

THE EXILIC AESTHETIC

Articulations of Patriotism by the Expatriate

Andrew Gayed

INTRODUCTION

Edward Said's writing has taught us that human beings make their own history, and they also make their own cultures and ethnic identity. Survival in fact is about the connections between these things. Youssef Nabil's self-portraits will be the site of exploration that will drive my theoretical ideas of exile and identity.* I will demonstrate and support exile as being an identity category, and foster new meanings of exilic identity and themes of migration with Youssef Nabil's vibrant photographs being a case study for my analysis. Most importantly, I will discuss how what I call an Exilic Aesthetic is created through Youssef Nabil's self-identification in his mediated photographs, articulating cultural dichotomies facing the Middle Eastern diaspora in North America through his own visual narrative.

Born in Cairo in 1972, Nabil grew up in Egypt as part of the Muslim majority. While studying French Literature and Arts at Ain Shams University in Cairo in 1992, Nabil was confronted by American photographer, David LaChapelle, about filming in Egypt and finding Egyptian models. Nabil then worked with LaChapelle from 1993 to 1994 in New York, later going back to Cairo to finish his studies and military service. In 1997, Nabil met Peruvian fashion photographer, Mario Testino in Cairo, then went to Paris and worked with him between 1997 and 1998. It was after this time that Nabil wanted to return to Cairo and start exhibiting his work.

* A obra foi realizada para o núcleo de Nova Teledramaturgia da TV Cultura. No site da TV, a sua apresentação ressalta a contaminação do cotidiano e do documentário por aspectos ficcionais como uma das principais tónicas da obra.

Shirin Neshat,* Nabil states that it was mainly in 2003 that he started producing self-portraits; it was the year he left Egypt to live in France. It is during this pivotal moment in Youssef Nabil's art production that I want to focus and assess the narrative function of his self-portraits, and how they foster new themes of migration and border crossing.

FORMAL AESTHETICS

I would like to take the time to discuss the formal elements Nabil employs in his artistic practice. His photographs comprise of hand-tinted silver gelatin prints, disrupting our notion of the photographic medium. Hand painted photography is a traditional Egyptian photographic technique, that was widely used from hand painted family portraits to hand painted movie posters in Cairo's streets; it is an old technique that was still practiced in Egypt in the 1970s and 1980s. Youssef Nabil went to one of the last portrait studios practicing this method of photography "to learn this old technique and be able to add a contemporary edge to it in [his] work."** As Michael Stevenson discusses Nabil's oeuvre as being part of the discourse of both photography and painting, his has been located within the Western art practices of David Hockney and Wolfgang Tillmans,** but subtly shifting the way intimacy is represented, something rarely acknowledged in Western art practice and traditional portraiture. Formally, these photographs are then not meant to be true-to-life representations as the medium would suggest, but hand-tinting the images transforms them into an uncanny and illusory realm that is no longer within the bounds of traditional photography. Hand tinting is a method of manipulating these personal images as a subversive way to transform reality and interject lived experience and self-narration of one's personal reality. I argue that this hand tinting is Useful to the destabilization of linear narrative, and achieves what Homi K. Bhabha describes in his writing as a necessary tool for incorporating subaltern narratives; a rupturing of "the past being linked to the necessary future."**** In this way, I will discuss how these artworks reflect identity navigated through exile and migration, and foster new ways of understanding expatriates and the broader migrant population.

* Amer, Ghada, Faten Hamama, Youssef Nabil, Shirin Neshat, and Octavio Zaya. *I Won't Let You Die*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2008. Page 10.

** Sans, Jeremy. *As Close As I Can Get*. Interview with Youssef Nabil, Venice. June 2007. Access on artist website. http://www.youssefnabil.com/articles/as_close_as_i_can_get.html

*** Emin, Tracy, Youssef Nabil, Simon Njami, Mark Sealy, and Michael Stevenson. *Sleep in My Arms*. South Africa: Cape Town, 2007. Page 88.

**** Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Page 205.

EXILE AS IDENTITY

Exile in the contemporary context of the Western Empire* reflects the scale of modern warfare, imperialism, and the quasi-theological ambitions of oppressive regimes of power, perpetuating the high number of refugees, displaced persons, and need for mass immigration. Exile, as explained in Said's foundational text, *Reflections on Exile*, is described as being produced by human beings for human beings, a state of being that is meant to tear people from the nourishment of tradition, family and geography.** Said makes powerful differentiations between exiles, refugees and expatriates, differentiations that I will challenge in understanding exile as an identity category, and complicate its articulations in political art production.

While it is true that anyone prevented from returning home is an exile, exile originated in the age-old practice of banishment. Once banished, the exile lives an anomalous and miserable life, with the stigma of being an outsider. Refugees, on the other hand, are a creation of the twentieth-century state. According to Said, expatriates voluntarily live in an alien country, usually for personal or social reasons.*** Here, the key word I wish to discuss is the use of the term voluntary; I wish to complicate the boundaries predicated by Said, dictating the distinctions between expatriate and exile. For, these politicized categories of "voluntary" and "involuntary" do not account for migration and separation as a purposeful mode of survival, necessary for human safety. Youssef Nabil articulates his own experience with border-crossing and diasporic identity in his interview with Shirin Neshat, stating:

"I think you leave your country only when you have to, when you feel that you can't live there anymore. You leave and try to find another place, where other people share your ideas, your thoughts, and your problems. In a way these people become like family and you create your own country around you, and this is what each of us did in a different way."

(Amer, Ghada, Faten Hamama, Youssef Nabil, Shirin Neshat, and Octavio Zaya. I Won't Let You Die. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2008. Page 12.).

This quote articulates that the act of leaving a place in and of itself is a politically charged action, for we leave out of necessity. This notion of necessity is one that I find too limited in Said's definitions demarcating the expatriates and those experiencing exile.

* Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

** Edward W. Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000.

*** Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000. Page 181.

For the boundaries become blurry when one is willingly leaving for personal safety, and there is a seemingly unintentional hierarchy of oppression created when discussing migration in these terms. In this way, I will discuss exile in this paper as a blurring of the definitions predicated by Said, a mixture of both expatriatism and exile, comprising of an exilic identity that reflects the trauma of migration based on survival and personal necessity. When broadening Said's notions of exile and expatriation, we can discuss their relation to one another to foster a new meaning of exilic identity; one that doesn't exclude and limit the precursors of personal identification based on survival, and one that creates an identity category that crosses borders, and breaks barriers of thought and experience.

Nationalism needs to be contextually understood as an essential association with exile. Said's definition of nationalism, one that I will use for the purpose of this section, is an assertion of belonging in and to a place, people, and heritage; it affirms the home created by a community of language, culture and customs. All nationalisms in their early stages develop as a condition of estrangement. In time, successful nationalisms consign truth exclusively to themselves and relegate falsehood and inferiority to outsiders.* The perilous territory of not belonging and its site as identity formation is the aspect I am investigating. This is where people were banished in past histories, and where in the post 9-11 era, immense collections of peoples loiter as refugees and displaced persons. Nationalisms are about groups, but in the very acute sense, exile is solitude experienced outside the group. Exile cannot be discoursed independently from nationalism and nationhood, for the discussion needs to have almost a cause and effect relationship; one that acknowledges exile as being a byproduct of nationalism's instruments of othering those that fall outside its structures.

I will analyze theories of the nation in relation to the aesthetic function of Youssef Nabil's photographs to displace linear conceptions of nationhood and homeland. The crux of this argument relies on art as being used as a signifier, a metaphor of national construction that can include the narratives of the subaltern. Foucault outlines subaltern as being a set of subjugated knowledge's or peoples that have been disqualified as inadequate;** and with Gayatri Spivak's text, *Can the Subaltern Speak* in mind, the Exilic Aesthetic will be the catalyst for this metaphor to create a language for the subaltern to express themes of migration and exile through visual art production. Metaphor— as the etymology of the Greek word meaning “to transfer” would suggest— transfers the meaning of home and belonging by crossing borders of cultural differences that constructed nationalisms. However, it is this use of the metaphor that Homi K. Bhabha complicates in his writing on *Dissemination*, for he insists that the metaphor must be a non-linear narrative that highlights the intersections of time and place that problematize the modernity of the Western nation.*** For visual representation to function as the subversion of state and nationhood while simultaneously being a voice of subaltern identity, Frederic Jameson's notion of 'situational consciousness'**** or national allegory is of use to our theory.

* Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000. Page 176.

** Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *In other worlds: essays in cultural politics*. New York: Routledge, 1988. Page 25.

*** Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Page 205.

**** Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Page 205.

In this, the telling of the individual story and the individual experience is ultimately involved in telling the collective narrative, and the multiple stories that constitute subjugated histories.

As the following section explaining the Exilic Aesthetic will illustrate, Youssef Nabil's lens-based artwork lends itself to this idea of one out of many. *His artwork will stand as a telling detail that emerges as a metaphor for national existence, and a special expression of unitary people.

EXILIC AESTHETIC

"I don't think it's about where you actually live. For me it is about being honest, and about what you feel about yourself. No one can really tell us that you're less Iranian or that I'm less Egyptian because we live in the West, or that you're not supposed to be this or that ... We talk about issues that are related to us; we cannot do work that we have no relation to."

(Amer, Ghada, Faten Hamama, Youssef Nabil, Shirin Neshat, and Octavio Zaya. I Won't Let You Die. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2008. Page 12.)

Youssef Nabil's self-portraits employ a multitude of tactics that create a unique visual narrative, illustrating themes of migration. What I term the Exilic Aesthetic is not only about uncovering the lived experience of the exilic artist, but (and more importantly), it is a way to articulate the complex signifiers of an artwork, and understand their significance to larger thematic discourses around migration, articulation of culture, and expatriation. The Exilic Aesthetic is a collection of artistic strategies used for articulating exile through visual language; this paper will analyze the artistic strategies found in Nabil's self-portraits thus far. These sociological themes of displaced persons encompass a magnitude of cultural baggage, many of which are still being theorized and trying to be understood by scholars today. Thomas Hylland Eriksen even articulates in his writing that some of the most promising avenues of research into transnationalism concern the relationship between the old country and the new one.** What I argue, is that given the importance of lived experience and first-hand accounts within sociological studies of expatriation, self-portraits such as these lend themselves to a vital passage of understanding the exilic experience, and illuminate how culture and nationalism is articulated by the Middle Eastern diaspora in North America.

* Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Page 204.

** Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, 3rd ed. ed. New York: Pluto Press, 2010.

This conflict has to do with issues of culture and hybridity, their intersection, and how expatriates and exiles articulate culture. This complex web of nationalism and nationhood is a well-documented social pandemic plaguing Middle Eastern diasporas in North America, a struggle Nadine Naber refers to as articulating Arabness.* She identifies the banalities of identity formation as a struggle between two cultures, a dichotomy that is built between the immigrant population who clutch their nationalism (and in effect intensify its tenets), resulting in a hyper-nationalistic identity that conflicts with their current geographical location. The binary is also enforced through American media outlets and anti-terrorist sentiments that are a result of the 9-11 attacks. While these points will be argued and discussed in greater detail at a later part in this analysis, we begin to see the importance (if not, urgency) of understanding the articulation of culture, nationalism, and identity formation of the Middle Eastern diaspora in North America. Arjun Appadurai's theorization of the many 'scapes' that constitute the disjunctures between economy, culture and politics are helpful in understanding the production of this cultural dichotomization. Terming five dimensions of cultural flow—ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes—** makes clear how nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities as well as sub-national groupings and movements constitute the multiple narratives within the construction of nationhood. The artworks of Youssef Nabil provide an exceptional case study to understand how culture and identity is navigated through political art production, and how art is used as a means of necessity and a tool of self-actualization. It is this articulation of self that creates an Exilic Aesthetic, a visual language that illuminates Youssef Nabil's self-portraiture as a vehicle for understanding larger themes of expatriation and articulating Arabness.

This photographic language fosters the new meanings of exile and expatriation I argue in this paper, as well as creating a unique aesthetic; when these narrative structures are employed together, they illustrate thematic tensions of displacement and homeland in its complexity. While the strategies employed by the artist are repeated in sometimes an archetypal fashion, I will discuss a few specific pieces that best represent the conflicting narratives within Nabil's self-portraits. It should also be noted that Nabil's self-portraits tell a very different story than his portraits of celebrities and friends, and the latter will be discussed in separate chapters of this analysis. It is through the use of language, composition, fragmentation, and juxtapositions that these narrative tools are combined to create the Exilic Aesthetic.

First, I would like to emphasize the use of language, and how the titles of each self-portrait reflect themes of displacement and nomadic existence. The use of language is best exemplified when looking at: Never Wanted to Leave—Self-Portrait, Paris 2007***; Will I Ever Come Again—Self-Portrait, Havana, 2005****; and I Leave Again—Self-Portrait, Sardinia, 2005.*****

* Naber, Nadine Christine. *Arab America: Gender, Cultural Politics, and Activism*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

** Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

*** See appendix A

**** See appendix B

***** See appendix C

The self-portraits are purposefully taken outside of Egypt,* linking his identity to the current land associated with each portrait. This idea of being dislocated and uprooted is a reoccurring theme in Nabil's work, also noted in the plurality of self-portraits, most with different geographical location, and all purposefully labeled as "self-portraits" regardless of location. The poetic titles also play a large role in understanding migratory notions of identity and nomadic existence. When looking at *Never Wanted To Leave*, the audience is unsure if Nabil is referring to leaving Cairo, his native place, or Paris, the place he left in 2006 to move to New York. Given the context of Nabil's border crossing, homeland is a blurred concept, and is further implicated by notions of culture and heritage. In her writing, Keri E. Iyall Smith discusses Georg Simmel's 1908 essay *The Stranger*, summarizing the stranger as occupying a hybrid identity space. The stranger arrives today and has the potential to leave tomorrow; strangers are simultaneously members of the community and not members of the community at all.** As the stranger is an identity that might emerge from combining two separate identities (as we see in the hybrid identities of the diaspora), a solution I pose through the Exilic Aesthetic and reformulations of exile is to create a new identity that encompasses these local and global identity forms. In unpacking the many complex ideas of this argument, we need to ask ourselves, is hybridity simply the combination of two separate identities? What other options of identity formations are there for subjects in-between? Are those in-between necessarily the stranger? To help clarify the notion of stranger, I will use Ruth Phillip's notion of the stranger-artist, a political refugee, an immigrant, a traveler.*** While Phillips develops her definition to complicate settler-colonizer relationships to indigenous artists, the idea of the stranger-artist in its broader sense as describing the artist as de-territorialized through exile and immigration can be useful in contextualizing stranger identity.

Here, with the artist as stranger, we can see how political art production can be used as the tool to navigate these murky waters, and help articulate this new identity and self-actualization when understanding culture, homeland, and exile, and the intersection of the them. Both *Will I Ever Come Again* and *I Leave Again* follow a similar theme of disassociation with the land, yet simultaneously the land is also intertwined in Nabil's self-identification, as reflected in his incongruity of location, and where homeland really is.

Another narrative tool used to discuss nomadic existence is composition. Rarely presenting his face to the viewer, these self-portraits are taken with his back to the camera. This shielding of his face is a narrative tool that reoccurs in many of Nabil's portraits, working synergistically with the conflicting titles to create tension and fragmented notions of identity.

* The portraits taken within Egypt follow a different narrative structure that will be discussed at a later point in this analysis.

** Iyall Smith, Keri E. and Patricia Leavy. *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations. Studies in Critical Social Sciences*. Boston: Brill, 2008. Page 4.

*** Phillips, Ruth. "The Turn of the Primitive: Modernism, the Stranger and the Indigenous Artist." In *Exiles, Diasporas & Strangers*. London: Iniva, Institute of International Visual Arts, 2008. Page 47.

In an interview with Jerome Sans, Nabil talks about his self portraits being “a witness of this reflexion and the stories it has generated from place to place as each portrait is done in a different city, I felt in all of them that I was a visitor and I had to leave... the same feeling I had when I was living in Egypt... the same feeling always had about my whole existence.”* Here, we see the narratives in each piece work together as a collection of disjunctive identity formations, giving as a better idea of the effect of displacement and expatriation has on self-identification, and how this complexity is navigated through political art production.

. . .

As seen in the three portraits discussed thus far, fragmentation of Youssef Nabil’s body in his photographs can be interpreted as the disjuncture of identity, never letting the viewer see Nabil in his entirety. This poetic representation of himself as fragmented is also joined with visual clues to add emptiness and alienation with a place as seen in *My Time To Go—Self-portrait, Venice, 2007*,** or symbolic references to homeland and roots, as seen in *Self-Portrait with Roots, Los Angeles, 2008*.***

When looking at *My Time To Go—Self-portrait, Venice, 2007*, the narrative convention discussed earlier slightly shifts, showing us a profile of his face. This diptych however functions differently than the other narrative strictures, for an empty bed in one of the pictures juxtaposes Nabil laying restlessly in the other. This empty bed is shown creased and unmade, with a visible imprint of Nabil’s presence from the sister photograph displayed next to it. Nomadic existence is further emphasized in these photographs, showing the imprint of the self and the impermanence that is thematically rendered in all of Nabil’s self-portraits. This visual structure (and the ones previously discussed) is a larger composite of visual cues that create a language for collective human existence and migration. To make this point clearer, Said’s text *Movements and Migrations* lends itself as a tool to understand resistance imagery and opposition to the imperial empire. Said sees this resistance and self-identification as hybrid counter-energies which is based on discontinuity, political experience based on communities and interpretation rather than the powerful hegemony that dictates the identities of less powerful minorities. In this way, Nabil’s diptych is adding to a larger narrative (in conjunction with his other self-portraits) that actively renews and re-invents their identity opposing the hegemonic powers that create exile and expatriate its citizens. The difficulty in navigating this space of identity building is best identified by Shirin Neshat and her articulation of being a part of a global village:

* Sans, Jeremy. *As Close As I Can Get*. Interview with Youssef Nabil, Venice. June 2007. Access on artist website. http://www.youssefnabil.com/articles/as_close_as_i_can_get.html

** See Appendix D

*** See Appendix E

“Very few Muslim artists that I know seem to have the luxury of showing their art both in their own country and in the West. In the case of some artists like you and me, our public is mostly outside of our country, and at home people can only access it through the Internet. We therefore have a divided audience, with some who don't entirely understand the work but are drawn to it (in the West), and others who understand it but mostly dismiss it (in the Middle East). So we as artists learn to live in what they call the global village, and try to survive both emotionally and professionally.”

In *Self-Portrait with Roots*, Los Angeles, 2008, themes of homeland and belonging are expressed in the literal representation of roots. Once again showing a side profile, Nabil's body is fragmented and the composition is unbalanced with his body in the top corner of the image. Showing himself as a small part of a larger picture, the roots are engulfing his presence in the pictorial frame. In this picture, nature and environment are used to emphasize notions of displacement homeland, using the literal soil of Los Angeles to signify homeland, or a loss thereof. The visual depiction of roots is ironic when looking at Nabil's repertoire of self-portraits, one that implies the inability to form roots and the lack of the stability that comes with roots. Complicating our understanding of his identity in a (once again) contradictory intent, Nabil says, “I do my self-portraits in cities that I visit, in which I am just a visitor. I know I will be leaving in a few days. I feel the same way about my whole life, up until death. For me living is about coming to a place that is not yours, then having to go.”* Nabil's visual narrative in his self-portraiture seems to be self-antagonizing, creating a disconnect between language, imagery, and self-representation. This disconnect is used as a tool to articulate themes of expatriation, and also create a barrier to be experienced by the viewer, a barrier that prohibits a true understanding of Youssef Nabil from his self-portraiture. Emphasizing the importance of land, and homeland being an essential point of articulation within the Exilic Aesthetic, Bhabha correspondingly wrote “the recurrent metaphor of landscape as the inscape of national identity emphasizes the...question of social visibility, the power of the eye to naturalize the rhetoric of national affiliation and its forms of collective expression.”** This conflicting narrative is one that contributes, as I have argued, to an Exilic Aesthetic, one that allows the viewer to read the sociological impacts of migration and the simultaneous separation/articulation of culture, nationhood and identity.

* Amer, Ghada, Faten Hamama, Youssef Nabil, Shirin Neshat, and Octavio Zaya. *I Won't Let You Die*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2008. Page 11.

** Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Page 205.

PHOTOGRAPHY AS LANGUAGE

Important to the success of the Exilic Aesthetic being read (subconsciously) by viewers is piecing together visual clues that comprise a complex visual narrative that is unique to articulating the expatriate's identity. For this to happen, identity needs to be formed through visual elements that compose a visual language, a language that is the vessel for articulating the Exilic Aesthetic. This visual narrative is a way to express the complex signifiers of an artwork (in this case the self-portraits of Youssef Nabil), and understand their significance outside the sole experience of the individual artist, but as a signifier to larger thematic discourses around migration, articulation of culture, and expatriation.

Interestingly, Said speaks negatively of photographs or texts that are used "merely" to establish identity and presence for their innately ambiguous and anti-narrativist subjectivity.* Taken from John Berger's writing, *Another Way of Telling*, Said claims that photographs such as these, ones that solely depict a sense of presence, enter what Berger calls a control system. Using Berger's analysis, I would like to create another reading of these "wayward" photographs, and show how Youssef Nabil's self-portraits cannot be restricted to such reductive definitions, even if they are meant to be representative images of himself (being innately ambiguous to use Said's terminology). The premise of the photographic medium as Berger describes it, is one that does not even lend itself to Youssef Nabil's work, I argue, because of the way he hand paints his photographs, thus blurring the distinction between mediums. Berger explains "you can only make a photograph tell an explicit lie by elaborate tampering, collage, and re-photographing. You have in fact ceased to practice photography. Photography in itself has no language which can be turned."**

With this, I would like to articulate two things. Not only does Nabil then cease to fit within the traditional criticism of photography and its medium by Berger's definition, but also that the Exilic Aesthetic described in this essay can be the language created in these photographic narratives that is outside the traditional language of photography. I would like to show that Nabil manipulating the photograph is a political act, which not only establishes presence, as Said describes, but inserting his own narrative and subjectivity into the pictorial depiction of the photograph and its geography is an innately subversive action; in this way, Nabil is effectively writing his own history from the margins of photography. In being outside the narrative language Berger describes, one that is not innately photographic, this is where Nabil employs the Exilic Aesthetic to create a language expressing themes of migration, homeland, displacement, and diasporic identity within his solitary self-portraiture.

* Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 1st ed. New York: Knopf, 1993. Page 334.

** Berger, John and Jean Mohr. *Another Way of Telling*. 1st American ed. New York: Pantheon, 1982. Page 96.

Next, Berger describes photography as being invented for two reasons. The first is an ideological use, which treats the positivist evidence of a photograph representing truth, and the second is a popular but private use which cherishes a photograph to substantiate a subjective feeling.* Here, I argue that Youssef Nabil does not fit merely in either category; for, while the most obvious category his self-portraits belong is the latter, I argue that his self-narration of his photographs asserting his own identity narrative can also be seen in the positivist category of photography, one that exists to represent truth. Abstractly, this representation of truth is one that relates to the Exilic Aesthetic, a form of representation from the margins, and as we learned from Said, the “exile’s life is taken up with compensating for disorienting loss by creating a new world to rule.”

**

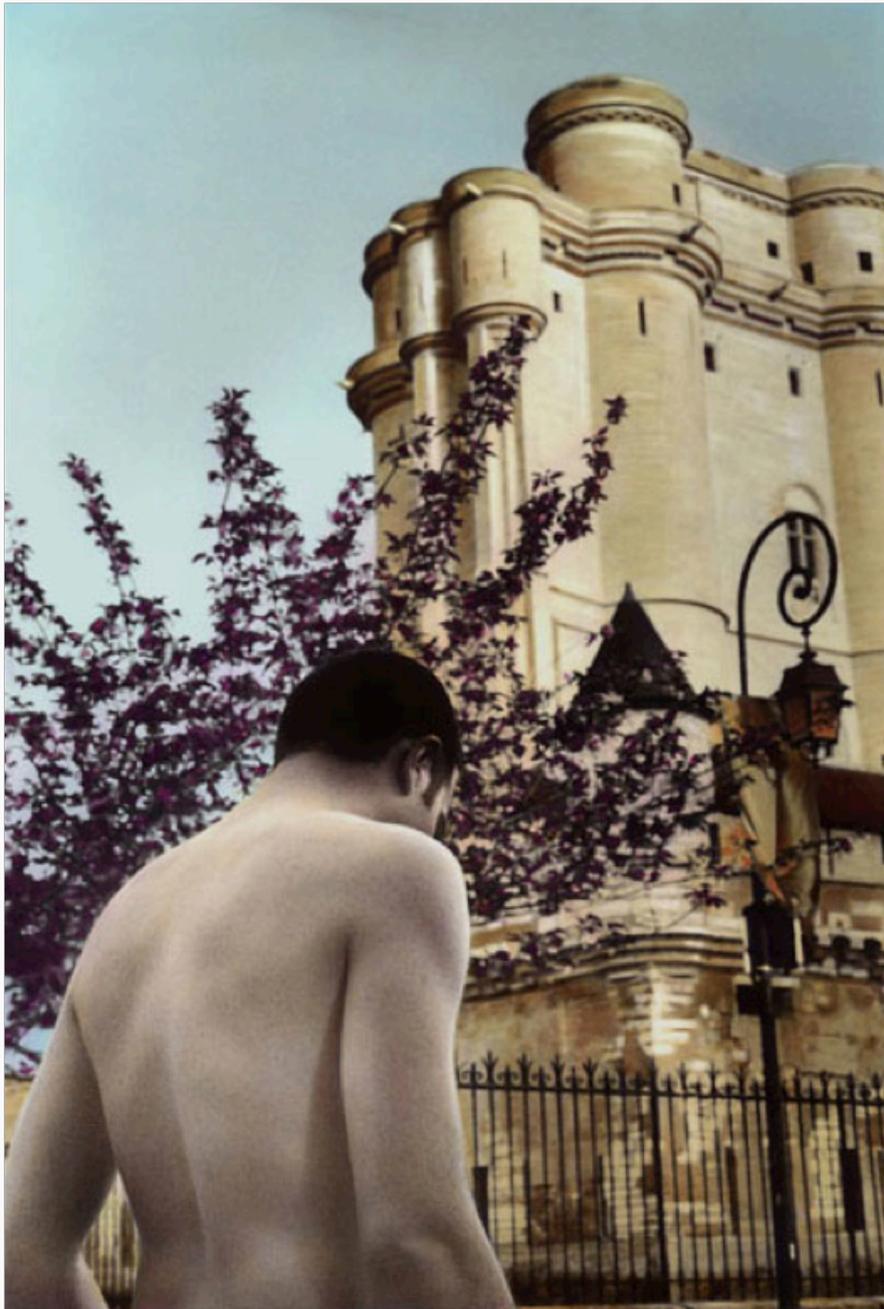
Here, this new world to rule is one that merges both Said’s theorization on exilic experience and Berger’s model of photographic representation to help illuminate the language created by artists in marginal states of existence, and how an Exilic Aesthetic is one that, while may not be created intentionally so, helps understand art production as a way of self-identification and assertion of the self while articulating themes of migration and diasporic identity.

* Berger, John and Jean Mohr. *Another Way of Telling*. 1st American ed. New York: Pantheon, 1982. Page 111

**Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000. Page 145.

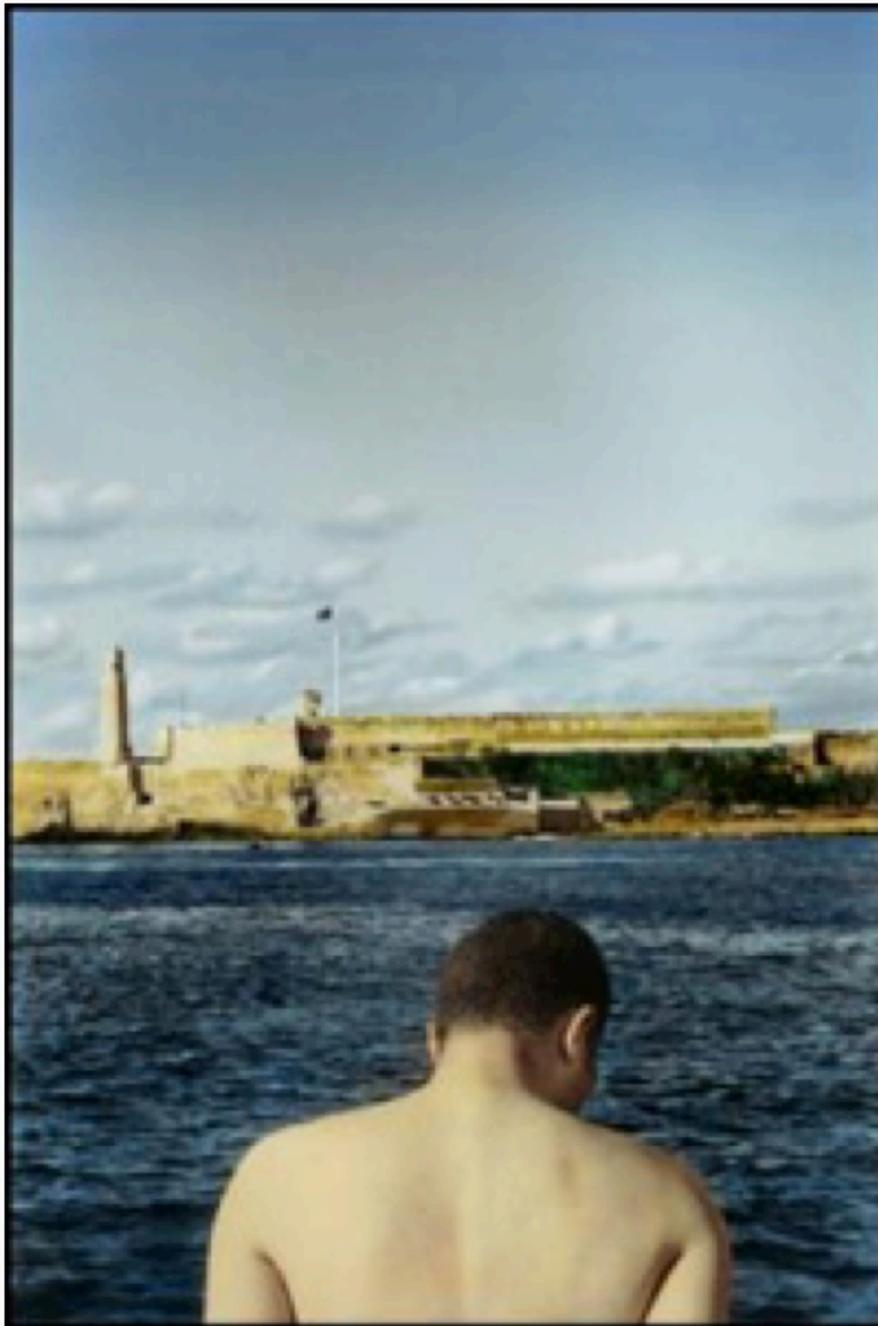
APPENDIX A

Never Wanted to Leave—Self-Portrait, Paris 2007
Hand colored gelatin silver print
Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia Gallery, Paris/ Brussels.



APPENDIX B

Will I Ever Come Again—Self-Portrait, Havana, 2005
Hand colored gelatin silver print
Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia Gallery, Paris/ Brussels.



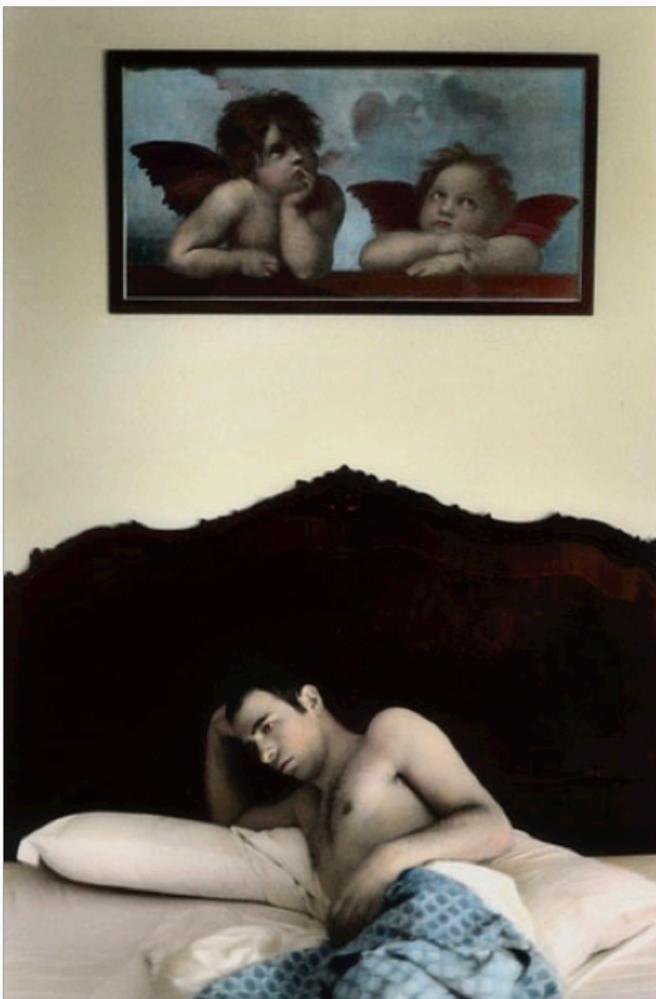
APPENDIX C

I Leave Again—Self-Portrait, Sardinia, 2005
Hand colored gelatin silver print
Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia Gallery, Paris/ Brussels.



APPENDIX D

My Time To Go—Self-portrait, Venice, 2007
Hand colored gelatin silver print
Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia Gallery, Paris/ Brussels.



APPENDIX E

Self-Portrait with Roots, Los Angeles, 2008
Hand colored gelatin silver print
Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia Gallery, Paris/ Brussels.



BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Abdulhadi, Rabab, Evelyn Alsultany, and Nadine Christine Naber. *Arab & Arab American Feminisms: Gender, Violence, & Belonging*. 1st ed. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2011.
- Amer, Ghada, Faten Hamama, Youssef Nabil, Shirin Neshat, and Octavio Zaya. *I Won't Let You Die*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2008.
- Appadurai, Arjun. *Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy*. Theory, Culture & Society June 1990 7: 295-310
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Bhabha, Homi K., W. J. T. Mitchell, and Edward W. Said. *Edward Said: Continuing the Conversation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Berger, John and Jean Mohr. *Another Way of Telling*. 1st American ed. New York: Pantheon, 1982.
- Dekel, Tal. "Body, Gender and Transnationalism: Art and Cultural Criticism in a Changing Europe." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 9, no. 2 (2009): 175-197.
- Emin, Tracy, Youssef Nabil, Simon Njami, Mark Sealy, and Michael Stevenson. *Sleep in My Arms*. South Africa: Cape Town, 2007.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. *Anthropology, Culture, and Society*. 3rd ed. ed. London; New York : New York: Pluto Press ; Distributed in the United States of America exclusively by Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Iyall Smith, Keri E. and Patricia Leavy. *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations*. *Studies in Critical Social Sciences*. Boston: Brill, 2008.
- Naber, Nadine Christine. *Arab America: Gender, Cultural Politics, and Activism*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.
- Phillips, Ruth. "The Turn of the Primitive: Modernism, the Stranger and the Indigenous Artist." In *Exiles, Diasporas & Strangers*. London: Iniva, Institute of International Visual Arts; 2008. Page 47.
- Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.
- Renan, Ernest., Olick, Jeffrey K., Vered Seroussi, and Daniel Levy. "What is a Nation?" *The collective memory reader*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 80. Print.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*, 1st ed. New York: Knopf., 1993.
- Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Sans, Jeremy. *As Close As I Can Get*. *Interview with Youssef Nabil*, Venice. June 2007. Access on artist website. http://www.youssefnabil.com/articles/as_close_as_i_can_get.html
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *In other worlds: essays in cultural politics*. New York: Routledge, 1988. Page 25.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. *Anthropology, Culture, and Society*. 3rd ed. New York: Pluto Press, 2010.

BIO ANDREW GAYED

Andrew Gayed is an Egyptian visual artist and art historian, born and raised in Toronto Canada. Completing his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Arts with a Minor in Women's and Gender studies, themes of race, displacement, and culture are foundational in his practice. Currently completing his Masters of Arts in Art History at Carleton University, his dissertation investigates Middle Eastern Contemporary Art, with a focus on photographic art being produced by the North American diaspora. This includes Middle Eastern artists (such as himself) working from Canada and the United States, creating artwork surrounding diasporic identity; his research emphasizes themes of migration, and the political artwork that is associated with the diasporic community. Gayed has been the recipient of notable awards including the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Award, and chapters of his dissertation have been presented at conferences internationally, including York University, Carleton University and two talks at Oxford University.