

FACE TO FACE

Visual Cultures and Radical Distrust in the Middle East



SATURDAY
11TH FEBRUARY 2012
12.30 – 7.00 PM

This interdisciplinary and collaborative event will provide a space for an extended discussion of Middle Eastern art and politics around the theme of trust/distrust amongst writers, academics, artists, curators and arts education practitioners

October Gallery, 24 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3AL

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Organised by October Gallery and the
Radical Distrust Project, University of Kent.

This workshop featuring Laila Shawa alongside writers, academics and curators will address the ways in which visual cultures construct, represent and contest separatisms, violence and the breakdown of social trust in the Middle East. From the construction of the Israeli West Bank barrier to the street art that festoons it to the multi-layered and subversive works of Laila Shawa, visual cultures have a central role in the establishment of social trust amongst communities in the Middle East.

In this interdisciplinary, interactive forum we wish to examine the role of various visual modes including street art, graphic novels/comics, film, architecture/urban planning, photography, painting, installations, art theory and art education. Questions we will be addressing together are:

- How does distrust manifest itself in visual icons and in the organisation of space?
- How do individuals, communities and artists negotiate or contest these visual manifestations of distrust?
- Can visual arts play a role in redeveloping trust between divided groups? What might this entail?

Speakers will include Laila Shawa, Felicity Allen, Wendy Pullan, Gabriel Koureas, Sue Malvern and William Parry. Refreshments and drinks will be provided.

Spaces are limited for this free event so please RSVP to mariska@octobergallery.co.uk and N.A.Ahmed@kent.ac.uk

Radical Distrust

University of
Kent



Radical Distrust: A Cultural Analysis of the Emotional, Psychological and Linguistic Formations of Religious and Political Extremism, University of Kent

The Radical Distrust research programme serves to analyse the emotional and psychological formations of extreme beliefs through a comparative study of literary texts and performance culture across the areas of postcolonial and Middle Eastern studies. Our research also explores the role that music, youth culture, literature and performance may play in establishing new forms of connectivity.

www.radicaldistrust.org



October Gallery, founded in 1979 in London, exhibits art of the trans-cultural avant-garde. From the outset, the gallery played a pioneering role in the promotion and exhibition of contemporary art from all around the world. The October Gallery also runs a major educational programme, houses a café and theatre, hosts talks, seminars and performances and provides a cultural hub in central London for artists, poets, musicians, writers and intellectuals.

www.octobergallery.co.uk

October Gallery Trust Registered Charity No. 327032

Image: **Laila Shawa**, *Walls of Gaza III: Fashionista Terrorista II*, (detail) 2011. ed. 1/2.
Mixed media with Swarovsky beads on canvas, 130 x 100 cm.