

Zaid Saad
Visual Artist



Zaid Saad, b. in Baghdad 1991, graduated from the visual art department at the College of Fine Art, Baghdad University in 2015. He is one of the founder of the artist collective TARKIB.

Since 2016, he works intermediate and conceptual. He is interested in concepts more than in 2D expressions because he has more options to work on compositions, shapes, forms and subjects. His art pieces focus on subjects related to migration and humanity. In his installations and graphic art he likes to use stamp and stencil techniques. Since 2020, he works on his new series of abstract concrete sculptures.

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I DO NOT NEED IT



I DO NOT NEED IT

Concrete sculptures, Room-Installation, Mixed Media
2023

The building of walls and fences has recently regained popularity among policymakers in Europe and the U.S. alike, to curb illegal immigration. Border walls do not stop immigration but shift migration patterns and harm integration. It entails many financial and non-financial costs for migrants, destination countries and societies at large.

Zaid Saad is reflecting in his art the 'journey of death', how refugees and migrants name their journey of crossing borders to reach a specific destination country, from the perspective of a refugee.



I DO NOT NEED IT

Room-Installation, Mixed Media
2023

He showed a one fifty by two metre handmade BRC fence with barbed wire up top. He refers to the displayed photo showing fleeing refugees while passing a barbed wired borderline. In his installation sculpture, he is trying to express what people exactly in this moment feel: heavy pressure, extreme fear, tremendous uncertainty. The inner turmoil might feel emotionally heavy, like concrete is.

Therefore, he installed in the middle of the wall a concrete block, which represent the refugees. The 'refugee block' is connected to the ground on each side with an orange rope. The orange rope expresses both the roots in both territories, but also the danger from the border police of both sides. In many countries, border officials use brutal violence to push back refugees and migrants who walk across their borders.



I DO NOT NEED IT



WHO DESERVES



WHO DESERVES

Found Object
2022

The work WHO DESERVES consisted of three oil barrels, but instead of filled with oil, the tanks were filled with red liquid symbolizing human blood. On the barrels Zaid Saad wrote by using stencil technique:

HUMAN BLOOD
FRESH BLOOD EACH DAY
0,001 \$
NEW KILLED
ALWAYS CHECK THE RECEIVER IF HE/SHE
DESERVES IT.

Zaid Saad is staggering about the sheer amount of unnecessary human loss and bloodshed attributable to war or terrorist attacks. For him, it seems like that human life is cheaper than any other product such as oil. Therefore, he redesigned a barrel of oil to a barrel of blood ready for sale in the street.



5. BAGHDAD WALK, Al Rasheed Street, 2022



Is the life ring that is offered to refugees
really a life ring?
Is the refugee treated like a human being?
Does the life ring save the refugees upon
arrival or is they drowning at another kind?

هل طوق النجاة الذي يجره المهاجرين
هو حقاً طوق ناة؟
هل يعامل المهاجرين كإنسان؟
هل طوق النجاة ينقذ المهاجرين عند
الوصول ام انه عرفهم بمرح أخرى؟

CONCRETE o

Concrete sculptures, Room-Installation
2022

A life ring is supposed to save people's life. But, what means a life ring for a refugee? Zaid Saad, a visual artist who is devoted to conceptual art, is asking what is written on the wall: "Is the life ring, that is offered to refugees, really a life saver?".

We see three life rings made out of concrete, hanging on the wall. We see a halved life ring made out of concrete on the ground. Concrete is heavy, like the decision you make to become a refugee, your experience on your journey as a refugee, your shock, how the destination country is dealing with you as a refugee. You think you are a human being, but you are only concrete, heavy to deal with. We see the colour of submarine, what people see if they are drowning. Our feet feel the water, what people feel if they are drowning.



8. TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Iraqi Artists Syndicate, 2022

CONCRETE o

Concrete sculptures, Room-Installation
2022

The colour orange is supposed to warn, to get attention, to get help. The colour orange appears in dark moments, as in his room-installation.

According to the World Migration Report 2020, published on the website of IOM, the number of migrants in the world has reached 272.000.000 humans. Are these 272.000.000 people humans or just concrete, heavy to deal with?

Zaid Saad is a visual artist. He is talking in his art about migration. "CONCRETE o" is part of his series of concrete sculptures. The letter 'o' in his title "CONCRETE o" refers to the form of a life ring: 'o'.



8. *TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Iraqi Artists Syndicate, 2022*

CONCRETE 0



BAGHDAD WALK IN BERLIN

Group Exhibition

23.06.-26.06.2022

Salon am Moritzplatz, Berlin

BAGHDAD WALK is an annual group exhibitions series which takes place in public spaces across the city of Baghdad, since 2018.

The exhibition BAGHDAD WALK IN BERLIN revealed how the participating artists developed artistic strategies and narratives in Baghdad's public space and presented selected works from the last four editions. On display were the works "ZANDUK" and "CONCRETE" by Zaid Saad.





ZANDUK
Photograph of an
intervention, 2018
Installation, 2022



CONCRETE
Sculpture
2022



CONCRETE w



CONCRETE w

Concrete sculpture

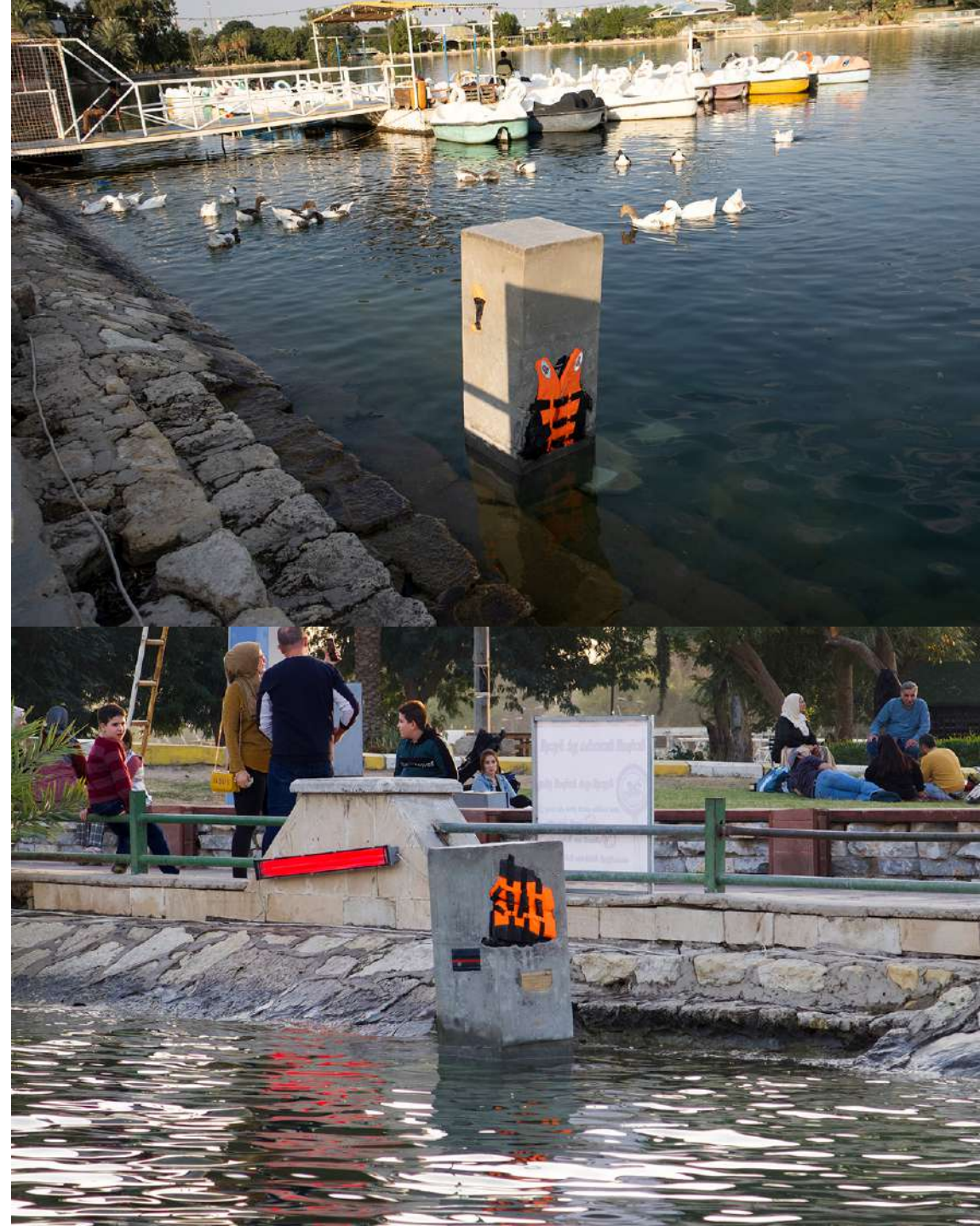
50cm x 150 cm

2021

The topic of immigration and exposing immigrants to danger is a purely human issue that people share sentimental around the world. CONCRETE g is addressing the topic of people smugglers. Many migrants choose the way to escape through the sea. Smugglers put them in rubber dinghies and give them a knife. As soon as they are in other territorial waters and see a fishing boat or a coast guard patron, they pierce the air chambers of the inflatable boats-then they are castaways and must be rescued.

Many migrants have been victimized by drowning or were killed during their journey. CONCRETE g symbolises a rubber dinghy and documents the suffering of the human beings who were forced to risk their lives and the life of their families.

7. TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Al Zawraa Park, 2021



CONCRETE ๑



CONCRETE q

Augmented Reality Sculpture
2021

Would you like to reach the other bank too? You can come to our boat. Do you have any money with you? The weather is ok so far and we still have seats available. Our lifeboat is not fragile like the others. In contrast, it is very solidly built. Water cannot penetrate, waves cannot turn it, we sit on it safely. It's a new type, new generation. Made in Iraq. Are you coming?

The route is not the goal. For many people, a lifeboat represents fate and hope. In high seas, where gods cannot rule over supremacy, there is not much left beside faith and hope. Zaid Saad's AR work is titled "Concrete" and relates to a concrete reality. With a lifeboat made of concrete, the journey seems to be predestined. His artwork is a digital monument of longings, dreams and utopias. Carried by faith and hope, his digital boat cannot go down and floats over the lake like a ghost. Please jump on.

1. AR OPEN BAGHDAD, 2021



CONCRETE w and q

Concrete sculpture, AR sculpture
2021

CONCRETE w is a sculpture made out of concrete material and CONCRETE q is a 3D model, representing a sculpture made out of concrete. Both are representing a rubber dinghy and are reflecting his analysis in the topic of migration.

1. AR OPEN BAGHDAD, 2021



CONCRETE



CONCRETE

Sculpture
2021

Zaid Saad presented the first sculpture of his new series CONCRETE. His sculpture has the form similar to the Corona virus which affected the whole world the last two years. The concrete sphere represents the globe, the seven sticks the seven continents. The virus, that reached every place on the planet, made us aware how much the world is connect, how we travel between places, be it by train, plane or other means of transport, and how quickly national border are closed and crowds controlled with force.



4. BAGHDAD WALK, Baghdad International Train Station, 2021

HUMAN RIGHTS



HUMAN RIGHTS

Mixed Media | Light
2020

The world is very cruel, and it was supposed to be in service of a better human life. The interests of governments are pushing people into the scourge of war, migrations and manufactured viruses, in order to reshape the world with certain new limits and to impose new rules. Governments run in parallel line with humanity as well as human rights organizations that are now run by governments. Who protects human beings in this cruel world?

HUMAN RIGHTS is a conceptual work consisting of cardboard boxes stenciled with words describing modern humanity as I call it, the same words stamped by seals on framed paper, the lighting is low and makes everyone similar in color, this is what we are as human beings, similar in spite of our different languages, nationalities, races and orientations.



6. TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Online, 2020

HUMAN RIGHTS



HUMAN RIGHTS



WHY ME



WHY ME

Video-Installation
2020

The video installation WHY ME explores the situation that many residents of Haifa Street, and of the country in general, have been forced to leave or flee their homes. Zaid Saad invited visitors to stand in front of a chroma-key canvas – a green screen – and visually transported them to another place: a refugee camp, under the sea, or nowhere. The visitors could see themselves on a TV screen in those unknown territories.

3. BAGHDAD WALK, Haifa Street, 2020



WHY ME



HALF



HALF

Installation

2020

It is very painful to lose half of your life. Life is the people who share your life and future projects with you.

A door is installed in the middle of a street without being connected to a wall or even a doorframe. The door is permanently closed and deprived of its usual function, meant to provoke irritation and disconcerting feelings. People cross thresholds and close doors. They step into another life and end the lives they leave behind. They leave almost half of their dreams behind; they abandon the projects they had planned to do with those who remain standing on the other side. Those leaving cannot return to those lost plans. Those staying cannot continue. The other half is gone. The artist's installation was presented in front of the Central Bank of Iraq. Central banks steer the economies of countries. The reasons that drive people to leave their home countries in search of a better life are often connected to hope for a better economic and financial situation. All too often, closing the door and leaving shatters dreams and projects on both sides. Hopes and dreams remain stuck halfway, partly with those in front of the door and partly with the other half on the other side – unseen, unknown to each other.



TISHREEN REVIEW – Group Exhibition, Bait Tarkib, 2019

HALF



DNA

Mixed Media

2019

The number 7 is a holy number in the belief of religions. It is the same with humans. We are holy.



FORB - Group Exhibition, Bait Tarkib, 2019

IMPOSSIBLE

Mixed Media

2019

It is impossible to say, that Iraq is
one single religion.



FORB - Group Exhibition, Bait Tarkib, 2019

REST



REPETITION

Room-Installation

Oil on canvas

12 pieces, 20 x 30 cm

2019

The symptom 'Rejection' pushes us sometimes to make a crime against ourselves. This refers us to the question: What is, if the world is without borders, which divided us in different nationalities.



5. TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Abu Nawas Theater, 2019



ZANDUK

Installation
2018

Beside the abandoned Abu Nawas Theater Zaid Saad installed 11 cardboard moving boxes. Zanduk is the Arabic word for “box”. The eleven cardboard boxes were prepared as a package and were addressed “From Iraq to the Sea”, from insecurity to another insecurity or even death. The walkers were listening to people’s stories about their loved ones who left Iraq. Zaid Saad addresses the wave of migrations that took away many Iraqis in the last few years. He is convinced it is time to work in the city rather than leave. The site-specific installation was positioned on the riverbank of the Tigris, which leads towards the sea. In the background, on the other side of the river, the wall of the International Zone, where the national decision-makers reside, is visible.

1. BAGHDAD WALK, Abu Nawas, 2018



ZANDUK

**Years 5-1
Seed of the
Community**



**from iraq
to the sea**

DOLL



DOLL

Room-Installation
2018

Underaged marriage seems to be a controversial topic. DOLL mirrors the parallized status of a person, who is a victim of child marriage, performed by Israa Ali.



3. *TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Bait Tarkib, 2018*

DOLL



o.T.

Animation

2017

In 2017, German artist Klaus Killisch and US poet Robert Fitterman - both founding members of the art collective Collective Task - collaborated with about a dozen of Iraqi artists. The artists from Baghdad chose the task: **MAKE MUSIC WITH YOUR OWN TOOLS!** As is the guideline with Collective Task, they had one month to complete their responds.

COLLECTIVE TASK BAGHDAD 2017 @ BAIT TARKIB



<https://youtu.be/x56A9hm5JgU>

FUTURE



FUTURE

Room-Installation
2017

Iraqi children are repeatedly and relentlessly targeted. All children have the right to protection. They have the right to survive, to be safe, belong, to receive adequate care and to grow up in a protective environment.



3. *TARKIB* Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Shatha Al Jameel, 2017

FUTURE



TERRORIST FACTORY



TERRORIST FACTORY

Room-Installation

2016

Zaid Saad addresses in his installation the influence of misused and misinterpreted cultural traditions and critical manners on the new generation of Iraqi citizens. The heart of his installation is a completely wrapped newborn babe wearing a gas mask and hanging on chains. The chains lead to four walls with paintings and pictures capturing four social-critical themes effecting the growing up of the new generation: child abuse, violence in TV, religious extremism and gender division. TERRORIST FACTORY wants to create an awareness in the observer about the overall liability towards the preservation of the innocence of children and the proper education. Zaid Saad shows dangerous influences who let the people even guide to terrorism.



2. TARKIB Baghdad Contemporary Arts Festival, Muntada Al Masrah, 2016

TERRORIST FACTORY



TERRORIST FACTORY

