

My Dreams Have Destroyed My Life. Some Thoughts on Pain
Al Fadhil & Aissa Deebi

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29 April - 26 June, 2011

Fri - Sun, 2-6 PM and by appointment

Opening: Thursday 28 April, 2011 8PM**Round Table discussion *Al Tahrir: The Day After*, 1 May, 2011 3PM**

Art Laboratory Berlin is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition project *Artists in Dialog: My Dreams Have Destroyed My Life. Some Thoughts on Pain* on 28 April. On May 1 at 3PM there will be a round table discussion of the exhibition as well as the situation of cultural politics in the Middle East in the wake of the this year's Arab Awakening.

The exhibition, the third in our ongoing series *Artists in Dialog*, is a discursive dialog between the Iraqi-Swiss artist Al Fadhil and the Palestinian-American artist Aissa Deebi, and explores the complex ties between the personal and the political in the theme of loss.



Al Fadhil, *Saddam Hussein with the Artist's Father, March, 26 1983*, 2011

My Dreams Have Destroyed My Life. Some Thoughts on Pain was first conceived by the artists during a common artist residency in Taiwan. Both artists had lost brothers in respective conflicts in their countries of origin. Al Fadhil has lost two brothers to the wars in Iraq. One brother died in the Iran-Iraq war. Fadhil's father, as the parent of a 'martyr,' was granted an audience with the dictator Saddam Hussein, which was documented with a photograph.

Fadhil's younger brother Ahmed was killed during the civil war that followed the American invasion of Iraq. After his death, Fadhil was contacted by Jason Sagebiel, an American soldier who had known Ahmed. Sagebiel is also a musician, who learned to play the traditional Arabic Oud during his stay in the city of Kut, Iraq, and composed a musical homage. Fadhil will include a series of documentations, the photographs of his father with Saddam Hussein, Sagebiel's song, and photographs of the family home by his younger brother Ahmed in the exhibition.

Aissa Deebi's younger brother Nasim died in Israeli police custody in 1999. The medical report labeled the death a suicide, something the artist and his family dispute. Deebi's works in the exhibition will trace his and his brother's connection to the land they grew up in. A series of holographic photographs will depict the route from Deebi's childhood home near Haifa to the coast, a route Deebi and his brother often took together when they were younger. The superimposition of geography, memory and historical space come together in Deebi's installation to form a palimpsest of the personal and the political.

The exhibition, a dialog of remembrance, focuses on both the artists' personal experience of loss and the cultural aspects of mourning and grief: Fadhil comes from a Shiite Iraqi family, whilst Deebi is Greek Orthodox. Yet all three deaths have taken place within the political and historical context of conflict.

Al Fadhil is an artist working in multimedia and performance, and is the initiator of the project 'Iraq Pavilion'. He is based in Lugano and Berlin. Aissa Deebi is a new media artist and currently an Assistant professor at the American University in Cairo



Aissa Deebi, *Fish Hill*, flip photography, digital print, 2011

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