

## **NACER**

### **‘Journeys into the Future Through the Sea of the Past’**

*June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 - July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018*

Mark Hachem Gallery – Beirut is delighted to present ‘Journeys into the Future Through the Sea of the Past’, a solo exhibition by artist Nacer, featuring a selection of his most recent work.

Following the end of World War II, cultural, economic and social interconnectedness were believed to be defining the features of the forthcoming epoch. Almost half a century later, a globalizing capital has spurred incessant racial, ethnic and religious conflict. Matters of immigration and border security are dominating the present political discourse, and the current global moment is epitomized in the resounding call to build walls. Brexit, the refugee crisis, and the rise of populism and alt-right groups in the US, Europe and beyond are but fresh and burning reminders.

An exhibition curated by Sumesh Sharma and Joud Halawani Al Tamimi, “Journeys into the Future Through the Sea of the Past” is the Algerian artist Nacer’s response to the current global situation. Bringing together installations, paintings, video and photography, Al-Tamimi writes: “This exhibition probes notions of identity and borders in relation to geopolitics and violence, but also with respect to the individual psyche. At a time when division trumps mobilization, and conflict and prejudice are rampant, this exhibition presents an apt and necessary inquiry into the politics of the neoliberal order, albeit by way of a largely personal and intimate journey.”

The artist tackles profound questions on the evolution of links between civilizations and cultures. He also looks deeply at the ambiguity that exists in human relationships and interaction. This exploration focuses on the forms of manipulation and exploitation of conflicts, either for the individual or at a more global scale: Is the aggressor always the one demonstrating power or influence or do either political and economic forces interfere through sentiment and the intellect?, creating tensions between an ideology and its realization.

Nacer experiments with and mixes different techniques and media: ranging from drawing to sculpture, painting on Plexiglas to installations, depending on which medium is best attuned to his thinking. The impact of his work relies on observations delivered in an instinctive and trenchant style. His work derives from complex and disarming situations, sometimes tinged with violence. Behind a scrupulous and often poetic aesthetic, the artist denounces a world increasingly hostage to manipulation and rationalization.

Born in Algeria in 1967, Nasr-eddine Bennacer, known as Nacer, has been part of international and middle eastern art fairs and numerous solo and group exhibitions. He has been living and working in Paris for over 20 years now.