

Hosted by Mana Contemporary's
Middle East Center for the Arts (MECA),
Umm El-Fahem Art Gallery presents:

Textile – Territory – Text

A group exhibition which examines concepts of identity, belonging, abjection, and exile in contemporary textile art works by Middle Eastern artists.

September 25, 2016 – February 25, 2017



Amira Ziyani, *Untitled*, 2016

Public reception: September 25, 2016, from 1PM – 6PM

JERSEY CITY, NJ, August 25, 2016—Mana Contemporary is pleased to present *Textile – Territory – Text*, a group exhibition curated by Irena Gordon. It is comprised of video installations, animation, painting, photography, and sculpture. It will be exhibited in 2017 at the Umm El-Fahem Art Gallery in a larger format. The exhibition is in the Middle East Center for the Arts (MECA) gallery, situated on Mana's third floor.

Cloth and clothing embody our being in the world not just in the present, but throughout the passing of time. They wrap our existence in every passing moment, and outlive us. Textile is embedded in the manner in which we perceive ourselves and the Other; the feminine and the masculine; the private and the public. It holds both decorative and sensual imagery, as well as traditional and groundbreaking technological development. By being so daily and intimate—yet symbolic and grand—textile presents issues of gender, belonging, exclusion, exaltation, abjection, purity, and sanctity.

Textile – Territory – Text is presented by MANA Contemporary in collaboration with Umm El-Fahem Art Gallery, shown in the Middle East Center for the Arts (MECA) space. The exhibition examines ways in which artists in Israel today use textile for confronting issues of identity, language, and boundaries of body and space. Textile in art presents a multiplicity, one that evades definition, and at the same time, continues to point back to its sources, processes, and techniques. The exhibition takes in this multiplicity and through it, presents the encoding of social norms, of historical and contemporary conflicts, of personal and collective narratives—always political, always poetic.

Featuring work by: Etti Abergel, Andi Arnovitz, Asad Azi, Hila Lulu Lin Farah Kufir Birim, Fatma Shanan Dery, Mervat Essa, Leor Grady, Buthina Milhem, Yoav Raban, Farid Abu Shakra, Tal Shoshan, Nevet Yitzhak, Amira Ziyani

These contemporary works of art relate to a reality of immigration and uprootedness; of exile and remembrance; of beauty and longing, of silenced memories and surging violence. They construct signs and maps of images in space while undermining them, showing their sustainability and fragility.

About MECA (Middle East Center for the Arts)

Conceived as a cultural hub for artists, activists, and scholars, MECA's diverse initiatives serve as mechanisms for discourse and collaboration. It is an international foundation that presents a broad range of programs that include exhibitions, workshops, lectures, and film screenings. In 2015, the center launched an artist residency program. By working directly with creative practitioners and institutions from the Middle East, MECA provides an inspiring epicenter for cultural exchange.

About Umm El-Fahem Art Gallery

The Umm el-Fahem Art Gallery was founded in 1996, on the initiative of local residents and artists who wanted to bring quality contemporary art to the city and its population and to exhibit original Arab and Palestinian art. With a lack of other art galleries in the Arab sector in Israel, the gallery has become an important social and cultural meeting place. Contemporary art exhibits, symposiums, creative workshops and seminars have drawn large audiences and have established the gallery as an important center in the local and international culture scene.

The gallery operates under the auspices of the El-Sabar Association, with a membership that includes intellectual and cultural figures from the entire Wadi Ara region. The association is a non profit organization and is supported by funds from the Ministry of Education of the State of Israel, the local municipality, various foundations, private donations and contributions from local residents. For more information, visit ummelfahemgallery.org

About Mana Contemporary

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is a leading arts destination dedicated to celebrating the creative process. Headquartered in a former tobacco warehouse in Jersey City, Mana unites artists' studios, exhibition spaces, and ancillary services in a single location, facilitating conversation and collaboration among its burgeoning creative community. Together with its sister campuses in Chicago and Miami, Mana serves as a lively center for all members of the art world. Mana Contemporary is home to the Richard Meier Model Museum, Ayn Foundation, the International Center of Photography, The Florence Academy of Art, Gary Lichtenstein Editions, Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation, Armitage Gone! Dance, Keating Foundry, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Mana Urban Arts Project, and many others. For additional information, please visit manacontemporary.com.