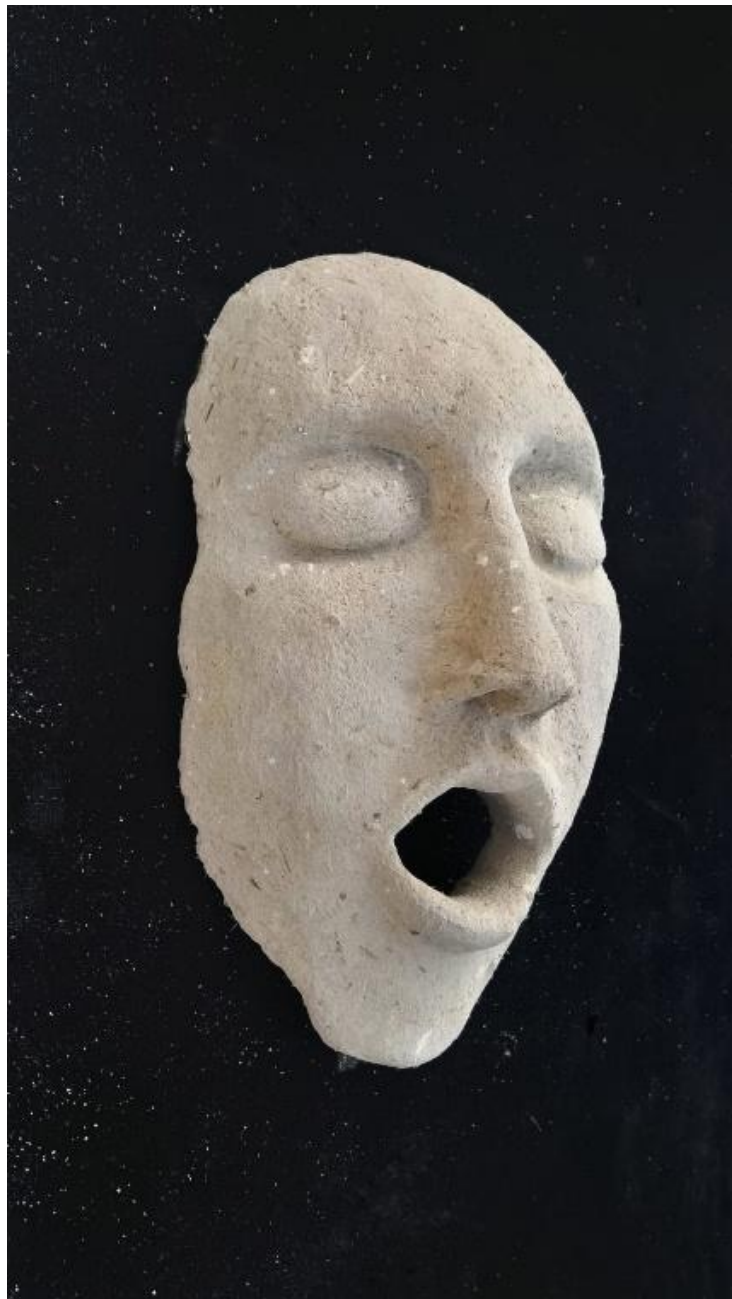


PRESS RELEASE - GAZA BIENNALE – THE ISTANBUL PAVILION



Yasmeen Al-Daya, **Life** (2024).
Sculpture (kiln clay), reinterpreted as a photographic print (2025).

Image courtesy the artist and House of Taswir.



THE ISTANBUL PAVILION

Exhibition Performance

Depo Istanbul

Opening: Friday, September 19, 2025, 5pm

Exhibition dates: September 20–November 8, 2025

Curated by House of Taswir and Associates. In collaboration with Addar Istanbul and the Forbidden Museum in Ramallah. With the participation of over 40 artists from the Gaza Biennale and international artists friends.

GAZA BIENNALE – THE ISTANBUL PAVILION features the work of over 50 artists from Gaza, Palestine, and beyond. The exhibition unfolds across two floors of Depo Istanbul during the 18th International Istanbul Biennial and is curated by House of Taswir in collaboration with the artists of the Gaza Biennale.

In 2024, in a breathtaking act of artistic defiance—and in collaboration with the Forbidden Museum of Al Risan mountain near Ramallah—artists in Gaza launched the Gaza Biennale from a beach under siege. Since then, art institutions worldwide have begun hosting Gaza Biennale Pavilions—acts of diasporic solidarity that replace national representations with a transnational practice of artistic affinity and alliance.

House of Taswir is honored to host The Istanbul Pavilion at Depo Istanbul in close collaboration with artists who live and work in Gaza. Due to the ongoing genocidal war, the forced famine and closed borders devastating Gaza and Palestine, most Gazan artists are unable to travel, and their works cannot physically cross borders. In response, the Istanbul Pavilion—together with the artists—re-imagines exhibition practices through co-creation, ghost-writing, tele-conversations, and collaborative installations.

Since its inception, in gestures of overwhelming generosity, more than twenty international artists have joined the Gaza Biennale Istanbul Pavilion by donating works in support of the artists. We are proud to show works by Alfredo Jaar, Walid Raad, Shirin Neshat, Elisabeth Masé, Silvina Der Meguerditchian, Furkan Akhan, Khaled Tanji, Ghayath Almadhoun, Christine Gedeon, Michael Barenboim, and more.

Featured formats include video portraits, mobile phone dialogues, wall writings, a table of scholars, a poetry festival, and the emergence of a Museum of Affinities and of Distant Collaborations. A performance program of film screenings, poetry evenings, and in-situ conversation with the Gazan artists will be held during the entire seven weeks of the Biennale.

"No war can stop the dreams of dreamers, and no mechanism of domination extinguish the light in the hearts and minds of creators."

— Gaza Biennale Collective Statement, 2024

Venue:

Depo/ Tütün Deposu
Lüleci Hendek Caddesi No.12
Tophane 34425 İstanbul
www.depoistanbul.net

Concept: A.S. Bruckstein Çoruh / House of Taswir with Istanbul Pavilion Team

Release date: Istanbul, August 3, 2025

Press contact:

Reine Chahine / House of Taswir / www.taswir.org / taswir.projects@gmail.com / www.gazabiennale.org



h.A.R.A.M.
♥ Al Risan Art Museum

EST. 2021

المتحف المحظور



Declaration of the artists

We hereby announce from here, from the land of Gaza, the launch of the **Gaza Biennale**, with the participation of over 40 artists, to affirm that Palestinian art pierces through all besieged spaces. No war can stop the dreams of dreamers, and no mechanisms of domination extinguish the light in the hearts and minds of creators. On behalf of all the participating artists, including those who, due to war and geographical division, are unable to join us physically, we affirm the following:

1. Through art, we resist all forms of genocide and oppression.
2. We continue to give and create, despite all obstacles and challenges.
3. Through art, we transcend barriers, ensuring that the voices of Palestinian artists reach the world, reaffirming Palestinians' right to speak and be heard.
4. The Biennale represents the starting point for collective artistic work, uniting many parties and institutions that believe in the justice of our cause and the power of art.
5. The Biennale emerged despite dispersion, displacement, and suffering endured by artists, gathering to fill a need—for invention, dignity and purpose, we present a vision for a better future.

This Biennale is a call to the world, to artists and cultural institutions, to stand in solidarity with Palestinian artists, support them, and work together to ensure that their voices and stories remain present, and that their works remain a testament to struggle and resilience, lighting a path for humanity in the most dire times.

The artists of the Gaza Biennial Initiative, quoted from their website www.gazabiennale.org

Artists of the Gaza Biennial – The Istanbul Pavilion

Adam Mghari Ahmad Aladawi Ahmad Al Assar Ahmad Muhanna Ahmed Adnan Alaa Abu Saif Alaá Al Shawa Ali Tayeh Ashraf Sahwiél Ameera Al-Hamayda Aya Juha Aya Mghari Bassel Aklouk Diana Alhosary Emad Badwan Essam Mkhimer Fadel Tafesh Farah Qarmout Fares Ayash Fatima Ali Abu Owdah Firas Thabet Ghanem Al Den Hala Eid Alnaji Hamada Elkept Hazem Alzomar Ibrahim Al Sultan Jihad Jarbou Khaled Huseyin Kholoud Al Dosouqi Liza Madi Mahmoud AlBalawi Malaka Abu Owda Maysa Khaled Bardaweel Maysa Yousef Mohammad Alkurd Mohammad Suliman Mohammed Al Farra Mohammed Alhaj Mohammed Mghari Mohanad Al Sayes Morad Al Assar Mosaab Abusal Motaz Naim Ola Al Shrif Ossama Naqa Rami Abu Jamous Rasha Alrayes Rawan Khzaiq Ruba Mahmoud Hassan Rufaida Sahweel Suhail Salem Tasneem Shatat Wafaa Alkahlout Yahya Alsholy Yara Zuhod Yasmeen Al Daya¹

Artists and scholars gifting works to The Istanbul Pavilion

Alfredo Jaar Ana Sontag Angela Harutyunyan Azza Ezzat Bassel Zaraa Benny Metz Christine Gedeon Elisabeth Masé Furkan Akhan Ghayath Almadhoun Gülen Güler Jassem Hindi Khaled Sait & members of Addar Kenizé Mourad Linda Llulla Gashi Khaled Tanji Mahmoud Darwish Marwan Nassar Michael Barenboim Mosab Abu Toha Navid Kermani Patrizia Bach Reine Chahine Reyan Polat Shirin Neshat Silvina Der Meguerditchian Taysir Bathniji Tyme Khleif Valerie Cachard Walid Raad²

Performance Program

The Istanbul Pavilion of the Gaza Biennial features a rich weekly public program throughout its duration. Screened in situ conversations with artists in Gaza on Tuesdays; poetry and music on Wednesdays; Saturdays to film screenings; and Sundays to a *Table of Scholars* with invited artists, writers, and thinkers. Many of the international contributors listed above will participate in these performative settings. The program is still in production, further events and additions will be announced throughout the Biennial on our various social media and online platforms. For inquiries, please contact Reine Chahine at taswir.projects@gmail.com

¹ For the CV of the artists, go to www.gazabiennale.org

² Open list.

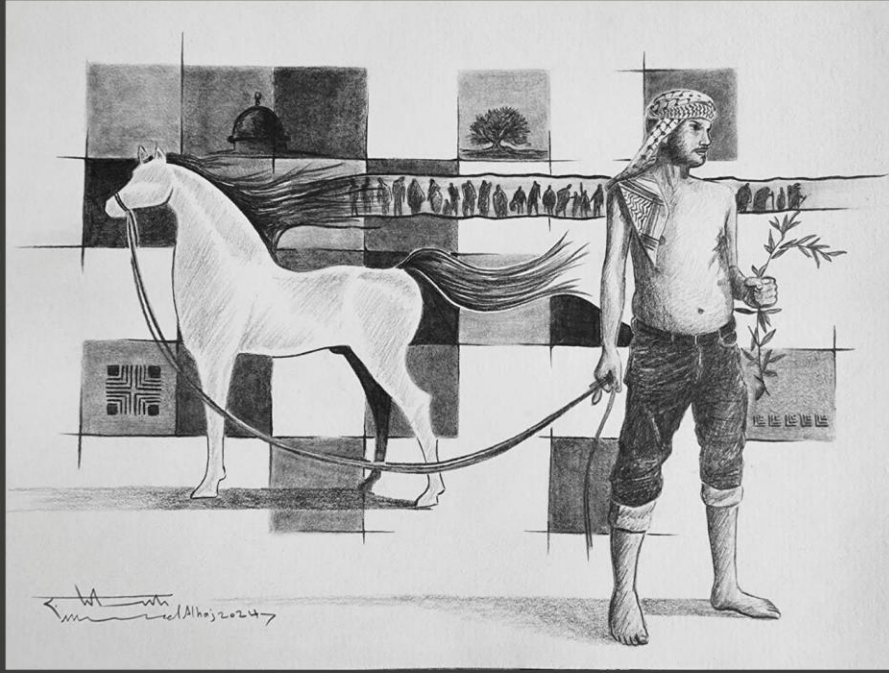
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GAZA BIENNALE ISTANBUL PAVILION

A CLOUD IN MY HAND

في يدي غيمة

a biennial born from a beach under siege



MOHAMMED ALHAJ, *ABU AL-KUFFIYEH* (2024)

Pencil on paper; also realized as a public mural drawing. Various sizes. © Mohammed Alhaj. Courtesy of the artist. Presented in the Gaza Biennial's Museum of Affinities as an 800 × 220 cm charcoal mural, executed by Furkan Akhan in collaboration with the artist. For inquiries, please contact taswir.projects@gmail.com.

SEPTEMBER 20 TO NOVEMBER 8, 2025

OPENING AT DEPO ISTANBUL, SEPTEMBER 19, 6 PM

Curated by House of Taswir in collaboration
with more than 40 artists from Gaza and associated friends.

بِسْأَلِي غَزَّةَ

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MOTAZ NAÏM, *EIN KAREM VILLAGE – PALESTINE* (2021)

Acrylic on canvas. 80 × 80 cm. © Motaz Naim. Courtesy of the artist.
This work may be available for acquisition. All proceeds support the Gaza Biennial.
For inquiries, please contact taswir.projects@gmail.com.

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MARWAN NASSAR, *SCENES FROM DAILY LIFE IN GAZA* (2024)

Acrylic on paper. 20 x 30 cm. ©Marwan Nassar. Courtesy of the artist.
Shown in color reproduction. For inquiries, please contact taswir.projects@gmail.com

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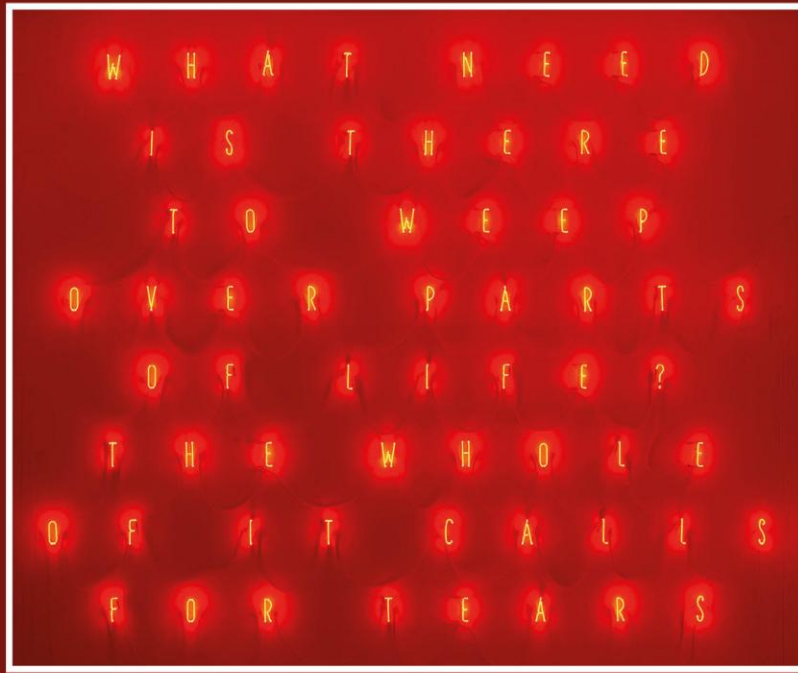
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ALFREDO JAAR. *WHAT NEED IS THERE TO WEEP OVER PARTS OF LIFE? THE WHOLE OF IT CALLS FOR TEARS* (2018)

Color print on paper. 102 x 122 cm. Unique edition donated by the artist to the Istanbul Pavilion of the Gaza Biennial. ©Alfredo Jaar. Courtesy of the artist. Available to collectors. All proceeds support the Gaza Biennial in Istanbul. For inquiries, please contact taswir.projects@gmail.com

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House of Taswir

The Istanbul Pavilion of the Gaza Biennial is curated by House of Taswir, an independent platform for artistic research and diasporic thinking. With a nomadic structure and an expansive international network, House of Taswir creates experimental constellations between contemporary art, archival practices, and anarchic epistemologies.

For this Pavilion, House of Taswir relies on an extraordinary outpouring of generosities — brought to the project by artists, scholars, editors, filmmakers, technical crews, venue hosts, installation masters, graphic designers, translators, writers, collectors, family, and friends.

We cannot thank the artists of this courageous Gaza Biennial Initiative enough: for bringing this project to our attention and for trusting us to help create an agency of power, creativity, and resilience — even in the midst of such darkness. We pray for the liberation of Palestine and for the day when we may celebrate this Biennial Initiative *together, in freedom and in joyful presence*.

We thank Addar – Center for Palestinians and Syrians, whose collective resources and inspiration gave us the audacity to embark on this challenging endeavor in the first place. We thank Depo for its generosity and hospitality. We thank the Barjeel Art Foundation, who supported us at the very beginning. We thank the Forbidden Museum Al Risan in Ramallah, for its abundant trust. And we thank the sheer unending number of individuals who have kept this Biennial alive with their personal support.

The Spirit of Generosity. An Economy of Anarchy.

This is a Biennial of spontaneous sustenance — built on friendships, coincidences, and even love. It is defiant, generous, and grounded in community. With no formal budget and by choice, it will open unfinished —with many of its works still waiting to be produced.

Shulamit Bruckstein and her team at House of Taswir will make the Pavilion their home for two months, welcoming every visitor personally. Guest will be welcome to take part in its overflowing productivity — to help realize what cannot be done alone, and to join the spirit of generosity that so profoundly defines the ethos of this Biennial's artists working and living at the brink of death in Gaza today.

Istanbul, August 2, 2025

Shulamit Bruckstein with House of Taswir, The Gaza Biennial artists, The Istanbul Pavilion Team, and all friends of this Biennial.

Press Contact

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Impressum

House of Taswir – Platform for Artistic Research and Diasporic Thinking

Berlin – Istanbul

www.taswir.org

www.gazabiennale.org

HOUSE OF TASWIR

