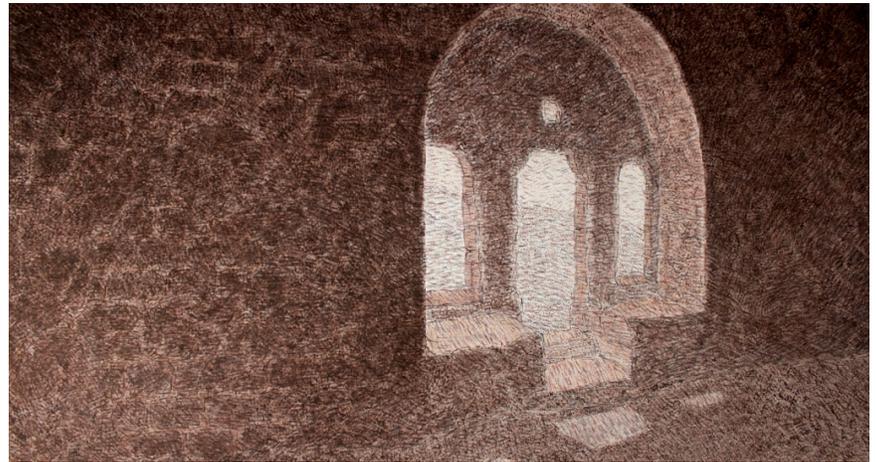


Press release  
For immediate release  
April 2011

# the mosaic rooms



 THE MOSAIC ROOMS  
ARE AN A.M. QATTAN  
FOUNDATION PROJECT



Remember-Forgive 2009 © John Halaka

## John Halaka

### *Landscapes of Desire*

6-25 May 2011

The Mosaic Rooms, 226 Cromwell Road, London, SW5 0SW

An exciting exhibition of drawings by renowned activist artist John Halaka will open at the Mosaic Rooms on 6 May 2011.

The drawings, from the series *Landscapes of Desire*, take their inspiration from the ruins of Palestinian homes and villages destroyed during and after the 1948 exodus. Halaka uses the images to reflect an ongoing effort to annihilate a Palestinian culture that refuses to disappear and an indigenous people that refuse to be swept away. Depicting the ruins of stone homes from devastated Palestinian villages such as Kafr Bir'im, Lifta, Al-Bassa, A'mka and Kuikat, the drawings are a declaration that the persistence of memory is a crucial act of political resistance and cultural survival.

The images are rendered with ink and rubber stamped words. The repeated stamping of the words defines the forms, textures and tones of the landscapes. These words become a visual mantra, compelling us to 'remember', 'resist', 'return', 'rebuild' and prepare to 'forgive'.

Halaka comments: "I view forgiveness as one of the most challenging, yet the most critical final stage of a successful non-violent resistance campaign waged by the Palestinians against their occupiers... History teaches all who have suffered or continue to suffer under the tyranny of an oppressor, that without cultivating an emotional state of forgiveness the victims risk becoming the monster they wish to destroy."

John Halaka is of Palestinian descent and was born in El Mansoura, Egypt, in 1957. He is a Professor of Painting and Drawing at the University of San Diego, where he has taught since 1991. Halaka is an activist artist whose creative work serves as a vehicle for meditation on personal, cultural and political concerns.

He creates images that raise questions, for himself as well as for the viewer, about some of the pressing issues of our time. He has exhibited his work in solo and group exhibitions across the United States. This is his first exhibition in the UK.

John Halaka will give a talk at the Mosaic Rooms on Saturday 7 May at 12 noon. For further information, visit [www.mosaicrooms.org](http://www.mosaicrooms.org)

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### **Notes to editors**

- John Halaka is available for interview via Colman Getty. He will be in London from 4 – 9 May
- Images are available via Colman Getty
- Entry to the exhibition is free
- The Mosaic Rooms are open from 11 am – 6pm Monday to Friday and from 11 am to 4pm on Saturday
- The Mosaic Rooms, a leading independent arts space in west London, deliver a high quality, contemporary, progressive cultural programme from the Middle East and internationally. They are managed by the A.M. Qattan Foundation, a UK charity dedicated to the support of culture and education in Palestine and the Arab world. The Foundation's London office, headed by one of its trustees, Omar Al-Qattan, is responsible for the Mosaic Rooms' programme. The Rooms are part of the Culture and Arts Programme of the A.M. Qattan Foundation.
- The Mosaic Rooms is situated on the corner of the Cromwell Road and Earl's Court Road in Kensington, London, a short walk from Earl's Court Underground Station and Exhibition Centre.
- For further information about The Mosaic Rooms and the A.M. Qattan Foundation visit [www.mosaicrooms.org](http://www.mosaicrooms.org)