

Basel Abbas & Ruanne Abou-Rahme

May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth

May 21 – September 11, 2022

The exhibition *May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth* deals with questions concerning the preservation of memory. The focus lies on how people bear witness to and narrate experiences of violence, loss, displacement, and forced migration through performance. In their works, the artists continuously deal with different forms of resistance and poetic manifestation through dance, music, and language. The two spatial installations *May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth: Only sounds that tremble through us* (2020-22) and *Where the soil has been disturbed* (2022) on the first floor of the museum take up these expressive practices and offer visitors a new perspective on how experiences of loss and expressions of resistance from Arabic-speaking contexts can be communicated, archived, and preserved.

The works on display are, on the one hand, a multi-channel video and sound piece based largely on filmed footage and written texts by the artists, as well as new performances developed with the musicians Makimakkuk, Haykal, Julmud and the dancer Rima Baransi from Ramallah. Further the immersive work *May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth: Only sounds that tremble through us* (2020-22) addresses mourning and overlooked forms of resistance in everyday practices. On the other hand, the work *Where the soil has been disturbed* (2022) shows photographically captured scenes and dried plants from Palestine that symbolize loss and resilience in its various forms. The artists' archive, which consists of found video clips, their own recordings, written and spoken stories, and collected objects, forms the basis for the work. The archived memories that Abbas and Abou-Rahme have located and recorded in and around Palestine, Iraq, Syria and Yemen both in the real and digital space, contain song, dance, performance as well as expressions of protest. Together, they transmit physical manifestations of a collective memory that revolt against the erasure of marginalised communities in the Arabic-speaking context and lay claim to geographical right to exist, political self-determination and living together in community. The individual and collective memories live on in the work of Abbas and Abou-Rahme and become effective as counter-designs to colonial as well as capitalist narratives and discourses of the West.

The exhibition title *May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth* can consequently be read as a reminder or call to resist forgetting as well as the erasure of histories. Through the exhibition, the artist's work against a systematic repression supported by political systems of power.

May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth is co-commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Dia Art Foundation, New York.

Curator:
Dr. Michael Birchall,
Curator,
Migros Museum für
Gegenwartskunst

Curatorial Assistant:
Joel Spiegelberg, Trainee,
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DIA Art Foundation



Artists' Website



Instagram
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List of works

May amnesia never kiss us on the mouth: Only sounds that tremble through us
2020-22

4-channel video projection (HD, colour, sound) on partition wall metal and concrete panels, photographic gel

Performers: Rima Baransi, Haykal, Julmud, and Makimakkuk

34:34 min.

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artists. Co-commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Dia Art Foundation, New York

Where the soil has been disturbed, 2022

Archival Inkjet prints on metal and concrete panels, dried Syrian thistle and milk thistle, bricks

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artists

Public Program

Public Guided Tours

The guided tour provides a multifaceted insight into the exhibition *May amnesia ever kiss us on the mouth*.

- Thursday, June 2, 2022, 5.30 to 6.30 pm, language: German with Tasnim Baghdadi (Head of Education & Public Programs)
- Thursday, July 7, 2022, 6.30 to 7.30 pm, language: German with Joel Spiegelberg (Trainee)
- Thursday, 8. September, 2022, 6.30 to 7.30 pm, language: English, with Michael Birchall (Curator)

Artist Conversation

Conversation between Basel Abbas, Ruanne Abou-Rahme, Michael Birchall and Chloe Stead, in partnership with *frieze* magazine during Zurich Art Weekend.

- Date: Saturday, June 11, 5 – 6 pm, with following Apéro (6 – 7 pm)
- Venue: schwarzescafé (Löwenbräukunst) & livestream on migrosmuseum.ch
- Registration: migrosmuseum.ch
- Language: English
- Admission: This event is free of charge

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More program: www.migrosmuseum.ch