

## **Bashar Alhroub**

### **Artist's statement**

My work has developed from paintings and mixed media, and has directly dealt with the polemics of a place, how to humanise it and its influence on our creativity. I assert my identity as essentially part of and perhaps born out of those places. We all want to feel that we belong to a social and cultural community, constantly longing for a feeling of attachment, rooted in a particular place with a sense of significant ownership of that place. My work is deeply influenced by these socio-political sentiments. Questions such as who we are are often intimately related to questions of where we are, so inextricably bound to defining our location in relation to self and other.

More recently my work began to engage with the search into the self. To achieve this I used the body as signifier. The work often shows threatened self-identity through the process of scrutiny and experimentation. The work deals with personal vulnerability and an experience of existential anxiety strongly associated with issues such as religion, nationalism, conflict and identity construction and looks for meaning not in the individual sign but in the context of exile and fragmentation.

My work touches on completely new creative surroundings with new physical freedom, away from the alienating materialistic and visual effects of my occupied homeland. I study the place's materialistic, psychological, aesthetic and meditational effects. I believe that the human self is an essential part of this holistic system, regardless of its closeness or distance from a place. I try to touch the inner state of the viewer by creating a state of chaos to get his or her psychological and emotional attention. Through this inner confusion, the physical experience forces the viewer to reconsider the self and its relationship with its surroundings, dominated by division and exile, where "progress" seems to mean bloody destruction and enslavement of the human soul.