



[Sign in](#) | [Register](#) | [Subscribe](#)

[REVIEWS](#) [NEWS](#) [OPINION](#) [FEATURES](#) [PREVIEWS](#) [SEARCH](#)

## POWER 100

See this in...  
Copenhagen  
*ArtReview's pick of shows to see in the Danish capital*

The Strip:  
Hanneriina Moisseinen  
*From ArtReview September issue*  
By Paul Gravett

Martin Herbert's pick of shows this September  
By Martin Herbert

*Like a Moth to a Flame*  
*An exhibition curated by CCS Bard's Tom Eccles and ArtReview/ArtReview Asia's Mark Rappolt with Liam Gillick for OGR Torino and Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo*

Here's where *ArtReview Asia* plans to be this summer  
*Berlin, Tokyo, Canberra, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Osaka, Manila, Yokohama and Sapporo*  
By Nirmala Devi

PREVIEW

# The Venice Questionnaire #3: Bashir Makhoul

By [ArtReview](#)

**A**rtReview sent a questionnaire to a selection of the artists exhibiting in various national pavilions of the Venice Biennale, the responses to which will be published over the coming days. Bashir Makhoul and Aissa Deebi are representing Palestine with Makhoul speaking for the pair. The pavilion is at Convento Ss. Cosma & Damiano, Campo S. Cosmo, Giudecca Palanca.

### **What can you tell us about your plans for Venice?**

*Otherwise Occupied* is an exhibition of Palestinian artists organized by al Hoash as part of the Collateral Events of the Biennale. Curated by Bruce Ferguson and Rawan Sharaf, the exhibition features two artists; myself and Aissa Deebi. We were both born inside the 1948 borders, in the margins of another state in our homeland, and outside the occupied West Bank and the centres of contemporary Palestinian culture. Though we have both emigrated to become citizens of other states, we still think of ourselves as Palestinians and are in continuous search of new ways to imagine the nation from a distance.

I will be occupying the garden of the Liceo Artistico Statale di Venezia with thousands of cardboard box houses. The occupation will be partly made by members of the public during the exhibition, who can view the growing cardboard shanty-town but will also be able to construct their own house from a stack of flat boxes. This piece is a further exploration of my largescale installation *Enter Ghost Exit Ghost*, which consists of a full-sized, interior maze and a large cardboard model of an Arab town or refugee camp. That questioned the kinds of spaces that have emerged in sites of conflict and in the urban margins of globalization. This piece will be emphasizing the performative aspects of occupation – the act of getting there and of filling the space. Aissa will show *The Trial*, a two-channel installation looped HD video which is accompanied by 24 drawings. The video shows a reenactment in English of a 1973 speech by Daoud Turki at the Haifa courthouse, when he was a defendant during a military trial. Turki, a Palestinian-Arab citizen of Israel, had been arrested by the Israeli military with four other members of the 'Red Front' and charged with espionage and collaboration with the enemy. In this speech, Turki tried to advance an idea against the paranoid Zionist fantasy of conflict towards a larger idea of a socialist class struggle, proclaiming solidarity with "...all workers, peasants and those persecuted in Israel society." The brilliance of his rhetoric and the fullness of his reasoned argument, in which he criticizes Zionism for pitting Jews against Arabs, is caught as an address almost from Franz Kafka's *The Trial* which echoes throughout as the tone of an idealist caught in the jaws of the heinous militaristic state.

### **Are you approaching the show in a different way to how you would with a 'normal' exhibition?**

We see Venice as a special event, particularly because of its international appeal. In his curatorial statement in the accompanying publication, *Otherwise Occupied*, Bruce Ferguson states: 'In *Otherwise Occupied*, we see two artists who are valiantly and successfully making works of art whose claims are modest, even slightly humorous, to declare a small territory that is both ironic and serious at the same time. The attempt is to make art in a way that is agnostic on the surface and yet persuasive. Both artists understand that these new limitations, as described above, on the making of art can be ironically and potentially expansive, despite the restrictions. It is as though they understand that Sisyphean activity is in itself a kind of progress of knowledge or consciousness, if not of territory and power. In this way, they identify with Camus' modern interpretation of the ancient myth. The "enchanted rock" which Zeus devised is maddening and elusive, and the task is never complete as a result, but in an absurd world, in Camus' terms, it is as though the "true struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart." Just as in the myth of Scheherazade, there is hope (however mitigated and perhaps false) in a kind of "constant revolt" which plays itself out incrementally and without closure – incompletely. The protagonist in either story is an absurd figure at first glance but it may be that only an absurd figure can overcome subjugation and retain the power of dignity as a legitimate hero; it is perhaps contradictorily the progressive protagonist – the traditional hero or heroine -- who can take on that mantle only as a result of abuses of power.'

**What does it mean to 'represent' Palestine? Do you find it an honour or problematic?**

The question of representation is often fraught with complexities. It is almost impossible to represent a total nation. The idea of representing Palestine will always fall short, not only because of the complexity of representation in general but also because of the dispersal of the Palestinians, which in turn carries plurality in their identities. This means that it is doubly difficult and, in my view, it is impossible. This exhibition was never conceived in order to represent Palestine *per se*. Instead, it evokes issues around the Palestinians and how they can be represented.

**What audience are you addressing with the work? The masses of artist peers, gallerists, curators and critics concentrated around the opening or the general public who come through over the following months?**

We are addressing diverse groups of people, including specialists in the field as well as the general public and we put great emphasis on the experiential part of the exhibition which should operate on the human level.

**You'll no doubt be very busy, but what else are you looking forward to seeing?**

Both of us, and the curators, are very much looking forward to joining this festive opportunity to look at smaller emerging nations with that have a big global impact and seeing how they are able to deal with their immediate issues. Furthermore, we are keen to see how more powerful nations with economic force choose to represent this sense of dominance. Finally, we are interested to see how countries with long civilisations are able to draw upon their past culture in a contemporary, globalized art scene.

## RELATED

The Venice Questionnaire #1: Jesper Just

The Venice Questionnaire #4: Mathias Poledna

The Venice Questionnaire #2: Tavares Strachan

The Venice Questionnaire #5: Richard Mosse

ArtReview Preview

Tweet

Like 0

## RECENT

Martin Herbert's pick of summer shows

*in Münster, Yokohama, Brussels, London, Oslo, Munich, Paris, Berlin, Paris and Venice*

By Martin Herbert

---

ArtReview Asia's pick of must see exhibitions this summer – part I

*in Seoul, Tasmania, Beijing, Mumbai, Manchester, Tokyo, Istanbul and Shanghai*

By Nirmala Devi

---

ArtReview Asia Xiàn Chǎng prizewinner

*selected from 25 artists featured in ArtReview Asia's curated project for West Bund Art and Design, Shanghai*

---

TONIGHT: Gabriel Kuri

*in conversation with Andrew Renton, 7pm – all welcome*

---

The Venice Questionnaire #30 – Nika Autor and Andreja Hribernik

*The artist and curator for Slovenia on news media, video fragments and speedboating to Venice*

---

The Venice Questionnaire #28 – Daehyung Lee

*The curator of the Korean Pavilion on representing his cross-generational show and the work of Mr K, Cody Choi and Lee Wan*

---

Ten shows to see

*in Venice, London, Dublin, Rome, Brussels, Paris, Los Angeles, Berlin and New York*

By Martin Herbert

---

Salon Suisse 2017: ATARAXIA

*Pro Helvetia and RAW Material Company present a series of talks and events during Venice Biennale 2017*

---

[SUBSCRIBE](#) | [ABOUT US](#) | [DISTRIBUTORS](#) | [ADVERTISE](#) |  
[NEWSLETTER](#) | [CAREERS](#) | [FAQ](#)

[CONTACT](#)

© 2017 ArtReview  
Made by Grandad