



Nearer East

Bushra Abassi presents a series of sculptural objects based on Orientalist paintings, including “Market in Jaffa” by Gustav Bauernfeind, 1848-1904; Osman Hamdi Bey’s “A Young Emir Studying”, 1841-1910; “Arabs Drinking Tea in an Interior” by John Bagnold Burgess, 1829-1897; “The Mosque of Rustem Pasha” by Rudolf Ernst, 1854-1932; “A Courtyard in the Alhambra Palace, Granada” by Adolf Seel, 1829-1907; “Overseeing Baby” by Jan-Baptist Huysmans, 1826-1906; and Ludwig Deutsch’s “A Moment of Repose”, 1855-1935. Abassi removes the protagonists from the paintings, opting to isolate architectural details and render them in three dimensional form. Although the original scene is missing, details in Abbasi’s works echo an appreciation of the painter’s aesthetics. For example, “Sabil” is based on Bauernfeind’s 81X109 cm oil on canvas work “Market in Jaffa” (1887). The painting depicts a bustling market in the port city of Jaffa, which served as a gateway to Jerusalem. Bauernfeind, who settled in Ottoman Palestine in the late 1800s, photographically captured urban architectural elements that set the background for the lively scene, which centers on vendors peddling their wares. A weaver mends a Berber rug, a merchant shows off a dagger, and women draw water from a spring, children at their side. Above them all, a woman in a white veil bakes bread among the domed rooftops, which are draped with colorful cloths. The busy activity is silenced and de-idealized by Abassi, who tries to set aside the Orientalist lens and redirect the viewer’s focus to elemental features of the local architecture. Bauernfeind was a German architect turned landscape painter, and Abassi’s intervention offers a reversal. She removes the protagonists, portrayed in the painting as exotic and backward, and renders an architectural detail — the sabil (سبيل), a small kiosk particular to Islamic architectural tradition where water is freely available to the public — as a large-scale sculpture. The context and functionality of this element is lost, and the customary becomes a show-piece.

Reduction serves as a means for overcoming classic binaries: modern and backward, active and passive, attractive exoticism and the danger of the unknown, self and other. Power relations are absent and asymmetry is reversed as the focus shifts from subject to object. Abassi’s selection of Orientalist paintings bridges between the ordinary and the extraordinary, the functional and the beautiful. In doing so, she creates a contemporary archeology of painting, reimagining the past to appreciate the present, offering the local audience an alternative visual record.


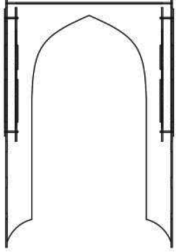
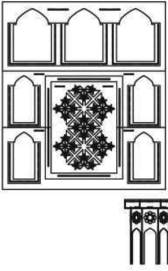
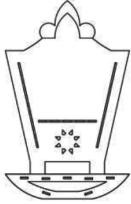
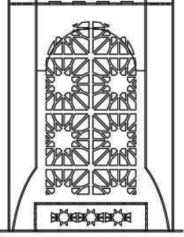
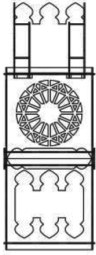
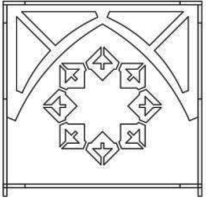
Curators: IDRIS | Livia Tagliacozzo, Barak Rubin

Bushra Abassi, b. 1990, lives and works in Jerusalem. She graduated from the Fine Arts department at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design. Abassi is a multidisciplinary artist who combines fine arts with science. Her work has been showcased by the Al-Markaz Contemporary Art Gallery in East Jerusalem, the Beit Ha’Gefen Arab-Jewish Culture Center in Haifa, and the Arab Culture Association (in collaboration with Qalandiya International Biennale). In 2021, she joined the Conservation, Restoration, and Protection of Public Art academic track at the Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem.



מזרח קרוב יותר
شرق أقرب
Nearer East

בושרא עבאסי
بشرى عباسي
Bushra Abassi

					
כופי	Kufic	כופי	סביל	Sabil	סביל
					
خزانة و سكملة	Cabinet & Skamleh	ארון וסקמלה	מהד	Mahed	מאהיד
					
شباك	Window	חלון	כרسي	Chair	ביסא
					
قوس	Arch	קשת			

אוצרים: ליביה טליאקוצו, ברק רובין
القيّمون: ليفيا تلياقوتسي, براك روبين
Curators: Livia Tagliacozzo, Barak Rubin