



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Majd Abdel Hamid



Majd Abdul Hamid began experimenting with art when he was just barely out of high school. As a graduate of the International Academy of Art in Palestine, and living in what he considers a society of spectacle, Majd feels like he has an endless array of strange ideas at his disposal.

Born in Damascus to a Palestinian family that belonged to the PLO, he

grew up with the image of a mystifying Palestine. When he settled in Ramallah, however, he discovered the reality of his country of origin. During his many travels he cultivated a critical view of his own identity, his country of origin, and its political leaders. It is in this gap between the myths of the national discourse and the geopolitical realities on the ground that Abdul Hamid found a fertile ground for interrogation in his multiple exhibitions.

Abdul Hamid insisted on having his first solo exhibition, "The Rhetoric from Within," in Ramallah and not abroad because he wanted to "talk to his community" by exploring the major symbols of the Palestinian imagination. By toying with long-worshipped symbols, Abdul Hamid gives observers a chance to re-evaluate their relationship with objects that have been deemed detrimental to their being.

Throughout modern Palestinian history there has been an urgency to create symbols of "resistance" and "existence" as a reaction to the abrupt rupture that took place in 1948. Art and



literature have played an integral part in constructing the modern identity of a stateless collective and the imagery of the revolution. Sixty-six years later these symbols have shaped the collective narrative and the contemporary visual identity of Palestinians. "The Rhetoric from Within" is an attempt to showcase an art practice that engages with the constructed symbols of modern Palestine: the Dome of the Rock, the key of return, and the declaration of independence. The concept of the project manipulates the fetishist aesthetic of the lost object that is condensed in a metallic old key by transforming the key into a lollipop, and re-creating models of the Dome of the Rock by Palestinian prisoners as an attempt to kill time, juxtaposed with drug dependency, namely, on Tramal. These pieces are accompanied by an hourglass made from bits of crushed cement from the apartheid wall, a dysfunctional hourglass where time often stops.

This solo exhibition in its totality is an attempt to deconstruct visually and

conceptually the paradoxical visual identity of the state-to-be and the national discourse.

If you find Abdul Hamid in a coffee shop, you'll see him crouched over his computer, smiling at the possibility of a rupture of ideas. He is brave, excited, and certain that art is the only way to really change the current, very grim, reality.

