

RULA HALAWANI (PALESTINE, B. 1964)

As a native of occupied East Jerusalem, Rula Halawani began her artistic career by registering the difficulties of living under a protracted political conflict. Halawani's early works capture the many aspects of this reality, from the tedious moments of attempting to perform daily tasks under the restrictions of military occupation to the cyclical onset of violent siege that transforms Palestinian neighbourhoods, towns, and cities into overnight war zones.

After several years of photographing the stark imagery that defines the everyday lives of Palestinians, Halawani increasingly focused on the spatial implications of the occupation by documenting its built environments and structures: the meticulous system of architecture that serves as one of its central mechanisms. Recently, she has turned her lens towards the traces of lives and history that can still be found in often overlooked details, whether in the material culture of Palestinian society or the transformed landscapes of her childhood.

Born in 1964, Rula Halawani holds a Bachelor of Art degree in Advanced Photography from the University of Saskatchewan in Canada (1989); and a Master of Art degree in Photographic Studies from the University of Westminster, London (2001). Halawani is based in Jerusalem, where, in addition to her artistic practice, she was the founding director and an associate professor of the Photography program at Birzeit University.

Halawani's exhibitions include the Guangdong Museum of Art, China (2021); Palestinian Museum, Birzeit (2019, 2017); American University Museum, Washington DC, USA (2018); Canadian War Museum, Ottawa (2017); Mediterranean Women Forum, Jerez de la Frontera, Cádiz (2017); The Hagop Kevorkian Center, New York (2016), National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington DC (2016); Ayyam Gallery (2016); Selma Feriani Gallery, London (2013, 2010); Al Hoash Gallery, Jerusalem (2009); and Botanique Museum, Brussels. Halawani has featured in recent collective exhibitions at the Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno, Valencia (2017); Metropolitan State University, Denver (2017); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2015); MART Museum, Rovereto (2014); FotoFest Biennial, Houston (2014); Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2012); and BOZAR, Palace for Fine Arts, Brussels (2011).

Halawani's photographs are housed in the international collections of the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Nadour Collection, Germany; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; The British Museum, London; The Khalid Shoman Foundation, Amman; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, among others. Palestine (2008), the artist's first monograph, was published by La Lettre Volée, Brussels in conjunction with her mid career retrospective at the Botanique Museum. In 2016, Halawani received a residency fellowship at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France, and was awarded the 2021 Sheikh Saoud Al Thani Project Award.