibitions

**Tuesday 3 May 2016: Part IV**

**Dor Guez**

*40 Days*

**18.00: Lecture** introduced by Ludovico Pratesi

**19.30: Exhibition opening**

**Exhibition open: 3 May to 24 May 2016**

**The British School at Rome**

via Gramsci 61, Roma

Dor Guez's lecture and exhibition *40 Days* is the fourth event in *Meeting Architecture: FRAGMENTS* curated by Marina Engel.

**FRAGMENTS** considers how emotions are stirred, memories evoked and ideologies shaped by buildings, ruins and their contents. To this end the programme focuses on the concept of the fragment, defined as an urban ruin – which may be a house with its remaining contents or which maybe personal relics, images, photographs, and other documents. Architects, visual artists and historians are invited to examine and to reassemble such fragments in an attempt to reconstruct personal or collective identities in zones of conflict or former conflict.

The exhibition presents the video installation *40 Days* (2012). In the Eastern Orthodox Church, the souls of the deceased are believed to wander the Earth for forty days after death until the soul ascends. Special prayers at the grave and in the church are then held in memory of the departed. Guez's project *40 Days* offers a deeply personal, familial story: the death of Ya'qoub Monayer,

the artist's grandfather, and the memorial service for him 40 days later. It also relates to a larger and more complex historical narrative: the story of the place where he is buried, the Christian Palestinian cemetery in Lydd (or Lod), which has been vandalised by other religious groups. The destruction of the cemetery reflects the position of the Christian Palestinians living in Lydd (Lod), a town between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and in Israel as a minority within the wider Palestinian minority.

The series of prints – *scanograms* – originate from photographs taken by the artist and his grandfather to initiate an investigation into the vandalism of the family cemetery. The original photographs were returned by the police after they failed to find those responsible for the desecration. They were kept in a kitchen drawer where they were exposed to condensation. Guez's digitally manipulated archival prints that he calls *scanograms* emphasise this damage. In doing so the artist echoes the destruction depicted in the original photographs.

*'40 Days deals with the position of the Christian Palestinian minority in the post 'Arab Spring' reality of the Middle East. Both the video works and printed materials relate to the history of the image as an object - the tears, folds and cuts. In the video you see the result of the destruction of the Christian Palestinian cemetery in the city of 'Lod/Al-Lydd', and, in parallel, the destruction of the actual photographs, which were taken by my grandfather to the police as evidence. The first destruction is a pure hate crime; the second, of the photographs themselves, notwithstanding poetic and aesthetic appearances, reflects the desperation of a disenfranchised and marginalised community'.*

Dor Guez, **40 Days**, A.M Qattan Foundation

**Dor Guez** (Jerusalem) focuses on the history of marginalized communities in the Middle East. Through installations combining diverse modes of video and photographic practices, Guez's work raises questions about contemporary art's role in narrating unwritten histories, both personal and collective, and re-contextualizing visual and written documents. The artist's interests and practice reflect his Christian Palestserinian and Jewish Tunisian cultural heritage.

Dor Guez's work has been the subject of exhibitions worldwide. Among others: Institute of Contemporary Arts in London and The Center for Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv, The Mosaic Rooms, Centre for Contemporary Arab Culture in London, The KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, and Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; MAXXI Museum, Rome. Guez's work has been included in numerous international exhibitions and biennials as 12th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul; 17th, 18th, and 19th International Contemporary Art Festival, Videobrasil, São Paulo; the 3rd Moscow International Biennale, Moscow; 8th Berlin Biennial, Berlin.

In 2009, Guez founded the *Christian-Palestinian Archive* (CPA), the first archive devoted to the Christian-Palestinian minority of the Middle East.

Guez is currently head of the Photography Department at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem.

## MEETING ARCHITECTURE – FRAGMENTS

FRAGMENTS considers how emotions are stirred, memories evoked and ideologies shaped by buildings, ruins and their contents. To this end the programme focuses on the concept of the fragment, defined as an urban ruin, a house and/or its remaining contents, personal vestiges, images, photographs, and documents. Architects, visual artists and historians are invited to examine and to reevaluate the fragment in an attempt to reconstruct personal or collective identities in zones of conflict or former conflict. The programme also discusses the destruction of monuments and heritage sites brought about by war and in particular the attempt to erase or fragment the memories of differing cultural identities and ideologies

**The programme is in partnership with the Royal Academy of Arts who will host an annual summer forum in London inviting participants in the programme together with RA Academicians to debate some of the main issues discussed in Rome.**

## CALENDAR 2016

**30 May 2016 | Lecture | Eyal Weizman (Israel)**

**Architect and Professor of Spatial and Visual Culture and Director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London.**

An authority on the architecture of Israel's occupation, Weizman recently established *Forensic Architecture*, a multidisciplinary research project based at Goldsmiths University of London. *Forensic Architecture's* investigations provide evidence for international prosecution teams, political organisations, NGOs and the United Nations. In a separate event, Weizman will lead a workshop at MAXXI – Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo.

**In 2016-2017, FRAGMENTS will concentrate on Eastern and Central Europe and invite: Miroslaw Balka, Joseph Rykwert, Grzegorz Piątek, Helen Walasek and Dragana Zarevac.**

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The British School at Rome  
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www.bsr.ac.uk

**Opening days:** 4 May to 24 May 2016, from Monday to Friday  
**Opening hours:** 16.00 – 19.30

***Admission free***

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