

## PRESS RELEASE

### Sounds and Stories from across the Arab world *From Ear to Ear to Eye* at Nottingham Contemporary



Image left: Haig Aivazian, *Hastayim Yasiyorum (Face)*, 2016. Courtesy of the artist and Sfeir-Semler Gallery Beirut & Hambur.

Image right: Jumana Manna, *A magical substance flows into me*, 2015. Still. Courtesy of the artist and CRG Gallery (New York).

This December, Nottingham Contemporary presents *From Ear to Ear to Eye*, an exhibition considering the politics of sound, music and listening in myriad forms. It explores the acoustic lives of cities across the Eastern Mediterranean and the Arab world, and the many ways in which translation, notation and recording are used to map memories and migration, territories and conflict.

*From Ear to Ear to Eye* is the largest survey of contemporary artists in the Arab world to have been presented in the UK. It brings together installation, sculpture, photography, film, music and archives by 17 artists of different generations. With a title borrowed from a text by Anna Boghiguan, the exhibition comprises graphic scores, field recordings, musical instruments and sonic archives.

Exhibiting artists include: *Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Etel Adnan, Haig Aivazian, Mounira Al Solh, Basma Alsharif, Ziad Antar, Marwa Arsanios, Ania Dabrowska, Malak Helmy, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Hiwa K, Jumana Manna, Joe Namy, Setareh Shahbazi, Raed Yassin, Shirin Yousefi*.

*From Ear to Ear to Eye* considers sounds travelling across borders, or being used to define them. **Mounira al Solh** tells the stories of Syrian migrants living in refugee camps around Beirut in woven portraits. Other works engage with the lived and imagined experience of places, such as **Shirin Yousefi's** *The Tales of the Cortex*, which evokes the fleeting sounds and fragrances of the Kurdish landscape, or **Ziad Antar's** hazy photographs taken from a boat travelling up the coast of Lebanon.

The ways in which histories can be told through music are represented through **Haig Aivazian's** sculptural installation, which grew out of his research in Turkish oud music and its ties with religion, cultural identity and national aspiration. A film by **Jumana Manna** represents the rich musical traditions from across Jerusalem and its relationship to the West.

Elsewhere, *From Ear to Ear to Eye* is concerned with how sounds can provide evidence or testimony, such as **Lawrence Abu Hamdan's** forensic analysis of the sound of gunshots. Created in Iraq in 2011, **Hiwa K's** video *This Lemon Tastes of Apple* mixes Ennio Morricone with civil protest.

The relationship between sound, image and notation is explored in the work of **Joe Namy**, who limns the limitations of translation and the disconnect between subtitles. The hand-painted leporellos of **Etel Adnan** combines the verbal and visual in accordion-folded booklets.

The process of recording history is a theme of *From Ear to Ear to Eye*. **Raed Yassin's** *Ruins in Space* rewrites musical history by crafting a fictional friendship between two musicians to imagine a utopian cultural crossover involving the Egyptian chanteuse Umm Kulthum. **Ania Dabrowska** navigates a vast photographic archive, drifting through and collating images from different decades.

Through a diverse range of work and practices, *From Ear to Ear to Eye* represents sound and notation as a means of tracing histories, identities and experiences. The exhibition is about that which might be voiced or heard, but resists being visualised.

The exhibition launches Fri 15 Dec 2017, 6.30pm – 11pm, and runs until 4 Mar 2018.

---

## Editors Notes

An exhibition by Nottingham Contemporary, supported by the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture – AFAC



آفاق AFAC

Supported by بدعم من

The Arab Fund For Arts and Culture  
الصدوق العربي للثقافة والفنون – آفاق

## Contact

For more information and further images please contact:

Laura-Jade Vaughan on +44 (0)115 948 9762 or email [LJVaughan@nottinghamcontemporary.org](mailto:LJVaughan@nottinghamcontemporary.org)

## Images

Images are available through Dropbox... <http://bit.ly/2i1oA6c>

## About Nottingham Contemporary

Nottingham Contemporary brings international art to an iconic building in the city centre. Designed by Stirling Prize-winning architects Caruso St John, it is one of the largest and most ambitious contemporary art spaces in the UK.

Nottingham Contemporary is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and regularly funded by Nottingham City Council.

Nottingham Contemporary, Weekday Cross, Nottingham NG1 2GB, 0115 948 9750

[www.nottinghamcontemporary.org](http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org)