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## Alfred Tarazi | 'Dear Madness...'

written by India Stoughton



Blurring the lines between history and fiction, and memory and imagination, Alfred Tarazi's latest solo exhibition explores a reality "lived and forgotten". Featuring characters, scenes, conversations and events that unfurled in "a Lebanon of the mind", it interrogates the fallibility of memory and the experience of loss. Born in 1980, Tarazi interrogates Lebanon's history in his work. In 'Dear Madness...' he pairs large-scale installations with a lengthy, poetic text reflecting on the period between New Year's Day of 2005 and New Year's Day of 2006, exploring his personal relationships and experiences, set against a backdrop of violence and political turmoil.



An overarching wooden structure transforms the gallery into a cave-like space, its walls plastered with dramatic black-and-white images. A towering installation of metal captures the ruins of skyscrapers, an annotated map of Beirut covers one wall and a life-size sculpture of a body lies on a pile of breeze blocks, surrounded by a crowd of tiny misshapen clay figures, each a few inches high and resembling a prehistoric artefact. The works come to life in the context of Tarazi's writing, a diary of sorts, covering the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and its aftermath in a poetic, abstract series of short entries. It's a powerful and cleverly immersive approach.

Galerie Janine Rubeiz

October 11 to November 24

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Featured Image: The Mortuary: 4,30×4,30×2,5m: wood + giclee prints

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*by* India Stoughton

India Stoughton graduated from the University of Edinburgh with an MA in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies. During her course she spent a semester studying in Damascus, where she developed a deep interest in Syrian, Lebanese and Iraqi art and culture. Having traveled extensively in the Middle East, spending time in Morocco, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Qatar, as well as Syria, she is currently based in Lebanon, where she works as an art and culture reporter.

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