

*with the horse and the bee  
twirling in a field of yellow flowers*

These works developed from a personal archive of images, video clips, journal entries, postcards and other ephemera, collected over years and woven together into narratives. Through 16 mm film, slide presentations and personal letters, I explore the subjectivity of memory in a place where historical records and their corresponding landscape are routinely altered, and erased.

The title of the exhibition is taken from a journal entry created during my first visit since I was a teen to the small Israeli town on the Lebanese border, where I grew up. In 1990, at ten years old, I was one of a million people torn away from home and brought to Israel as part of a Zionist settler colonial program. Since leaving 23 years ago, I underwent a long process of detangling and unlearning Zionism: a settler colonialist movement that uses aspects of Judaism to justify land theft and genocide of indigenous Palestinians. Through a racist law—the Law of Return—I received instant citizenship to a place I had no relationship to, while millions of Palestinian families are not able to move freely on their own territory or set foot in their ancestral lands. Anti-Zionism became a guiding principle in my life and culminated in a public renunciation of my Israeli citizenship at the height of Israel's current horrific assault on Gaza, in hopes that others would follow suit.

This exhibition is a reflection on the imperfection of memory, archive, and personal interpretation, and how all three are used to manufacture a fabricated collective history.

Three 16mm film works are projected on opposing walls: *The Black Box is Orange*, *You May Laugh at Me a Little*, and *First Day at the Beach*.

*The Black Box is Orange* is a work in progress chapter from a feature length experimental film currently in production. It combines archival research, family albums, and video to create multilayered narratives about the bizarre realities of a child growing up in a highly militarized society. The title *The Black Box is Orange* refers to an object that records data indiscriminately, but also to the fact that although the colour of the contemporary data recorder is high visibility orange with flashing beacons for easier location, the object's official name is still *Black*, a contradiction that is mirrored in the film when things described are opposite to what we see in front of us.

*You May Laugh at Me a Little* is a short film about a glass blower in the old city of Hebron—a place historically known for its glass production, which dominated the city for centuries. Each family in the glass business had their own secret recipe. Last year I interviewed the last glass blower in Hebron's old city and filmed him during a regular day at his studio. Yaqoub (Abu Waheed) Al-Natsheh has been working with glass since he was a child. To maintain their practice as artists and sustain the family business after Israel carved up the West Bank with its apartheid wall, family recipes in the glass industry have been replaced by melting down recycled glass, which is collected all over Hebron.

Abu-Waheed's studio is located 50 feet from the Ibrahim mosque, a site of ongoing settler violence preceded by an Israeli controlled check point within the Palestinian city, which children and adults have to cross daily on their way to school, work, or in order to visit their families. I filmed Abu-Waheed with a friend named Fadi Abu Akleh on May 10th. When Fadi drove me back we hugged and he said "I think things are going to be ok", and the next morning his cousin, journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was murdered by an Israeli sniper while covering a military raid in Jenin in her Press uniform.

The title *You May Laugh at Me a Little* refers to an expression made by Abu-Waheed as he describes how the shape of glass he creates comes to him right as he falls asleep, in a half dreaming state. One of Abu-Waheed's glass pieces featured in the film hangs from the ceiling at the entrance to the exhibition.

*First Day at the Beach* is a 16mm portrait of my childhood beach. The film was submerged in the same salt water that appears in the portrait, until its emulsion disintegrated. Based on a false memory I had since 1991, in which I walked to the beach with my family only to get lost in a forest for hours, the image in this film disintegrates as soon as it appears, as if in a dream.

These films are accompanied by slide presentations of 35mm slide collections purchased on eBay: *Biblical Archaeology Society, 1970s Israel Vacation Slides, 1954 Jerusalem Jericho Amateur Travel and Lot of 35 Vintage Slides Palestine (Private List)*.

These slides of Biblical, touristic or archeological imagery that is often used to represent the *Holy Land* to outsiders and tourists are reshuffled and presented as a continuous stream of images. Within it I mixed a handful of my own photos: featuring the bizarre militarism prevalent in Israel's day to day, they reiterate that there will never be peaceful life in a land taken by force.

*...i was so lonely while filming my "hometown" and in full dissociation mode ~ i was alone facing a reality that somehow was made invisible to ppl around me. nothing and no one felt real. except nature! which was in full bloom, each flower made me overwhelmingly happy and emotional, so my shooting days stretched way past darkness, just before the last train home. i spent those days with the horse and the bee twirling in a field of yellow flowers, so much yellow everywhere...*