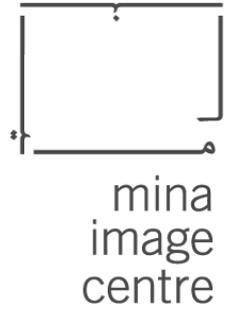


# Beirut Kaputt?



Beirut *Kaputt?*

Curated by: Stephane Sisco

Opening: 12pm 4 May, 2021

Duration: 4 May – 4 June, 2021

Mina Image Centre

## Installation

The installation **Beirut *Kaputt?*** is a reflection on the representation of violence. It consists of two juxtaposed works: a video montage of social media clips of the Beirut Port explosion and the painting ***All That Remains*** by Lebanese artist Ayman Baalbaki.

The project allows us to reflect on the constant recycling of traumatic news, imagery, headlines and captions and how this can add to, rather than appease, our traumatic experiences. How, rather than engaging in nuanced reflection, fast media often exploits traumatic events by triggering a most basic human emotion: fear.

## Curatorial Text

By Stephane Sisco

There are events that take place where the context of the moment is key. Without even mentioning the event itself, people will ask, in the past tense: Where were you? And then there are events that take place where even words well-known to a place like Beirut are unable to reflect the current reality: *explosion, blast, like Hiroshima!* For nothing can describe this moment despite the amount of local experiences of violence. And so, to really *grasp* it, video clips are circulated around the world, but only momentarily – a perpetual war of attention waged by the social media networks – until the moment that Donald Trump, for example, comes out with an absurdity such as, “Looks like a terrible attack” which means absolutely nothing but nonetheless provides a caption to a confusing and blurry visual.



The POTUS and the social media algorithms offer thousands of captions. He and thousands of others, incapable of rational evaluation, overestimate their competencies and provide their own interpretations. Rumours that only add to people’s anxieties (cognitive bias 1). He and thousands of others give precedence to information that confirms their preconceived ideas and give no value to ideas that are contrary to their preconceptions. (Cognitive bias 2). He and thousands of others isolate themselves with others like them, consolidating followers in groups of cognitive isolation (cognitive bias 3). The term bias refers to a systematic deviation from any analytical, logical and rational thinking in relation to reality. To resist is to not let reality be biased.

## Project: Condotta

Condotta was born out of an increasingly angry weariness in the face of ever more wars represented from biased, mythologized or fantasized angles. Condotta has a modern ambition to continue an approach and a reflection on the representation of war initiated by the Ancients. Sophocles' Ajax ends with the suicide of one of the greatest heroes of the Trojan War, yet Sophocles had been a *strategos* during the wars against the Persians. The piece can also be read as a description of post-traumatic stress disorder and like a veteran's testimony, in front of an audience of veterans and soldiers engaged against Sparta. It seems to us that those who have been in contact with extreme pain, suffering or death have no problem relating to Greek tragedies. The essence of the tragedy is when all parties are both right and wrong with neither one knowing it. This is another theme that Condotta draws from Antiquity and from its first descriptions of warlike events: reality as it is and the difficulties that come with recounting it.

## Biographies

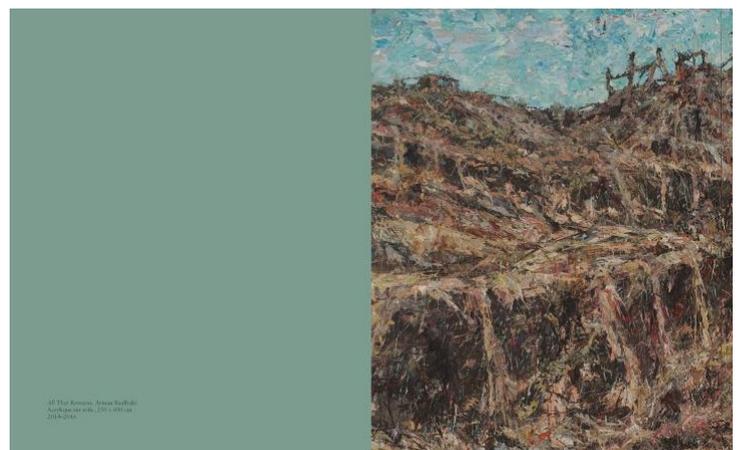
### **Stephane Sisco**

The curator of Beirut *Kaputt?* is Stephane Sisco, founder of Condotta – Art and Stories about War. His work is centered on the representation, narration and perception of war. He has been a crisis analyst starting on the field in Cambodia in 1988 and ending in The Democratic Republic of Congo in 2019.



### **Ayman Baalbaki**

Ayman Baalbaki is a Lebanese painter who lives and work in Beirut. Born in 1975 in Odeissé, Lebanon, he studied Fine Arts in Beirut and at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Decoratifs in Paris. Ayman draws most of his inspiration from the Lebanese Civil War. His painting *All That Remains* has been generously lent to Mina Image Centre for the purpose of this intervention by The Saadallah & Loubna Khalil Foundation.



## Space: Mina Image Centre

Mina Image Centre is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of the image in all its forms. With a yearly schedule of regular exhibitions and a dynamic program of corresponding events, Mina seeks to showcase the work of local artists from diverse backgrounds and across a variety of disciplines.

As an important hub for the local cultural scene, Mina offers its space as a platform for artists and the wider public to come together to exhibit, debate and reflect, promoting creativity and diversity through art, discussion and ideas.

On 4th August, 2020, Mina sustained considerable damage during the Beirut Port explosion. Mina has since decided to come back to life and hopes to be a part of the rebirth of Beirut's once-thriving cultural scene. The first phase of renovation has been completed and reconstruction works will be ongoing until the space is once again fully functional.

### Address:

Stone Gardens Building  
Darwich Haddad Street  
Port District, Beirut

### Opening hours:

Tuesday – Saturday  
11 am – 7 pm



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This project was made possible with the generous support of Condotta, The Drosos Foundation and The Saadallah & Loubna Khalil Foundation.

**CONDOTTA**  
ART AND STORIES ABOUT WAR

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**SAADALLAH & LOUBNA KHALIL**  
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