

If I must die you must live

13 oktober - 21 januari 2024

'AUTO VITESSE' Eindhoven



Henk Visch Right of Speech 1985, wood paint H 220 cm



International Court of Justice APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE IN THE GAZA STRIP (SOUTH AFRICA v. ISRAEL) 26 januari 2024, The Hague, 50 min video



Henk Visch
The Bell,
 2024
 Metal, bronze
 H 125 cm

Mahmoud Darwish
 Poem: *Identity Card*, 1964



Jos van der Sommen
De Orientatie, 2016 pencil
on paper
H 24 x 32 cm



Zhao Yan Bin
Las Meninas, 2014 pencil on paper on
wood H 90 x 60 cm

Sliman Mansour *Memory of
Places*, 2009 photo print
H 70 x 60 cm





Henk Visch

Enigma of the Western World, 2021, bronze mixed media
H 186 cm



Henk Visch

The Poem and the Poet, 2022, metal
bronze H 175 x 100 x 72 cm

Henk Visch
It all comes back, 1998 bronze H 130



**If I must die,
you must live
to tell my story
to sell my things
to buy a piece of cloth
and some strings,
(make it white with a long tail)
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza
while looking heaven in the eye
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze--
and bid no one farewell
not even to his flesh
not even to himself--
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up
above
and thinks for a moment an angel is there
bringing back love
If I must die
let it bring hope
let it be a tale**

**If I must die
Refaat Alareer**

Refaat Alareer Poem 2011: *If I must die you must live*



Henk Visch

On the road home I became someone else, 2023 wood, mixed media



Teuny Tukker *No choice*,
1997 ink on paper H 44 x 36
cm

Sliman Mansour

I will survive, 2016 photo print
H 67 x 57 cm





Paul de Reus *no title*, 2016
wood, paint H 18 x 40 cm



Henk Visch
*Did he call my name when they hit
him?*, 2018 Glass, copper, acryl
H 83 cm

Henk Visch
*Names
(Miralde)*,
2007 polyester
H 40 cm





**Jimmie
Durham**
Camera
1993



Guillaume Bijl *Sorry*, 2018 metaal, polyester H 20 cm

Victor Racatau
The Sky Gate, 2009
oil paint on
wood H 18 x 15 cm



Henk Visch

Enemies of the third dimension (Jane), 2010

metal, paint

H 126 cm



T. Zoom 1992 Oil paint on canvas H 30 x 40 cm

Stephan Körperl
Kopenhagen, 1996
photo: Dorothee
Albrecht
H 9 x 14 cm

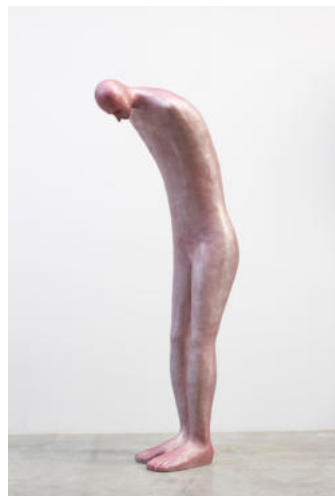


Wolfgang Tillmans
Tomatoes, 2003
C-Print
H 30, 5 x 40, 5 cm



Hamid Sulaiman *Freedom hospital*, 2016
ink, pencil on paper H 50 x 40 cm

Henk Visch
The wounded artist 2011
Aluminium, acrylic
H 220



Poetry of Resistance

The Palestinian poets and writers have opened up an expansive vista on the suffering and losses within their communities. They revolutionized Palestinian literature, saving their hopes and collective memories, voice their identity, reclaiming their loss and dispossession, resurrect it from oblivion, rejecting the nightmare.

1917-

November 2, Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour had a letter delivered to Lord Rothschild, leader of the British Jewish Community, London: "On behalf of His Majesty's Government (...) to establish in Palestine the National Home for the Jewish people". This in sympathy with the "Jewish Zionist aspirations" as its co-authors N. Sokolov and C. Weizmann had formulated it. The troops of Field Marshal *Allenby entered Gaza*, that very day. December 11, Allenby walked through the Jaffa Gate, demanding the surrender of Jerusalem. The British installed the *Occupied Enemy Territories Administration*, by which Palestine became a colony under British military rule.

1919-

Jews were given political status in their envisioned *National Home* and "in any other country". The foreign office in London, preparing for the Peace Conference in Paris, February 1919 wrote "creating such political, economic and moral conditions that will increase the Jewish population, so that in accordance with the principles of democracy it may develop into a Jewish Commonwealth". The letter turned Balfour Declaration, incorporated in the *Paris Peace Deal*, gave biblical status to the pre-Zionist Jewish state. A religious claim that made the Arab rights of ownership and rights of birth vanish into that unfathomable phrase for a ghost of the past: the Jewish Zionist aspirations. The Arab inhabitants of Palestine knew nothing. The Declaration speaks about "civil and religious rights" for the Arabs, rights without any legal meaning. What it meant: denial of political rights to Arabs. A denial never refuted.

1948-

The *Nakba* brought the definitive loss of territory, the right of self-determination unfulfilled. The decimation of the literary infrastructure

was unprecedented: entire institutions, printing presses, periodicals, bookshops, libraries, cultural organizations and associations, literary clubs and cafés were destroyed, looted, plundered, occupied and forcibly vacated. *418 villages* laid in ruins, its communities massacred. Many literary and cultural figures were forced to flee, together with 750,000 civilians, have since been stranded in refugee camps in Arab countries.

1950-

The Jewish state installed an *Apartheid system*, legalizing silencing Palestinian voices. The theft of more than 80,000 Arabic and foreign writings, publications, manuscripts, photographs and archives, legalized through the *Absentee Property Law* (1950) added tens of thousands of items, pulled out of the Palestinian heritage, to the Jewish National – and University Library. Palestinians began to write down their memories of burned down houses, ruined gardens and family members lost, often publicized decades later: Edward Said, Adel Manna, Fadwa Turqan, Ghada Karmi a.o.

1967-

The '67 *War* turned Palestine into a military controlled territory. Palestinian poets understood the necessity to legitimate the cause of their people. Mahmoud Darwish, Samih Al-Qassam, Fadwa Tuqan became the great Palestinian *resistance poets*, together with the novelist Ghassan Kanafani, assassinated 8 July 1972 Beirut, and cartoonist Naji al-Ali, assassinated 29 August 1987, London. Naji the creator of Handala, icon of the Palestinian child with his hands on his back, watching the massacres, resurfacing on every wall left standing.

1980-

The Jerusalem Law, called the city the complete and united capital of Israel, dispossessed and displaced Palestinians. Sheik Jarrah, Palestinian Quarter in Jerusalem became the intellectual center of resistance, led by the Al-Kurd family: activist Muna and her brother the poet Mohammed al-Kurd being its symbols. Settlements for Zionists on the West Bank, the

Golan Heights and Jerusalem, increased. On December 6, 2017, president Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and the Golan Heights as Israeli territory.

1982-

September 19, french writer *Jean Genet* entered the Palestian Camp of *Chatila* and looked at the horrors of the massacre that took place from September 16-18. Back in Beirut he wrote: “Four hours in Shatila. Here in these ruins of Shatila, there is nothing left. Some old women, mute, quickly closed on a door where a white cloth is nailed.” The destruction of the Palestinian Research Center in Beirut, where the archive was housed of Palestinian historical material, took place from September 21-29.

2002-

The 9 m high *Separation Barrier* (713 km long) built inside the West Bank subjects the lives of 100,000 Palestinians to a rigid permit-regime, controlled by the Israeli Civil Administration (1981). ICA, subordinate to the Israeli military and Shin Bet (security agency), legalized the dispossession and relocation of West Bank Palestinians, building 522 roadblocks and checkpoints, demolishing houses, capturing water sources. The *Freedom Theatre of Jenin*, founded in 1987 for the traumatized children of the Jenin Refugee Camp, is an important cultural center. It was bulldozed in 2002, students being killed, but reestablished in 2006 to pick up on cultural resistance through popular culture, performance, film and art. Actors, writers, musicians, film directors and poets organize touring programs. 2011 April 4, Juliano Mer Khamis, director, was assassinated. On 12 and 13 December 2023 the theater was ransacked by Israeli soldiers, directors arrested. Jenin was declared a closed military zone.

2006-2024

The 200-ton bombs dropped on *Gaza* in 2006, 2007, 2008/9, 2012, 2014, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023/4 destroyed residential buildings, schools, administrative institutions, universities, museums, production studios, hospitals, publishing houses, cultural centers and libraries. The killing of 13 poets/writers along with their families, in less than 8 weeks, was the beginning of daily massacres and mass graves:

Omar Abu Shaweesh (October 7), Said al-Dahshan (October 11), Yusuf Dawas (October 14), Abdullah al-Aqad (October 16), Jihad al-Masri (October 17), Heba Abu Nada (October 20), Abdul Karim Hashash (October 23) Inas al-Saqa (late October), Shahadad al-Buhbahan (November 6), Mustafa al-Sawwaf (November 18), Nour al-Din Hajjaj (December 2), Refaat Alareer (December 6), Saleem al-Naffar (December 7).

Mosab Abu Toha fled to Egypt after his house and public library were bombed into ruins. The loss is unforgettable, as *Refaat Alareer* wrote in his poem from 2011 and published on Instagram a month before he was killed on December 4, 2023 *If I must die you must live to tell the story...*

Henk Visch/ Irene Veenstra
Eindhoven, March 2024