Basel Abbas & Ruanne Abou-Rahme

Prisoners of Love: Until the Sun of Freedom

Dyslexia Friendly version of the text panels which form part of the artworks in Gallery 3

Until we became fire.rtf

After they destroyed the village they planted pine trees to cover the remains

In the wake of the destruction
we looked out towards the hill
but could not find the path

Decades set in pine needles covered the land extinguishing breath of pomegranate, fig, almond

And then one afternoon

a fire raged

encircling the hilltop

Burning

Burning

Burning

until all the pine trees

had been reduced to ash

And the terraces we had built

returned

Embracing the land

The fire raged

and raged

until we became

fire

and fire us

baba.rtf

March 2024

These are my baba's drawings.

He drew them in the 70's and 80's.

A few weeks ago while he was in hospital we spoke about them.

Months before, before he was sick, as the genocide was devouring us I felt I was seeing Gaza now in them.

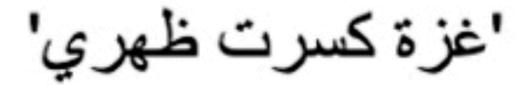
When I started working with the drawings I did not know what would

happen with him.

My baba passed in the wake of this genocide four days after his birthday, February 11th

He told my mother

'Gaza broke my back'



He left us suddenly

And left us heartbroken.

He was born in 1948, in the wake of the Nakba, my grandmother fled with him and 5 other children to Lebanon leaving my grandfather in Shefamer.

A few months later she made the decision to try and return, the journey back was very dangerous.

Israeli soldiers were shooting people who tried to return.

Do you see the deadly repetitions that make their home in us.

Mariam my grandmother was a force to be reckoned with, still her milk

dried up from the fear and exhaustion, my father was a baby only a

few months old. Were it not for the solidarity of other women making

the journey who took turns
breastfeeding my father he would
not have
made it.

These are the deadly repetitions that make their home in us.

Baba lived a life full of resistance, in every stroke of his drawings he resisted, in his love for the land he resisted, in his refusal he resisted,

in his laughter and joy and defiance he resisted. When he restored

our three hundred year old home in the Galilee, in our town Shefamer,

he removed the concrete to unearth powerful Palestinian stone. In the

70's my grandmother had poured cement over the stone, in an effort to 'modernise', concrete being a colonial material that somehow for those under the thumb of

colonisation seemed to be a symbol of

modernity. He worked ten years, with little money and resources to restore the house to what it was, all the while gathering people from the town to speak about a forgotten time before colonisation. People chipping away concrete, chipping away in one small way the violence of colonisation. Baba restored the house, he resisted. When he was done he put up a plaque that told its story.

Baba resisted every day at the core of his being, and taught us the meaning of resistance to the core of our being.

Taw fik Abou-**Rahme**February 7th 1948- February 11th

I say we and yet oceans divide us.rtf

4 am

2024

We are under siege

I say we and yet oceans divide us if you don't leave

they will demolish the house on top of your heads

We lose contact

I say we and mean so many named and unnamed

that share in a wound

that is theirs and not theirs

Later after it is all rubble

I watch you

When I say watch I mean on a screen thousands of kilometers away trying to retrieve

forms of life from the debris

what is undone can be done and what

is done can be undone

You come out holding what remains of a fridge

'This is all I was able to get from under the rubble,

this is what remains, a fridge with family memories on it'

We are trying to string words together

But there is no language only sounds that tremble through us

being the negative.rtf

Being the negative is to be the debt that is owed to us

Being the negative is being with what we are indebted to, all those that came

Before us and calls to us now call to us from within their graves;

"those who chant do not die"

the call echos, call us again and
again to where we must be

Being the negative is being what seems buried, but continues to sprout

Being the negative is to see the breaks as openings,

to be that break

breathing and being, being and breathing where you should not be

أن نكون الناقص يعنى أن نكون الدّين الذي هو حقنا أن نكون الناقص هو أن نكون مع الذين ندين لهم، كل الذين سبقونا وينادون الآن

ينادون إلينا من أعماق قبور هم

" اللي بيهتف ما بموت" المناداة تدوي

تنادينا مرارا إلى مواقعنا

أن نكون الناقص هو أن نكون ما يبدو دفينا لكنه دوما ينبت

أن نكون الناقص هو رؤية الشق كانبثاق

أن نكون الشق ذاته

أن نتنفس ونكون، نكون ونتنفس حيث لا ينبغي أن نكون

hospitals.rtf

October, November, December,

January, February, March, April
2023-24

Gaza, again and again, the genocide destroys every part of us.

Hospital after hospital, is bombed, shelled, under siege. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, daughters, sons, loved ones are buried in the grounds of the

hospitals. The hospital becomes a burial site. The hospital is under siege, loved ones dying from lack of oxygen, lack of medicine, lack of food and water. Dina Abu Mehsen the only survivor from her family killed in the Nasser hospital, where she was being treated, when a bomb was dropped on the children's wing. The hospital is under fire from snipers, people who were sheltering in the hospital have to crawl out, one man crawls for a whole day, a

young boy witnesses his father and brother killed by snipers, manages to escape, leaving his heart with his brother and father martyred outside Al-Shifa hospital. The hospital becomes a prison. Patients too sick, disabled or old to leave are trapped inside, a few doctors who were not detained or killed remain with them. They have no water or food, the hospital is under siege, they are trapped in one room. The hospital is a scene of a massacre, hundreds of people

lay slain, maimed, crushed under tanks. These words are a complete failure, there are no words to grasp this unbearable, unimaginable horror.

All this only a fraction of thousands of stories. Stories that break you. Stories that should break and unmake the world.

S on writing

S told us:

"...They confiscated pens and papers, so that we don't produce, don't write, and don't have any production as a prisoner movement. It was a failure. I promised myself to go out and write, and to write all these feelings and all these thoughts that I had while in prison. To this day, I am writing, because what I discovered is that prison is a journey, not just while you are inside the cell. Your

journey with prison and your relationship with prison begins afterward. It begins with how you produce after detention. And here I am writing, and to this day I am writing, and to this day there are things I keep remembering."

stream.rtf

I was on a stream

That could have been a sea

In which I drowned

And everything in me

Was saying this is death

This is death

And I knew it was

Some form of dying

And then a voice called out

And I paused

'I want to tell you just a brief couple

Of things about that bomb

That I think you need to

understand'*

And knowing what happens after a bomb

goes off

I listened

And everything in me

Was saying

This voice is life

Some form of life persisting

'The bomb here created a

radioactive cloud

that ascended over 40,000 feet into the stratosphere.

Actually it surpassed the atmosphere.'*

These were the forces

That raged within us

And these are the forces

That raged against us

Within us and against us

Against us and within us *

'As the

Ash fell from the sky

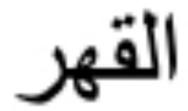
We were absorbing the radiation through

Our skin'*

How many times do I need to tell you this story?

'We lost the court case. They came and demolished our home.

My father had a heart attack standing in the remains of the house.'



*Tine Cordova speaking about the fallout from Nuclear test site in New Mexico

*(after adrienne rich, with raged instead of ranged)