

Press release
For immediate release

the mosaic rooms

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



June 10, 1949: credit IDF and Defense Archive



October 28, 1948: credit IDF and Defense Archive

Ariella Azoulay

From Palestine to Israel

A Photographic Record of Destruction & State Formation, 1947-1950

4-25 November 2011

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

This November, the Mosaic Rooms in Kensington will present an extraordinary photographic exhibition documenting the early years of the Israeli state, curated by celebrated visual theorist Ariella Azoulay. *From Palestine to Israel* is a collection of photographs, previously confined to Israeli state archives, which depict four crucial years in the history of Palestine/Israel: 1947 to 1950. This is the first time that many of these images have been shown outside Israel.

Through over 200 striking images, Azoulay provides a new account of the first years of the Israeli State and its relationship with the remaining Palestinians, a subject that has been previously ignored or only partially acknowledged in both Israel and the West. The photographs featured tell the story of how the Palestinian majority in Mandatory Palestine became a minority in Israel, while the Jewish minority established a new political entity in which it became a majority ruling a minority Palestinian population. As a leading visual theorist, Azoulay is able to provide fascinating analytical explanation of the images. This unique exhibition opens to coincide with the publication of Azoulay's accompanying book, *From Palestine to Israel: A Photographic Record of Destruction and State Formation, 1947-1950*, by Pluto Press on 3 November.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of talks on the fascinating relationship between archival photography, film and the writing (or re-writing) of history.

Ariella Azoulay comments: "The constituent violence recorded in photos from these years should not be mistakenly and anachronistically read as signs of unavoidable national conflict. What was and still is truly unavoidable is not national conflict, but rather co-existence of Jews and Palestinians in a shared territory and the open space for a variety of forms to shape, practice, express and represent this co-existence. The past cannot be changed perhaps, except in this sense: it can be shown to be incomplete, the closures it seemingly imposed can be reopened, dormant potentialities can surface again and transform the present horizon of the political imagination, for the sake of moulding a still indeterminate future."

Ariella Azoulay directs the Photo-Lexic project at the Minerva Humanities Centre at Tel Aviv University, Israel. She is the author of *Civil Imagination: Political Ontology of Photography* (2011), *The Civil Contract of Photography* (2008), *Once Upon a Time: Photography Following Walter Benjamin* (2006) and *Death's Showcase: The Power of Image in Contemporary Democracy* (2001). She won the 2002 Infinity Award for Writing, presented by the International Centre for Photography for excellence in the field of photography.

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Notes to editors

- Ariella Azoulay is available for interview via Colman Getty
- Images are available via Colman Getty
- Entry to the exhibition is free
- The Mosaic Rooms are open from 11am – 6pm Monday to Friday and from 11am 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
- Supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England
- *From Palestine to Israel: A Photographic Record of Destruction and State Formation, 1947-1950* is published by Pluto Press on 3 November at £17.99. For further information or to request a review copy, contact jonw@plutobooks.com