

Dala Nasser

Cemetery of Martyrs

07.02-10.05.26

Dala Nasser (b. 1990, Lebanon) works across painting, sculpture, and sound to create installations shaped by the ancient cultures, landscapes, and geologies of southern Lebanon and wider West Asia. For her new work, Cemetery of Martyrs, she transforms the exhibition space into a symbolic graveyard - a collective site of mourning, remembrance, and reflection.

Using frottage, the technique of taking rubbings from textured surfaces, Nasser has gathered charcoal impressions from the graves of influential artists, writers, poets, filmmakers, historians, and journalists across Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, and England. Each rubbing commemorates a cultural figure from the Arab Renaissance (Nahda) in the mid-nineteenth century to the present whose work and ideas resisted political

domination and occupation. Among these figures are Palestinian author Ghassan Kanafani, feminist writer May Ziadeh, painters such as Etel Adnan and Juliana Seraphim, and the assassinated cartoonist Naji al-Ali. Though separated by geography and eras, they are brought together in this new memorial site.

Cyanotypes represent those whose graves are unreachable or unknown, extending the memorial to voices otherwise lost. These sit alongside black mourning fabrics that hang over a wooden trellis, forming a canopy that visitors move beneath. An accompanying sound installation bridges the realms of the living and the dead, deepening the sense of communion across time.

Nasser's installation constructs a shared space in which the legacies of these cultural figures can be gathered, protected, and felt. Their work - spanning literature, art, and political thought - has been seminal in shaping understandings of sovereignty and self-determination in West Asia. Cemetery of Martyrs

counters colonial and Eurocentric frameworks that have obscured or erased these histories, offering instead a place in which buried stories may re-emerge. In seeking to mend what history has left undone, the work is a place to mourn, learn, and reaffirm the power of culture and humanity to connect us to histories of resistance and renewal, finding hope in the past to forge new pathways of thought and action for the future.

RELATED EVENTS

WALKTHROUGHS

Tue 17 Feb, 12pm

Welcome Walkthrough

Explore the exhibition with our team, followed by a creative workshop with Associate Artist Amelia Daiz.

Wed 25 Feb, 1pm

Curators' Walkthrough

Join Nottingham Contemporary's curators, Katie Simpson and Niall Ó Faircheallaigh for a tour of our spring exhibitions.

Wed 8 Apr, 1pm

BSL Walkthrough

With Zoe Milner, deaf and visual artist.

Wed 29 Apr, 1pm

With Reuben Hutchinson-Wong, Ancient Historian.

12.30 Talks

12.30pm every Tue, Thu, Sat

and Sun, starting Tue 17 Feb

Join one of our friendly Gallery Assistants for a short exploration of one of our current exhibitions.

WORKSHOPS

Wed 15 Apr, 1pm

With Winter Beaumont, Artist and Occultist.

FILM SCREENING

Two Lenses on Beirut, Curated by Emma Bouraba.

Thu 26 Mar, 6pm

Screening of Nahla, dir. Farouk Beloufa.

Thu 30 Apr, 6pm

Screening of A Letter from Beirut, dir. Jocelyne Saab.

ARTIST TALK

Sat 2 May, 2pm

In conversation with Dala Nasser.

For more information about the exhibition, related events and learning programmes, visit nottinghamcontemporary.org or scan here:



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The Dala Nasser Exhibition Circle: Mai Eldib, Zaza Jabre, Cherine Magrabi and Maria Sukkar.

The Nottingham Contemporary Commissioning Circle: Nissreen Darawish, Gabriela Galcerán, Il Posto, Rafik&Najoua, Hamza Serafi and Mercedes Vilardell.

Cemetery of Martyrs is produced and commissioned by Nottingham Contemporary in collaboration with KM21 The Hague, Netherlands and Peer Gallery, London, UK where the exhibition will be presented during 2026.

This exhibition is curated by Katie Simpson and Klara Szafrńska.

Works courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council.

Architects: MÜLLERAPRAHAMIAN.

Research: Rayyan Abdelkhalek, Nadi Abu Saada.

Production assistants: Rayyan Abdelkhalek, Jawad Al Amin, Müller Industries.

Sound design and composition: Mhamad Safa.

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**Exhibition build and installation by
Helen Bartholomew, Jon Chambers, Billy Hughes,
Craig Humpston, Jack Narewski, Craig David Parr,
Emily Stollery, Hannah Templeman and David Thomas.**

Exhibition graphics by Waste Studio.

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If you would like to use any alternative forms of interpretation, we have a range of accessible versions on our Access Wall beside Reception or alongside the wall text in the exhibition.

Environmental: Nottingham Contemporary is committed to advancing sustainability within the organisation and aims to explore and embed sustainable working practices and habits within our workplace and across the sector. This includes standardising environmental considerations at all stages of decision making. The exhibition graphics have been produced by local suppliers Hayman Creative. Our exhibitions are always built and installed by local fine art technicians. The exhibition AV equipment has been loaned and installed by local company Lindley Productions. Our exhibition notes are printed on FSC Mix paper (Forest Stewardship Council® certified products manufactured with a variety of sources including FSC-certified virgin fibre, controlled wood and/ or recycled materials).