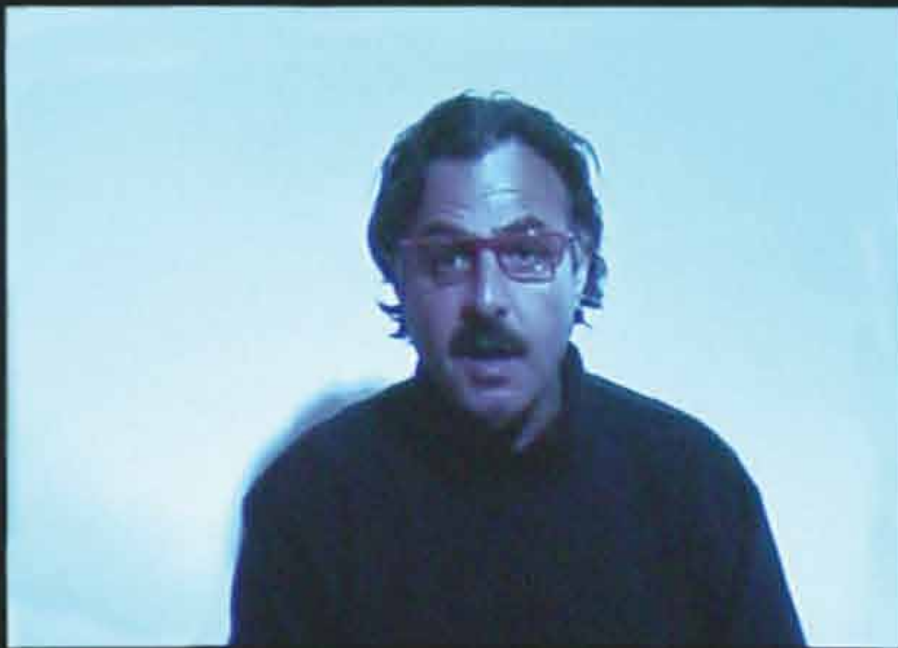


THE PALESTINIAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND HUMANKIND

NEWSLETTER
Summer 2011



Review is an exhibition in three parts. Each part is the most recent outcome of a project that Khalil Rabah has been working on for a long time. The exhibition is made entirely of new work.

Find the labels for the different sections of the exhibition. Write down the title of each of the three parts in this box:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Khalil Rabah **Review**

**EDUCATIONAL
WORKSHEET**

b. BEIRUT ART CENTER
مركز بيروت للفن

In this Issue

In this Issue is based on the newsletter of The Palestinian Museum of History and Humankind. The different parts of the installation are related to different parts of the newsletter. We will take all the elements one-by-one to look at how the different parts are related.

Look at the granite sign and the neon. Where else can you see the same text?

Where else could you imagine seeing a granite sign like this?

Why do you think it is presented in this way?

i Installation is a type of art work that is made especially for the site where you see it. It is three-dimensional and designed to transform how you see and experience a space.



In this Issue presents paintings. What are these paintings of?

The artist is trying to give the impression that the newsletter is in storage. What elements in the installation give this impression?

- 1.
- 2.

Why do you think Khalil Rabah has chosen to present different aspects of the newsletter in so many different media and formats?

i A **MUSEUM** is a building in which objects of historical, cultural or artistic value are stored. These artefacts are then made available for the public to see in either permanent or temporary exhibitions.
Oxford English Dictionary



The Imaginary and Reality

An important part of Khalil Rabah's work is the play between the imaginary and reality. Sometimes this can be confusing, and that is an important part of the work: to confuse the viewer.

First, read the text from the Summer 2011 issue of the newsletter that is displayed in the paintings and distributed in the little cardboard boxes. Then, discuss the following points:

The Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind was created by Khalil Rabah. It has a newsletter - but does that mean it is a real museum? The Museum has also existed on a physical site in Athens, for example - does that mean it is a real museum?

Why is it important for a country or a city to have a museum?

Why would an artist create an imaginary museum about Palestine?

Another Geography

Another Geography is based on the 3rd Riwaq Biennial, which was held in 2009. The Riwaq Biennial is an institution founded by Khalil Rabah. Unlike most biennials, Riwaq did not have a large central exhibition featuring numerous artists or representing different countries. Instead it organised a series of visits to the different villages looked after by Riwaq, the architectural organisation that the biennial is named after.



How many villages was the Riwaq Biennial held in?

How is this different from how biennials are usually organised?

Why do you think the postcards are displayed that way in the room? (NB Think about the title of the installation)

Why do you think the artist wants you to take postcards?

What do you think will happen to this installation as the exhibition continues?

Each type of postcard forms a little islands that is sometimes connected and at other times disconnected other islands of postcards. Why do you think the artist has chosen to do this in the installation? (NB Look at the map)

The Arabic title of this work is *mishwar* meaning a walk. To experience the installation, you have to walk through it. Why is this interesting in the context of the Riwaq Biennial?

i The Riwaq Biennial is named after the RIWAQ, an organisation based in Palestine dedicated to preserving Palestinian architectural heritage in.



i A BIENNIAL is an exhibition of contemporary art held every two years in a specific city. The first 'biennale' was held in Venice in 1895 and has continued ever since. Since then, biennials have spread throughout the world: the idea of the biennial has been globalised.



Founding Institutions

One feature of this exhibition are two institutions founded by Khalil Rabah - The Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind and the Riwaq Biennial. Why the artist has founded these institutions is closely related to the history of Palestine. By founding institutions, Khalil Rabah manages to show how impossible such institutions are: he uses the mechanics of the art world to show an absence stemming from the history of Palestine.

Is it necessary to construct a national identity, especially in the face of an occupation that denies such an identity?

How do artistic institutions help construct this national identity?

Two Exhibitions



Two Exhibitions presents three pairs of paintings. The paintings are made after photographs which document an exhibition of Khalil Rabah's work. The exhibition they are documenting was called *Art Exhibition: Readymade Representations* and it was itself a collection of paintings which document exhibitions in Palestine or of Palestinian art.

The red wall shows the paintings that make up *Art Exhibition: Readymade Representations*. How many categories of paintings are there?

Are these real or imaginary categories of paintings?

Look at the large paintings exhibited in pairs. How many exhibitions does one painting document?

Are the paintings identical?

What is the effect of displaying pairs of paintings next to each other?

i The 'Readymade' is an artistic term coined by Marcel Duchamp. The idea is to present objects that are not disguised, though often changed in some way. In this way, the 'real world' enters the art gallery. The most famous example was Duchamp's *Fountain* which was a urinal with the words "R. Mutt" written on it.



Originality

None of the paintings in this exhibition were painted by Khalil Rabah. All of them were commissioned by Khalil and completed by other painters who used photographs as sources. The newsletter that is presented in *In this Issue* has also been 'translated' into a series of paintings.

Does it matter that Khalil Rabah didn't paint the paintings himself?

Is there a hierarchy of artistic medium in your mind? Is painting more important than video art, for example?