

*Manal Deeb*

## EXILE AND PALESTINIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

### **Abstract**

A Palestinian American artist who expresses her heritage, identity, dreams and memories through a variety of forms and materials. The content and narrative behind the art pieces explain her Palestinian origin. The artwork is an attempt to interpret the known versus the unknown of finding home, self, identity, and the challenge it presents in the creation of art. ([www.manaldeeb.com](http://www.manaldeeb.com))



### ARTIST STATEMENT

Paintings in one's **dreams**, denote the passing of time (**memories**), advancing of years, and the days of one's life. As for a Palestinian in exile, paintings in a dream mean reunion with the family and the beloved ones in the homeland "Palestine." Using textured surfaces convey dream persistence and memory perseverance.



*A Home Land (23" X 32")*

They say home is where your heart is. I say home is where your art is. Although this artwork is titled "A Home Land," the subject matter is living in exile with an internal search for home via carrying dream-like memories and wearing traditional garments. This mixed emotions and search of belongings are results of displacement of soul and body from origin, the motherhood.



*Appeal (26" X 32")*

Appealing to the world for understanding the sorrow of living in exile, the artist peeled textured paint from canvas as a representation to reveal memories. The female soul is torn between its own bleeding character and the people's perceptions of Palestinian females (shown as looking eyes), mixed with hopes and desires (shows as the white colour penetrating the darkness)



*Vow* (16" X 22")

With all the personal and social psychological conflicts of Palestinians, there continues a vow (a promise) for a more normal living. This piece shows the conflict between being or acting normal and being or acting as a clown (a desire for a social belonging while escaping from reality). Even the normal right side of the work is shown as fading with time, while the hope is represented by the musical instruments at the bottom of the work.



*Unruly Night (26" X 32")*

Palestinians' physical existence resides where they live in exile, while their spiritual existence continues to reside in their homeland. The anguish of longing for home is represented by a dream-like vortex of swirling movements, while the black split is a show of split in attempting to belong to societies while belonging to another. This creates unruly nights due to living under social injustice. Looking into this artwork, viewers have indicated seeing a smile from under, a smile showing hope.





*From There (16" X 22")*

Self-portrait, showing artist face without eyes. Escaping from allowing others to look into my eyes, escaping from reality, and not allowing others to read through me. A feeling of shame to leave home behind while being socially judged as a Palestinian female. There, faraway, I may be able to reveal my identity once I find it. My smile speaks of pride of being from there. There were my ancestors were farming land.



*Delirious in Exile (26" X 32")*

Running around in circles, Palestinians living in exile or under occupation, continue to hold strongly to their culture and tradition. Delirious in exile, Palestinians try their personal and social power to mandate their right for existence and to be heard. Their circles of life continue to present challenges, while white hopes penetrate such ambiguity in the future.



*Steadfastness (26" X 32")*

Palestinian refugees and their longing for return to home, a mission transferred from one generation to the other. Living their calamity and separation, they continue to thrive to return. Eyes represent the overlooking Palestinians in refuge toward the old Jerusalem city, in a mass migration form while showing the painful shadowy figure of a female awaiting social and political rescue.