



REGARDING
DISTANCE

YAZAN
KHALILI

8 APR –
24 MAY 2014

EOA.P

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EOA Projects is proud to present Regarding Distance, the first major solo exhibition in the United Kingdom by acclaimed Palestinian artist Yazan Khalili. This show features works produced over the last decade, which explores the scarred and fraught landscapes of the West Bank, where the artist grew up.

Khalili's output is detailed, reflective and full of intent. Predominantly using photography and the written word, he unpacks historically constructed landscapes. Borrowing from cinematic language, images become frames where the spectator embodies the progression of time. The artist has woven together parallel stories over the years, suggesting both questions and paradoxes concerning scenery and the act of gazing, all of which are refracted through the prism of personal identity. In particular, he focuses on the effect of geographical distance on our rendering of territory, and its ability to heighten or arrest our political and sentimental attachments.

The exhibition features video work, photography and drawings, including some of Khalili's best-known projects; Regarding Distance, The Aliens, On Love and Other Landscapes and The Slaughterhouse. These works are accompanied by lucid and engaging texts reflecting upon and mediating this visual output. They include accounts of journeys through 'Area C', in the occupied West Bank, unplanned stops in car dumps and attempts to reach the sea; others are broader interactions with the notion of landscape in a Palestinian context and a refusal to depict the Israeli-built wall. They form a critical strand in the work of this pioneering Palestinian artist.

THE ALIENS

LIGHTJET ON KODAK PREMIER
30 x 20 CM



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born 1981, lives and works in and out of Palestine. Yazan Khalili received a degree in Architecture from Birzeit University (2003) and graduated with a Masters degree from Goldsmith's College, University of London (2010). He was one of the founding members of Zan Design Studio (2005) and a finalist in the A. M. Qattan Foundation's Young Artists Award (2006), as well as an artist-in-residence at The Delfina Foundation in London (2008) and The Danish Film School (2006). He was the production Coordinator for Sharjah Biennials 9 and 10. He taught Politics of Production course at the International Art Academy - Palestine, and co-curated along with Reem Shilleh the Young Artist of the Year Award (YAYA 2012). His writings and photographs have been featured in publications such as Manifesta Journal, Frieze, Race & Class, C-Print, Ibraaz, Contemporary Art: World Currents, and Subjective atlas of Palestine.

Khalili has had solo shows at Imane Fares Gallery in Paris, Transit Gallery in Belgium, French Cultural Centres in Palestine and The Delfina Foundation in London. He has participated in group shows in Ramallah, Amman, Rome, Granada, Dubai, London, Venice, Berlin and Sharjah. Khalili's work has been acquired by the British Museum and Sharjah Art Foundation, among others.

ABOUT EOA.PROJECTS

Born out of the global success of Edge of Arabia, EOA.Projects (EOA.P) was established in 2011 as a commercial gallery platform dedicated to building artists careers to an international standard. EOA.P has since established itself as a leading platform for contemporary art with a special focus on artwork production and Middle Eastern artists. In January 2013, EOA.P opened a 400m², state-of-the-art gallery in London with a programme including participation in international art fairs, collaborations and pop-up shows around the world.

WE HAD ALREADY DECIDED THAT WE WERE GOING SOUTH, TO HEBRON, PASSING THROUGH BETHLEHEM VIA THE VALLEY OF WADI AN-NAR. THERE IS A SPOT THERE WHICH OVERLOOKS JERUSALEM; IT'S THE ONLY PLACE WHERE THE GREEN-ID-CARD-HOLDERS CAN SEE THE DOME OF THE ROCK WITH THEIR BARE EYES - IT'S SO FAR AWAY THAT ONE NEEDS TO GAZE FOR A FEW MINUTES BEFORE SEEING THE SHINING DOME. A CLOSE FRIEND USED TO JOKE THAT WE SHOULD INSTALL BINOCULARS THERE AND OFFER PEOPLE (FOR MONEY OF COURSE) THE CHANCE TO SEE IT. "IF THEY CAN'T BE THERE FOR REAL, THEY CAN SEE IT FOR REAL," HE WOULD SAY.

REGARDING DISTANCE

2010

LIGHTJET ON KODAK PREMIER

'When the woman in the Bounty chocolate advert (the Arabic version) eats a bit of the chocolate, time goes backwards, and she is transported to the shores of a Caribbean island with coconut trees in the background. After her lover dives into the tropical sea, we see the slogan: The taste will take you there. The producers of this advert aim to create a direct relation between the taste and the place through the image; Bounty becomes a taste of an image, of blue seas and clear skies; the taste of paradise as in the English version of the word. We "the consumers" know that it won't take us there, to the island, but we consume it so that it takes us there, to the image. It creates an experience of an image through tasting it. Heidegger noted that photographic images appear to abolish distance in their presence yet they do not bring nearness; "despite all conquest of distances the nearness of things remains absent", they do not imply a shift in proximity.

The picture of the Dome of the Rock – the one that can be seen on every wall and in the background of every poster – is for the post-second-Intifada-generation – who grew up without the possibility of visiting the city – the image of Jerusalem. The whole city has been reduced to that picture, it contains in its two-dimensionality the erasure of Jerusalem from our space of three-dimensional experiences, the image becomes a documentation of the distance, or the disappeared distance.'

REGARDING DISTANCE II
THE IMAGE

148 x 214,5 CM



*REGARDING DISTANCE I
THE LANDSCAPE*

148 x 214,5 CM



‘THE REAL TRAUMA OF LOSING THE HOMELAND IN 1948 WAS TO BE DISCONNECTED FROM THE VITAL SPACE, THE LANDSCAPE, THE WAY OF LIVING, THE POTENTIAL OF MAINTAINING FREEDOM OF CHOICE AND BECOMING, AS SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK SAYS, ALWAYS IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY, WHERE THE POSSIBILITY OF THINKING AND LIVING IN THE PRESENT BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE.

COLOUR CORRECTION

2007 – 2010

LIGHTJET ON KODAK PREMIER AND
INKJET PRINT ON SOMMERSET TUB PAPER

‘This project is a re-production of space by using its architectural elements which maintain the trauma to create a space that produces the possibility for hope (hope in this sense is the ability to imagine a better future, to think of un-essential events yet to happen, and mainly to be able to be sarcastic about the present).

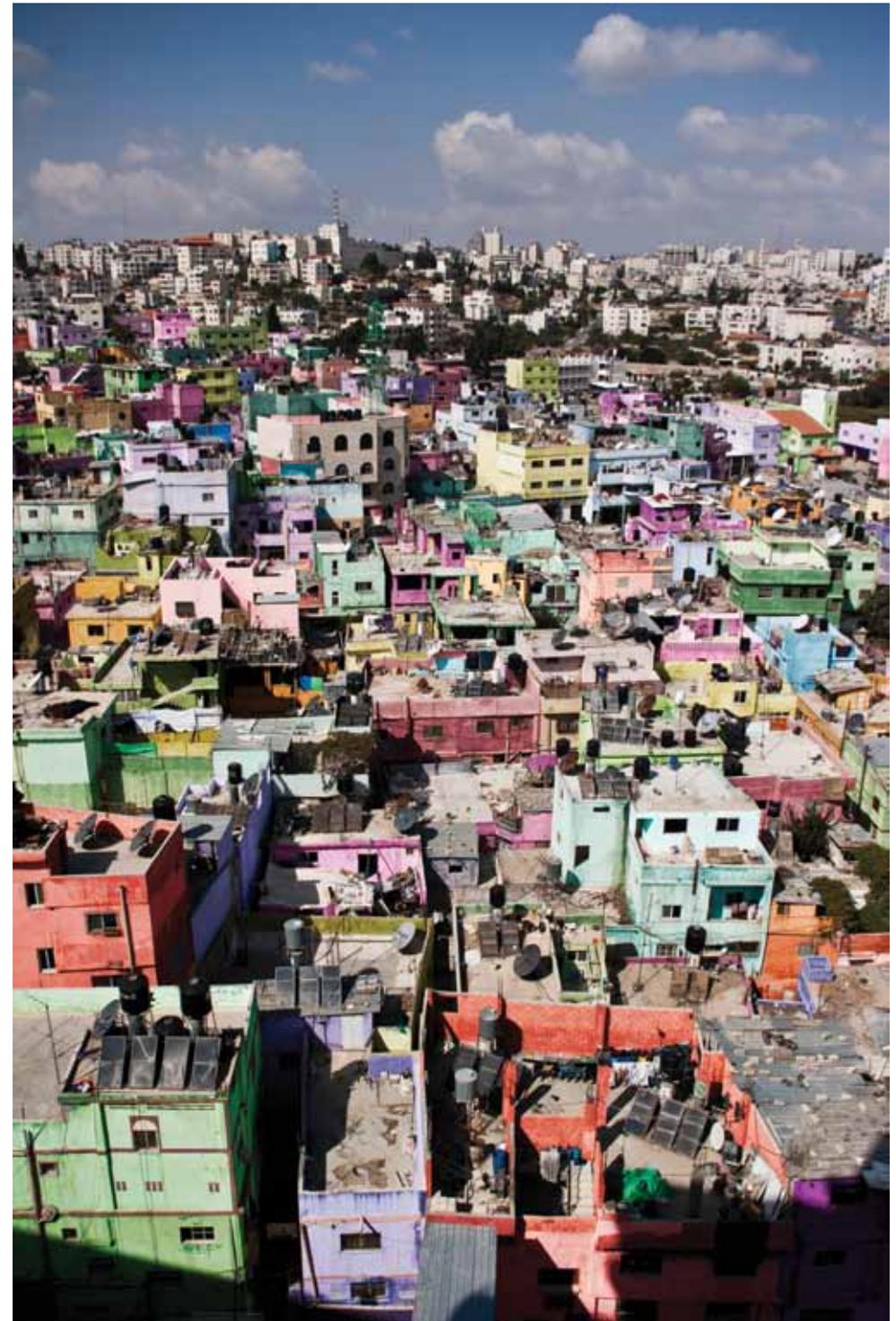
‘Here I’m dealing with Al-Amari Refugee camp, located inside/beside/outside Ramallah city. The form of the camp doesn’t represent its economic status but rather its loss and trauma as a political manifestation through the continuous production of ephemeral structures, ways of living and relationships with its surroundings.

‘Changing the camp’s colours is a symbolic act to fill the loss – like a child filling a colouring book – and so produce the possibility of hope. Here I’m attempting to appropriate an urban landscape that reminds us of the tragedy of both their existence and our disappearance, in order to subvert a memory into a desired future.’

COLOUR CORRECTION 1

150 x 244.7 CM





THIS SERIES EMERGED OUT OF QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ISRAELI-BUILT WALL. DEPICTIONS OF THIS HAVE BEEN USED AND CONSUMED WITHIN OUR SHARED VISUAL ECONOMY TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT ITS RAW FORM IS VERY NEARLY BANAL OR NORMALIZED.

ON LOVE AND OTHER LANDSCAPES

2011

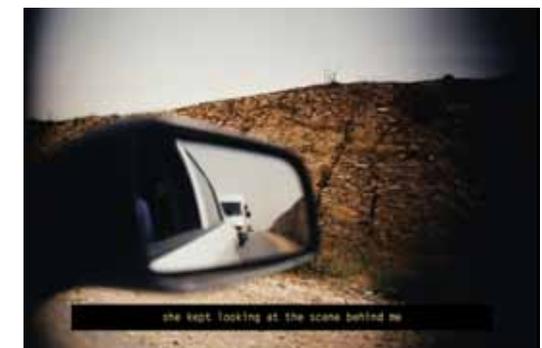
BOOK
31 x 48 CM

Here Khalili places the wall in a context of love, marking it out as a gesture of resistance. He writes of a love story involving a woman who had recently abandoned him and left on the walls photographs lacking his presence, an absence which echoes the atmosphere conjured by these images.

Courtesy of the artist and Imane Fares Gallery

ON LOVE AND OTHER LANDSCAPES

PAGE 3 FROM THE BOOK













‘THIS REDUCTION OF PALESTINE INTO THE “STATUS” OF A SIMPLE LANDSCAPE ALIENATES PALESTINIANS FROM THE LAND, BUT, INTERESTINGLY, NOT FROM THE IMAGE THAT REPRESENTS THE LANDSCAPE.’

DETAIL FROM
THE ALIENS

15 x 10 CM

THE ALIENS

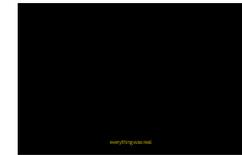
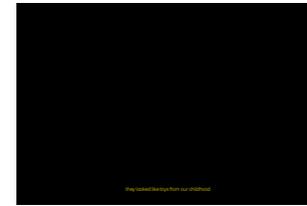
2012

LIGHTJET ON KODAK PREMIER

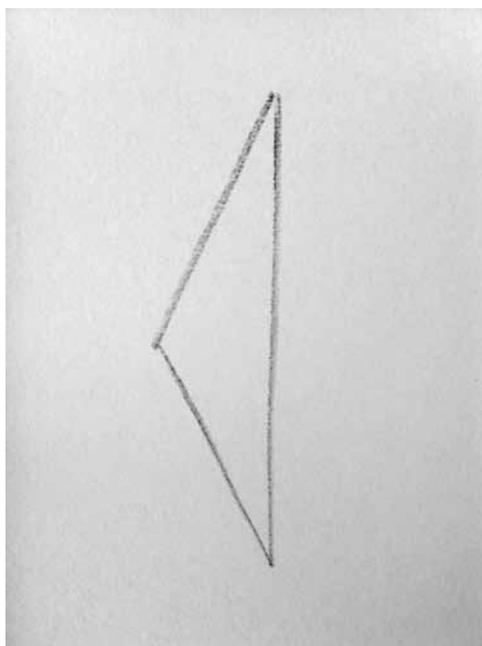
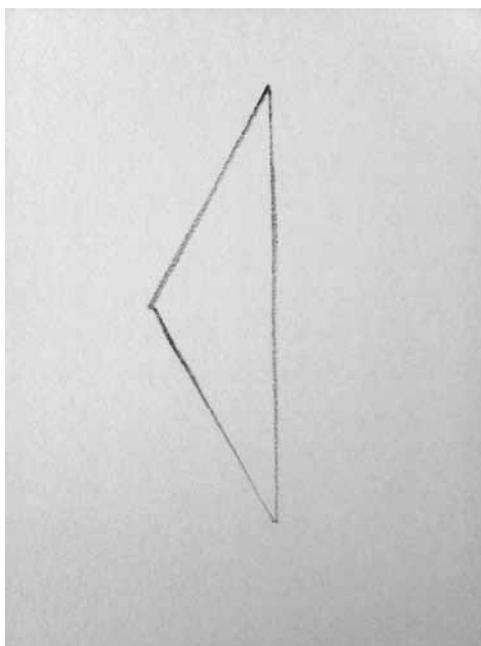
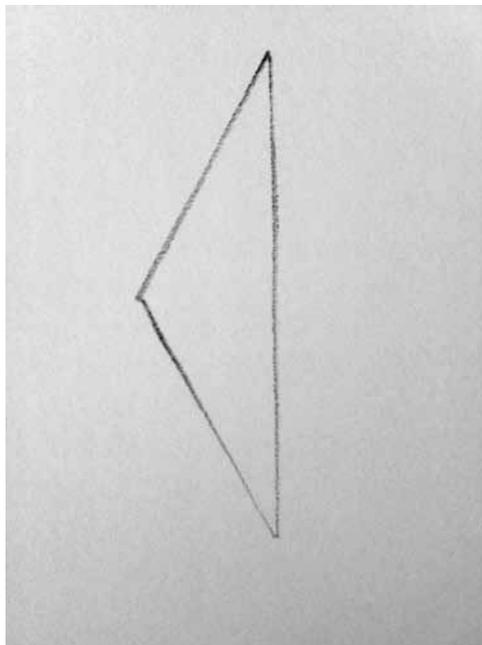
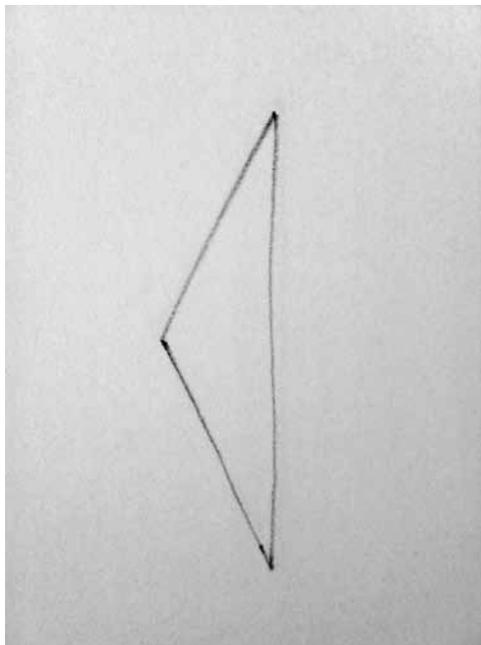
Access to the land is limited and restricted by different encounters: temporary and structural, procedural and bureaucratic. Exile occurs without the indigenous people having been expelled. Instead we become passers-by on the road-networks that penetrate the landscape as we travel from one ghetto to another (the ghetto known as Area A as per the Oslo Accords): temporary inhabitants of the roads overlooking a timeless landscape.

‘Strangely, we, “Palestinians”, cannot see that very Biblical landscape; we don’t belong to it because we are it. Our vital space is its continuation through history, and when we begin depicting that space as a landscape we start to give ourselves over to that sense of alienation from what used to be, for us, a place.’

THE ALIENS







SIMPLE STANDING TRIANGLE

2013

41 SKETCHES OF A TRIANGLE + TEXT
INK ON PAPER
14.8 x 21 CM EACH

'When my mother first taught me to draw the map of Palestine, I used to simply draw it as a standing equilateral triangle. Later I got to know that it isn't exactly equilateral, its lower side is longer than the upper one, and the latter is concaved with a salient closer to its top, and the upper angle is actually a flat straight line with another salient coming up towards the north. There is also Tiberias Lake, and the Dead Sea, and the many destroyed villages and the 1948 green line, and there is Israel and the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, and the Oslo accords, and Area A and Area B, and C, and H1, and H2, the checkpoints, The Wall, the settlements, and I don't know what and when and how... but until today, when I want to draw the Palestine map, I draw it as a standing equilateral triangle.'

‘THE SEA IS ALWAYS AND
INCESSANTLY TO THE WEST
OF WHERE I LIVE. THAT
NIGHT, WE DROVE TOWARDS
IT. THE DARKNESS BETWEEN
THE SEA AND WHERE WE
WERE STANDING MADE THE
DISTANCE BETWEEN US
COLLAPSE AND DISAPPEAR.

THE SLAUGHTER- HOUSE

2011

LIGHTJET ON KODAK PREMIER/
DIASEC MOUNTED ON ALUMINIUM
66.6 x 100 CM EACH

The sea looked close... reachable... We drove west that night. On the way we reached this car dump, it looked like a deep black sea. It is located in Rafat area, on the very edge of Ramallah, just between Area A and Area C. It is filled with dismantled car parts. The guys there allowed us to take photos as long as they didn't appear in them. Some of the cars were stolen, some were legally dumped. They said this makes it harder for the Israeli army to figure out which is which. We drove west that night, but we didn't reach the sea... We stopped just after the car dump; we were not allowed to drive further west. I wanted to take a photo of the newly found sea... But by mistake, the camera fell off the tripod. The sea at that point receded back endlessly, far away into the west.'







BLINDNESS OF LOVE

2013

VIDEO
01 : 58

This project was produced as part of /Sin/ festival 2013, curated by Lara Khaldi and Reem Shilleh. It is based on photos exposed to excess light, leaving a whiteness that witnesses the details of a disappeared love, prompting the question, 'How does one regard the pain of the self?'



'LIKE SO MANY OTHERS,
THESE PHOTOS CAN'T ESCAPE
THEIR FATE OF BEING READ
AS A REPRESENTATION OF
A CONTESTED SPACE. THEY
WILL ALWAYS BE SEEN IN
TERMS OF THE LIGHT THEY
CONTAIN RATHER THAN THE
DARKNESS, THEREFORE, THEY
CAN EASILY BE SUCCESSFUL IN
REPRODUCING THE COMMON
IMAGE, THE FAMILIAR ONE;
THE ONE THAT IS SEEN IN
DAYTIME.

LANDSCAPE OF DARKNESS

2010

VIDEO
07 : 33

'For these photos to create a space for a political proposition, they will need to be read through the darkness in them, to consciously fail to represent or to document. Each one should be seen as an image for rather than an image of, and be regarded as a space where the process of its production and the act of its reading entwine and connect.

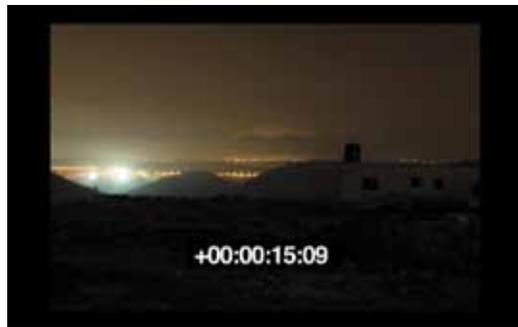
'Godard used to say ironically that fiction is for the Israelis and documentary is for the Palestinians. The oppressed isn't allowed to create fiction; he is there to document the oppressor while he is planning the space, rearranging it, using his vision and visual technologies to create a landscape out of the oppressed space.

'The oppressed camera is the extension of his eye, while the oppressor's camera is the extension of his mind. And we need to subvert this, as the artistic work of memory is that which accords everyone the dignity of fiction.'

THE TIMER THAT APPEARS IN THE VIDEO
IS THE TIME OF ACTUAL EXPOSURE

A video frame showing a winding asphalt road curving through a landscape at sunset. The sky is a deep orange, and the terrain is dark and silhouetted. A white timer overlay is positioned in the lower center of the frame.

+00:00:25:07





we haven't met since then

EOA.P

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8 April – 24 May 2014

Artworks © Yazan Khalili
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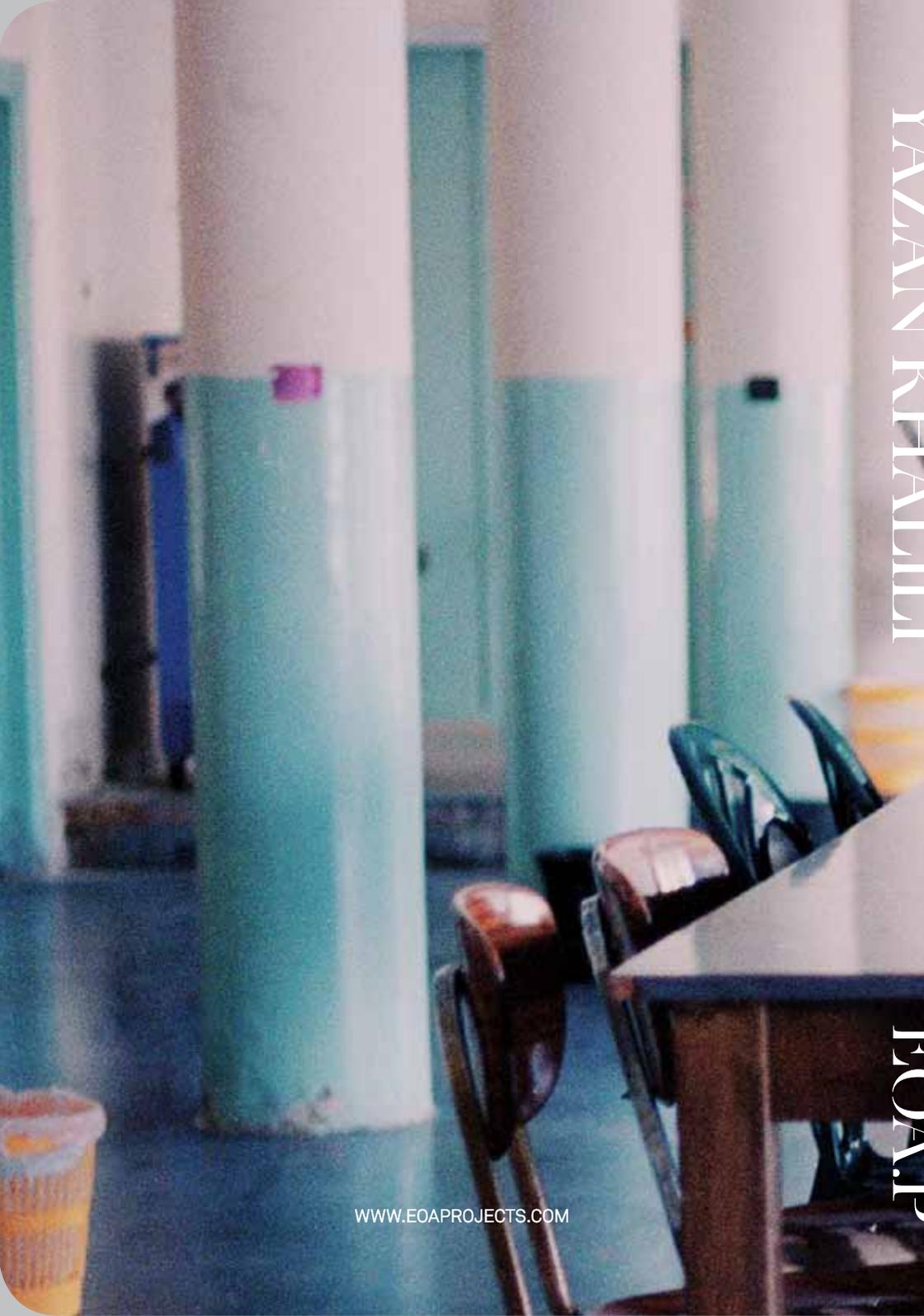
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EOA.PROJECTS GALLERY
40 ELCHO STREET
LONDON SW11 4AU

FACEBOOK: EOA.PROJECTS
TWITTER: @EOAPROJECTS
INSTAGRAM: EOAPROJECTS
WEBSITE: WWW.EOAPROJECTS.COM



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