

# Walid Raad

Organized by Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator, The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, with Katerina Stathopoulou, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Photography.

MoMA presents the first comprehensive American survey of the artist Walid Raad (b. 1967, Lebanon), whose work in the last 25 years investigates distinctions between fact and fiction, and the ways in which we represent, remember, and make sense of history. The exhibition brings together over 20 bodies of work across various mediums—including photography, video, sculpture, and performance—identifying Raad as a pivotal figure in contemporary art. Dedicated to exploring the veracity of archives and photographic documents in the public realm, the role of memory and narrative within discourses of conflict, and the construction of histories of art in the Arab world, Raad's work is informed by his upbringing in Lebanon during the civil war (1975–90), and by the socioeconomic and military policies that have shaped the Middle East in the past few decades.

The exhibition focuses on two of the artist's long-term projects: The Atlas Group (1989–2004) and Scratching on things I could disavow (2007–ongoing). Under the rubric of The Atlas Group, a 15-year project exploring the contemporary history of Lebanon, Raad produced fictionalized photographs, videotapes, notebooks, and lectures that related to real events and authentic research in audio, film, and photographic archives in Lebanon and elsewhere. Raad's recent work has expanded to address the Middle East region at large. His current ongoing project, Scratching on things I could disavow, examines the recent emergence in the Arab world of new infrastructure for the visual arts—comprised of art fairs, biennials, museums, and galleries—alongside the geopolitical, economic, and military conflicts that have consumed the

region in the past few decades. The exhibition also includes a series of lecture-performances; Raad will perform in MoMA's Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atrium up to five times a week for the duration of the exhibition.

Walid Raad was born in 1967 in Chbanieh, Lebanon. In 1983, he left Beirut for the United States, where he attended high school and college. Raad enrolled at the Rochester Institute of Technology, where he studied photography and Middle Eastern studies and earned his PhD in visual and cultural studies from the University of Rochester. Raad frequently returns to Lebanon, and is deeply involved in the artistic community there. He currently lives in New York, and has been an Associate Professor of Art at The Cooper Union since 2002. Recent exhibitions of Raad's work in Europe have been met with enthusiasm and critical accolades. Solo exhibitions have been held at Museo Madre, Naples (2014), Carré d'Art, Nîmes (2014), the Louvre, Paris (2013), Hasselblad Foundation, Gothenburg, (2011), Kunsthalle Zürich (2011), Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010), and Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2006)

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated 192 - page scholarly publication with a major essay by the exhibition curator Eva Respini, and contributions by Finbarr Barry Flood and Walid Raad, that surveys nearly three decades of Raad's practice in a variety of mediums. Essays by the exhibition curator Eva Respini and scholar Finbarr Barry Flood place Raad's art in the international context of contemporary art making, and a special eighteen - page visual contribution by Raad provides insight into his practice.

The exhibition will travel to the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, February 24–May 30, 2016, and to the Museo Jumex, Mexico City, October 13, 2016–January 14, 2017.

The exhibition is made possible by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Jill and Peter Kraus Endowed Fund for Contemporary Exhibitions, MoMA's Wallis Annenberg Fund for Innovation in Contemporary Art through the Annenberg Foundation, and The Contemporary Arts Council of The Museum of Modern Art.

Major support is provided by Oya Eczacıbaşı; A. Huda and Samia Farouki; and by Elham and Tony Salamé, Aïshti Foundation Beirut.

With generous funding from Basil and Raghida Rahim; Plurimi Foundation, Maya and Ramzy Rasamny; Rana Sadik and Samer Younis; and an anonymous donor.

Research and travel support was provided by The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art.

MoMA Audio+ is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Pictured, from top: Walid Raad. Let's be honest, the weather helped\_Saudi Arabia. 1998/2006. Pigmented inkjet print, 18 7/16 x 28 1/2" (46.8 x 72.4 cm). Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T.B. Walker Acquisition Fund, 2007. © 2015 Walid Raad; Walid Raad. Scratching on things I could disavow: Walkthrough. 2011. Performance, Kustenfestivaldesarts, Les Halles de Schaerbeek, Brussels, 2011. Photo © Piet Janssens

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Press Preview: Wednesday, October 7, 2015 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

Exhibition viewing 11:30 a.m.

Conversation with the Curator in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2

The Museum of Modern Art MoMA

11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019

**Hours:**

Saturday through Thursday, 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

**Museum admission:**

\$25 adults; \$18 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$14 full-time students with current I.D. Free, members and children 16 and under