

CARBON.12

PRESS RELEASE

'backbone' عَمُود الفقري

12 JUNE – 7 SEPTEMBER 2024

Curated by *salasil*

-- NOUR MALAS, MALIK THOMAS JALIL KYDD, KAÏS DHIFI, ALIA HAMAOU, JANA GHALAYINI, AUDREY LARGE & THÉOPHILE BLANDET

Made up of a composition of vertebrae, disks, joints, soft tissues, nerves and your spinal cord – the backbone serves as a central, internal structure of strength that binds and connects things together, embodying our internal worlds and expanded senses of function and feeling. The metaphorical meaning is similar to the figurative translation of the word, *سند* in Arabic, which refers to someone who has your back. Through the interrogation of the word, *backbone* explores the complexities and fragilities of these structures which at times can be exposed, excavated or elusive.

salasil invites six artists who engage in risk and interruption within their practices, ranging from painting, sculpture, video, sound and textile. *backbone* reveals how the "image", whether dreamt or felt, can begin to materialise into a physical form, producing outcomes that self-alter within a constant balance & tension between shifting & collapsing temporal spaces. The threshold between the object and space are in constant play with each other – each dimension transmitting signals as evidence of our presence. Our senses and nerves are challenged as *backbone* attempts to render the internal and external visible in order to understand their differences.

Nour Malas engages in spontaneous gestures, exposing and transporting to endless inner voids as a chronicle of confrontations, emotion and spontaneity. **Alia Hamaoui** explores architectural structures, as if viewing them from a car in motion. As each moment passes by, Hamaoui builds and distorts a place which examines our inner worlds. Utilising natural materials and organic techniques to backdrop **Malik Thomas Jalil's** feverish narratives of soft, spectral figures – delicately draped textiles poetically provoke the voyeuristic gaze in an attempt to trace the artist's own psychological journey. **Kais Dhifi** introduces an industrial aesthetic through engraved aluminium that references ancient knowledge and futuristic technologies, constantly interrogating remnants of the past. **Jana Ghalayini** introspects traditional weaving methodologies, as tapestries reveal her inner world which attempts to create presence as proof of evidence. Through an exploration of distinct and separate visual languages, **Audrey Large** and **Théophile Blandet** seek the notion of an object to provide a point of view on the world. Through their work, they challenge the reliability of vision to what we consider tangible.

CARBON.12

About *salasil*:

A future-focusing curatorial duo tending to care, research and experimentation. Through these principles, we develop exhibitions, publications, programs, mentorship and artwork that reimagine narratives, senses and experiences. We invite collaboration and conversation as we explore the multidisciplinary nature of creative work to reveal the infinite possibilities of exhibition-making and artwork creation. Highlighting the relationship between curators, artists and the audience, our aim is to encourage risk, disruption and imagination.

Salasil have curated *Beyond A Reasonable Doubt*, in collaboration with The West Asian North African Women's Art Library at Reference Point, London and *Crystal Clear* at Bayt Al Mamzar, Dubai.

About the Curators:

Sara bin Safwan is a curator working in both institutional and independent spheres. She is a Curator at Guggenheim Abu Dhabi and founded Banat Collective in 2016. Bin Safwan received a Master of Arts in Postcolonial Culture and Global Policy at Goldsmiths University, London (2023). Her research and practice explores politics of memory, speculation, futurisms and built environments with a focus on contemporary art from West Asia and North Africa, specialising in the Gulf. Bin Safwan has co-curated *As We Gaze Upon Her* (2021) and was the guest curator for the Homebound Residency (2023), both at Warehouse421, Abu Dhabi.

Zainab Hasoon is an independent curator, researcher and artist based between Dubai and Baghdad. Her practice centres predominantly around the multifunctionality of space, archeology, archival and found material such as artefacts and sculptures & experimenting with video, sound and structure. Zainab continues to curate using different spaces, mediums and engages with sonic outlets through 7aflet, a music platform founded by her. Zainab has curated *Building Blocks* at B7L9 in Tunisia and *Beyond A Reasonable Doubt* at Reference Point in London.