



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

HERE&NOW16/GENYM

CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM ARTISTS

30 April – 16 July 2016

Opening next week at the University of Western Australia's Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, *HERE&NOW16/GenYM* investigates the creative responses of nine contemporary artists whose works are tied together by experiences of growing up Muslim in Australia.

HERE&NOW is a series of annual exhibitions at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery that are led by emerging curators and showcase the outstanding work of contemporary Western Australian artists. Together with GenYM, the exhibition spans two galleries, containing 45 works by nine contemporary Australian artists from Muslim backgrounds who belong to Generation Y.

Running from 30 April to 16 July, *HERE&NOW16/GenYM* is the first exhibition of its kind in Australia to showcase the maturing voices of Gen Y Muslims who boldly and unapologetically speak their minds on topics spanning the philosophical to the political. They come from a range of ethnicities and live all over Australia, from Lakemba to Footscray to Mount Lawley.

Exhibition curator Hamida Novakovich, 30, knows what it means to be young and Muslim in Australia today. Growing up in Perth in a post 9/11, hyper-globalised world, she says "There is no doubt that 9/11 represented a turning point in the way Islam and Muslims were viewed in the world and for my generation, it was a lot to come to terms with at once.

“Muslims have constantly been called on to represent ‘the collective’ rather than themselves as individuals; I found that this also happens in the art world where artists may be defined as ‘Islamic’ or ‘African’ or whatever group they may belong to.

“With this exhibition we want to present stories from young Muslims whose identities are constantly unfolding, just like our Gen Y peers. There isn’t just *one* Muslim experience, and this exhibition aims to make that point.

“Challenging these assumptions has been the trend in international exhibitions with artists from similar backgrounds, but they have always come from Gen X, and of course dealt with themes of that era such as the Iranian Revolution and the rise of Arab dictators in a pre-9/11 world.

“*HERE&NOW16/GenYM* captures the multitude of experiences of growing up in Australia with Muslim and other cultural identities – experiences which have been greatly overlooked by narratives of otherness, orientalism, feminism, and Western ideas of Islamic art.”

About the work

Abdul Abdullah’s photography confronts the broad frustrations of marginalised youth. Nadia Faragaab expresses notions of ‘Somaliness’ through domestic objects representing the importance of place and collective memory. Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, Idil Abdullahi and Rubaba Haider recollect delicate objects evoking important lessons from childhood tales. Suzi Elhafez deconstructs concepts of non-figurative Islamic ornamentation through her existential work on human mortality. Marziya Mohammedali exposes the ongoing plight of asylum seekers in Australia’s detention centres through her memorial installation and Zahra Habibullah and Fatima Mawas relate the significance of land, ancestry and belonging through their work in Palestine.

**HERE&NOW16/GenYM runs from 30 April to 16 July at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery.
Entry is free.**

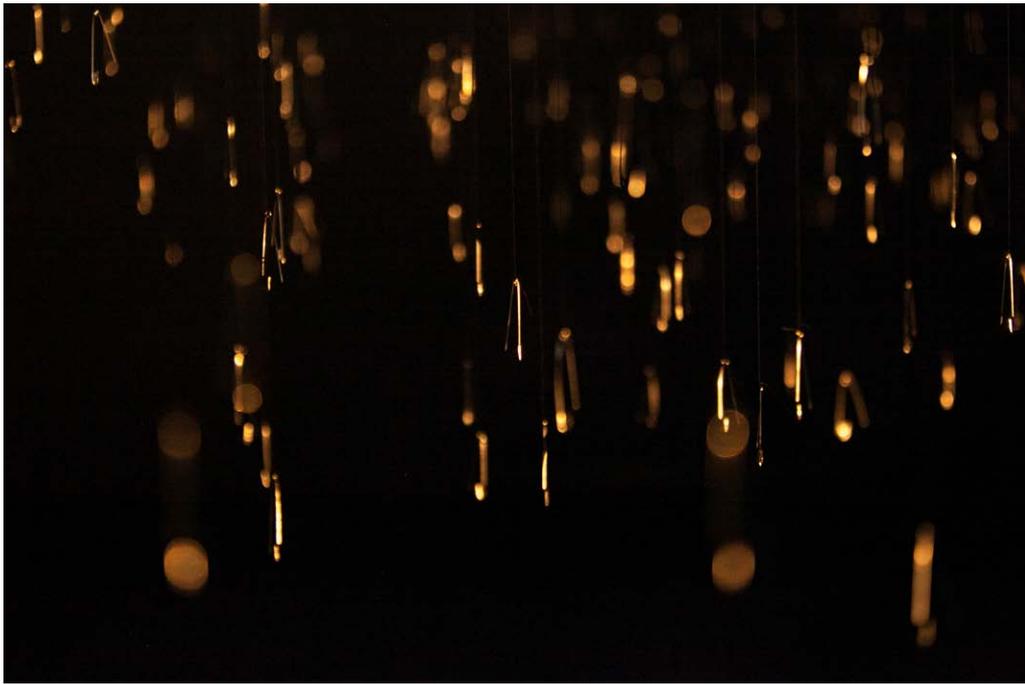
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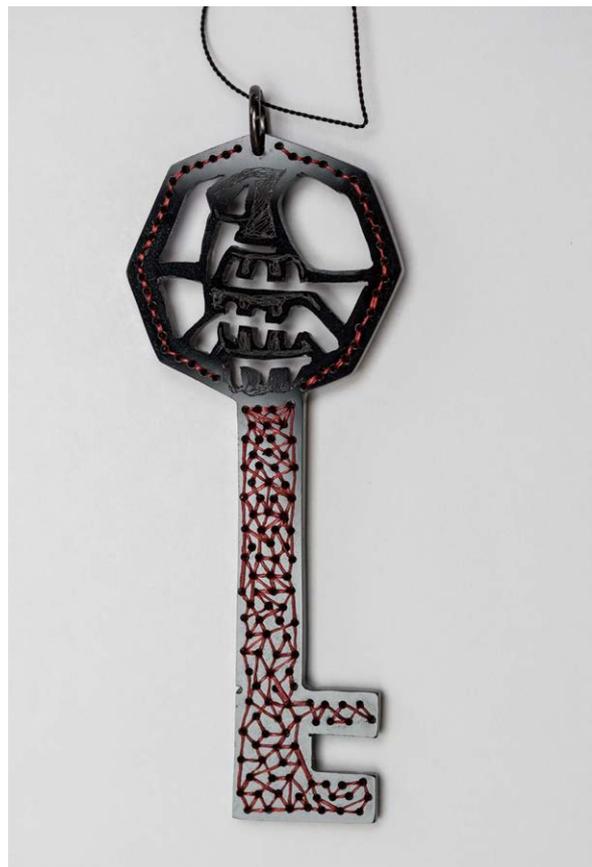
Rubaba Haider, *Like a shadow; I am and I am not*, 2015, installation (safety pins and thread)



Abdul Abdullah, *Reclaiming territories*, 2016, digital print, 100 x 175 cm



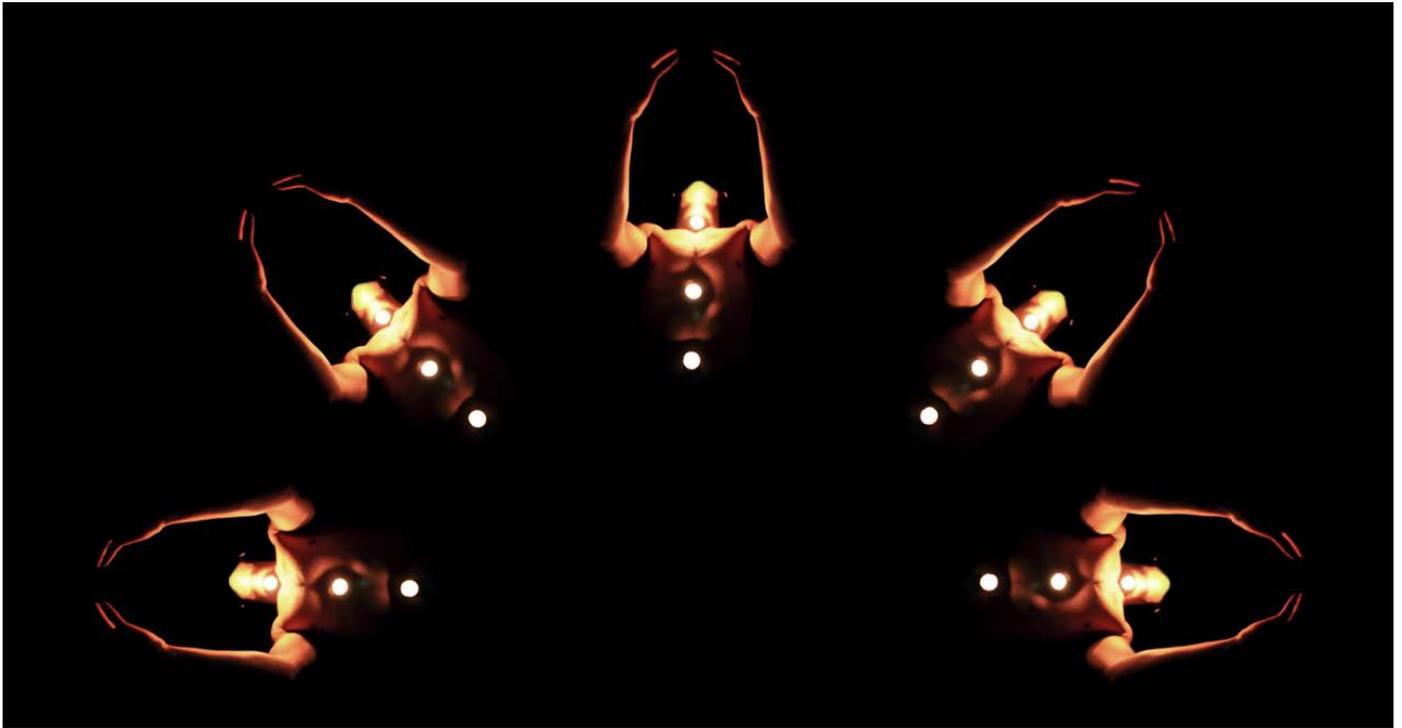
Abdul Abdullah, *Push back*, 2016, digital print, 100 x 175 cm



Zahrah Habibullah *Palestine Keys-In memory of... (green)*, 2014, acrylic, sterling silver, cotton, nylon 9.7 x 4 cm
Zahrah Habibullah *Palestine Keys-In memory of... (red)*, 2014, acrylic, sterling silver, cotton, nylon 9.7 x 4 cm
Zahrah Habibullah *Palestine Keys-In memory of... (white)*, 2014, acrylic, sterling silver, cotton, nylon 9.7 x 4 cm
Zahrah Habibullah *Palestine Keys-In memory of... (black)*, 2014, acrylic, sterling silver, cotton, nylon 9.7 x 4 cm



Fatima Mawas, *Fiddler On The Roof park II*, 2014, HD, 16:9, single channel video, stereo.



Suzi Elhafez, *Demarcations of Timelessness*, 2016, photograph, archival print, 100 x 190cms