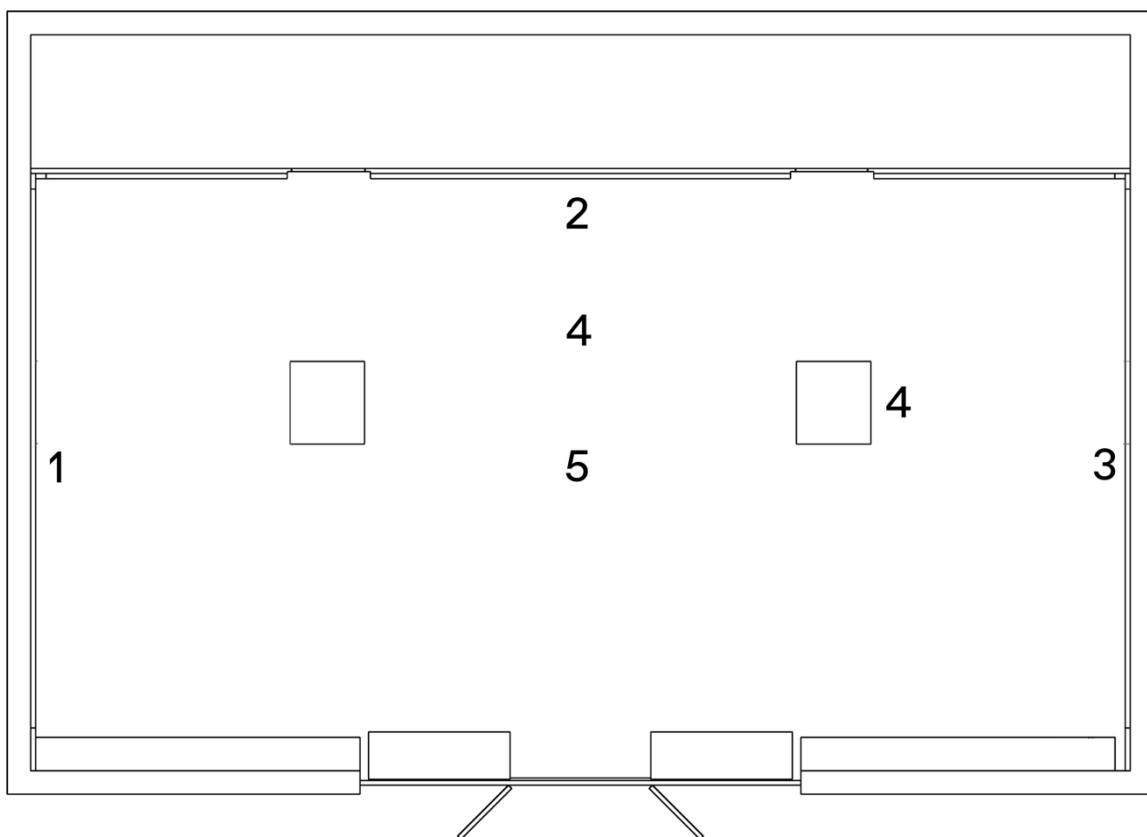


EN

Exhibition Floorplan, Individual Artwork Descriptions, and Artist Biography

Exhibition Floorplan with Artworks



1. "Obstallee", 2025, 150x150cm, mixed media across 9 wood panels, Jamila Barakat
2. "Amal", 2025, 50x50cm, concrete cast, Jamila Barakat
3. "Dhakīra", 2025, mixed media on 8 wood panels, each one 100x70cm, Jamila Barakat
4. "Der Frieden auf Erden ist nicht für uns", 2025, Sound piece, Maryam Fazeli
5. "same sky, different light", 2025, 200x300cm, printed fabric and digital projection, Jamila Barakat

Descriptions of Individual Artworks

1 - Obstallee, 2025, Barakat

A printout with all the sources of the poetry in this work is available at the front of the gallery.

Viewed from afar, “Obstallee” appears to be a large, singular portrait of a thriving *Khobiza* plant, with warm golden and wooden elements in the background. *Khobiza*, or mallow, is known for its ability to endure poor soil. The golden spheres represent the Jaffa orange, used here as a symbol of appropriation and rootlessness. Abstract shapes which trace the texture of the wooden panels, look like rivers, valleys, or sunsets of a broad landscape.

When we come closer to the work, we see its nine components, as well as the outlines of people fading into the landscape. We start to notice archival photographs with covered eyes, erased bodies, and scratched-over faces, their forms enveloped by the leaves of the *Khobiza*. In the background are faceless, towering buildings and in the forefront, the subtle fishnet texture of a *Keffiyeh*. Lines of poetry meander like currents across the image.

Obstallee is the name of the street Barakat moved to as a child in Berlin-Spandau, in a neighbourhood where many experience poverty and are excluded from the benefits of the city centre. Despite the street’s difficulties, she has fond memories which blossom through the artwork like Jaffa orange trees. Barakat mixes together the precious artefacts brought from her family on their journey to Germany, as well as within divided Germany, and weaves them into her personal memories growing up in Berlin, offering one representation of what it could mean to be German-Palestinian. These fragments are warmly embraced by the central, flowering *Khobiza* plant, reminding us how family trees endure beyond an individual, yet remain rooted in land.

2 - Amal, 2025, Barakat

أمل

At the back of the gallery we see a large, rough, grey wall. The wall could remind the viewer of a looming concrete border wall, familiar to many inhabitants of Karl-Marx-Allee, or perhaps an ancient plaster wall, which shows traces of the hands that made it. Lost in this expanse, and not visible from the entrance to the gallery,

is the artwork "Amal" (EN: hope). Small, grey, and cast in concrete, the form of the Arabic word looks strong, like it could weather many storms, almost confrontational in its steadfastness. "The work embodies hope as a force of persistence, a refusal to yield." (Mauthofer, 2025)

3 - Dhakīra, 2025, Barakat

ذاكرة

Directly across from "Obstallee" is the series "Dhakīra". Where "Obstallee"'s warm, organic forms make the red-brown wall behind it evoke the colour of soil, "Dhakīra"'s sharp, dark forms make their background colour call to mind blood and stone. The lines of Barakat's pencil are quick, chaotic, and spiralling, while the black paint inexorably drips down, opening up dark tunnels that are difficult to get out of. Again, we see the traces of erased people, dragged into and swallowed up by these whirlpools. This series processes Barakat's feelings of despair and hopelessness amid Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza as well as the consequences for Palestinians in Germany. Yet, outlined in the despair of the collage, we see hands reaching for each other.

"Despite the constraints of the medium — the wooden board as a material limit — a transcendent interconnectedness emerges across her pieces. The imposed borders that Palestinians encounter daily are questioned, challenged, and reimagined." (Mauthofer, 2025). The Arabic word *Dhakīra* is linguistically linked to the concepts of memory, collection, and archiving. Barakat collages here are a form of anti-imperialist archiving and witnessing.

4 - Der Frieden auf Erden ist nicht für uns, 2025, Fazeli

السلام على لأرض ليس لنا

Throughout the gallery, we hear a soundscape: calls to prayer, voices reading and talking in German and English, songs from a choir as well as everyday people in Arabic. In the background, a clarinet and droning, glitching, ambient electronic music. As Barakat collages painting, drawing, etching, photography, and text, so does the sound artist Maryam Fazeli collage her own musical recordings, recordings of Barakat's poetry, and historical, academic, and journalistic sound bytes to create the work "Der Frieden auf Erden ist nicht für uns" (EN: Peace on Earth is not for us).

The work begins with a mournful tune, like a funeral dirge, performed by an orchestra. Then the choir begins, acerbically, to sing: “Peace is for our enemies, oh God/For their guards in distant lands/And their guards in nearby lands...Peace is for others/It is for children other than mine...Peace is for silence when we scream/and silence when we are silenced...Peace on earth is not for us/not for my son, not for yours/Mary said to Mary”. The song builds up to climax of a military song: every time the word peace is repeated in Arabic, *Salam*, it sounds more despairing. Eventually, it dwindles back into a single, solemn clarinet line, played by Fazeli. With this performance of the poem “Mary of Gaza” (Nasrallah & Houry, 2024), we understand that this sound piece will get us in touch with deep feelings of grief.

Next, Fazeli’s wandering clarinet takes us to a recording of Barakat’s poem “In den Rissen der Stille (Blues of the Orient)” (EN: In the Cracks of the Silence). Barakat describes her and her family’s attempts to grapple with the daily massacres in Gaza and the apathy of many towards this suffering in Germany. Her words ring like a small incantation of hope: “Our stories weigh on us like stones. They tell of survival, of resistance. Dreams that have been dispelled, but they live on – in the invisible spaces that the system has left us. An unwritten law says that the present is haunted by the past, and in this haunting lies the possibility of change. Borders drawn today will one day crumble to dust.” (2024).

After wandering through many other beautiful and troubling sounds, “Der Frieden auf Erden ist nicht für uns” ends with the words of the scholar Ariella Aïsha Azoulay at her talk “Potential History, Decolonization, and Palestine” for Jewish Voice for Peace in 2020. Azoulay smartly illustrates how the history of Israel and Palestine tie into that of European colonialism. She every one of us listening to unlearn imperialism: “what does it mean [to be] mobilized by the state, to become agents of erasure, erasure of memory?” This question is left ringing in our ears.

5 - same sky, different light, 2025, Barakat

At the center of the exhibition hangs a monumental textile work depicting the sun at the moment of its descent, partially concealed beneath heavy clouds and resting above a treeline. The image was taken at the current home of the artist’s parents in northern Germany. Printed on fabric and activated by projections, the surface remains in constant movement, responding quietly to the presence and passage of visitors. The work introduces a slow, breathing rhythm into the exhibition, contrasting the political urgency of the surrounding works with a space for pause.

The setting sun does not offer consolation. Instead, it marks a threshold, a moment of suspension between fading and becoming. If it gestures toward hope

at all, it is not as a promise, but as endurance: the simple fact that light withdraws only in order to return. Together with the exhibition title visible from the street, the textile extends the work beyond the gallery walls. In the cold of winter, a fragile warmth is offered outward.