

MICHAEL HALLAK:

Born in 1975 in Fassuta village (Upper Galilee). He graduated from Haifa University in 2002 with a degree in Fine Arts. In 2005 he won a residence scholarship at the Florence Academy of Art, Italy and then continued to pursue a Master in Fine Arts from the University of Haifa in 2007. Halak is a realistic painter whose works focus on classical subjects such as portraits, landscapes and still life's with a contemporary twist. He has had solo shows at Tel-Aviv Museum of Art and Noga Gallery in Tel-Aviv and Haifa University Art Gallery. He has also participated in many group shows in Haifa Museum, Herzelia Museum and Ramat Gan Museum and many galleries in Israel, Europe and U.S.A. He currently lives and works in Haifa.

Michael Hallak's paintings belong to the Western tradition of realist; illusory painting that goes back hundreds of years. The drama and turmoil in these paintings are given contemporary expression in his paintings, and reflect his connection to this particular place and time. Halak's paintings address the immediate reality that surrounds him by means of direct observation or photographs. The illusion of reality represented on canvas is seductively beautiful and perfect, yet it is simultaneously revealed to carry a disturbing charge, which is related to states of disruption and disintegration.

His works charged with the central tension that shapes both his life and his work – the question of the connection between man and place, and related concerns regarding presence and absence, identification and dis-identification, witnessing and silencing, memory and intentionally imposed oblivion.

EDUCATION:

2007-9 MFA, the Art Department, University of Haifa
2005 Summer session, Florence Academy of Art, Italy
2002-2004 Art teacher's certificate, University of Haifa
1999-2002 Bachelor Degree in Archeology and Fine Art, University of Haifa
1996-1998 Graphic Design, Western Galilee College, Wizo College Branch

EXPERIENCES:

2009 Drawing and Painting lecturer, the Art Department, Haifa University
2009 Drawing and Painting lecturer, Education Wing, Haifa Museum of Art
2000-2008 Production Assistant, the Art Gallery, University of Haifa

AWARDS:

2015 – The Ministry of Culture and Sport Prize for contemporary artist
The Pais Culture Council support in Exhibition and Catalog
2011 – The Rapports Award for Young Israeli Artist, Tel-Aviv Museum
The Pais Culture Council support in Exhibition and Catalog
2010 – The Young Artist Award 2010, Ministry of Culture and Sport
2009 – MFA Distinction scholarship, Haifa University
2007 – Distinction scholarship, Haifa University
2005 – Residency scholarship in Florence, the America-Israel Culture Foundation
Residency scholarship in Florence, A.M. Al Qattan Foundation, Ramallah

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

- 2016 – “Roots of identity” Collective exhibition, Art on 56 th, Beirut- Lebanon
2016 – The Identity of the Palestinian artist, Umm El-fahem Art Gallery, Umm El-fahem
Drawings, Noga Gallery, Tel-Aviv
2015 – The Museum Presents Itself 2, Tel-Aviv Museum, Tel-Aviv
The Palestinian Arab House (Haifa 1860-1930), Haifa City Museum, Haifa
Visions of Place, Stedman Gallery, New Jersey, USA
SummerSet, Noga Gallery, Tel- Aviv
2014 – Cracks (solo), Noga Gallery, Tel-Aviv
Portraits, Shinkar Gallery, Ramat Gan
Wonderland, Espace Oscar-Niemeyer, Paris
Wisdom of Crowds, Beit Hageffen Gallery, Haifa
Profile Is Aggression Too, Gallery -1, Tel-Aviv
2013 – Galilee Paint Art Fair 2013, Hatzour Hglileet
Realytizm, Grand Art Gallery, Haifa
Wonderland, The German Bundestag, Berlin
Territory, Oranim Gallery, Oranim Collage
2012 – Faces and Landscapes (solo), Tel-Aviv Museum, Tel-Aviv
Spring 2012, MECA: Middle East Center for the Arts, New Jersey
48-67, The House of Culture & Arts Gallery, Nazareth
2011 – Certified Copy, Beit Hgeffen Gallery, Haifa
The Armory Show, New-York City
Winners of 2010, Ramat Gan Museum, Ramat Gan
2010 – July, Noga Gallery, Tel-Aviv
Window to reality, Haifa Museum, Haifa
Dream a reality, Pyramid Gallery, Haifa
Fresh paint art fear 3, Tel-Aviv
Following the chocolate soldier, Shinkar Gallery, Ramat Gan
2009 – Men in the sun, Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Israel
MFA Exhibition, the Dr. Hecht Art Center, Haifa University
2007 – Portrait, Beit Hageffen, Haifa
Desert Generation, Meneer de Wit Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
Portrait, Municipal Gallery, Tamra
2005 – Alumni exhibition, The Florence Academy of Art, Florence, Italy
2002 – Alumni exhibition, The Art Department, Haifa University

ARTIST STATEMENT:

Days go by and what is left is just a shadow. The shadow is suspended between ripples of memory. People and faces pass through our lives. Their light has ceased to shine. Some accompany us through the journeys of our lives while others inhabit a corner of our memories. Our minds and recollections keep their spirits alive.

I keep my memory box sealed, so that my emotions do not come bursting out. I am unsure whether they are happy or sad memories; all that I am aware of is that the box safely conceals my mixed emotions. In this memory box, I find toys, my childhood, postcards and greeting cards from some of my friends. There are pictures of old cities and of a land that time has weathered away and that history has disintegrated.

How did time go by this fast? I forgot all of it except when I open the memory box. I am trapped in a state between oblivion and memory, between presence and absence and between reality and illusion. What has happened to my land? What has happened to my people? Where are they now? What did time do to them?