



PRESS RELEASE

In the Future They Ate from the Finest Porcelain

Expansive dystopian landscapes, spacecrafts used to plant ancient relics, and a single colossal skyscraper to accommodate a national population. These vivid scenes beyond reality are part of New Art Exchange's exhibition showcasing the work of London-based interdisciplinary artist, Larissa Sansour. The future that Sansour visualises may seem absurd, yet it has roots in very real political situations that exist in the present day.

The exhibition features new and existing film and photographic works including the UK premiere of *In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain* (2015). *In the Future* takes place in the cross-section between science fiction, archaeology and politics. 'Set in a barren desert landscape, a resistance group makes underground deposits of elaborate porcelain, forging archaeological artefacts. When these relics are unearthed in the future it shall prove their claim to the land; thus the myth becomes historical intervention. The narrative unfurls as the female leader reveals the philosophy behind the group's actions, yet her voice of reason blurs with fiction. The film comprises of atmospheric landscape shots and widespread stillness, recalling an otherworldly non-fixed space. Shots interweave between live motion and computer generated images, dissolving the boundaries between reality, memories and illusions. Central to the film is the question: how is the future written by those who record history? Who is responsible for shaping national identity? These broad questions also relate to the politics of Palestine, Sansour's birthplace, where archaeology is employed as an ideological tool rather than an objective scientific endeavour.

Showing alongside *In the Future* is Sansour's 2012 sci-fi short, *Nation Estate*. Projecting to the future, Sansour visualises an unconventional and improbable conclusion to the deadlock in the Middle East; a single skyscraper that houses each region on separate levels. Sansour's laughable solution, whilst playful, truthfully reflects the distance that stands between Palestine's current situation and a rational resolution. Although the CGI glossy skyscraper may evoke living the high-life, the result is a clinical dystopia; a cold prison devoid of identity.

Completing Sansour's sci-fi trilogy is *A Space Exodus* (2009), inspired by Stanley Kubrick's 2001 film *A Space Odyssey* (1968), which depicts a female Palestinian astronaut travelling to the extremities of outer space in order to claim land for her nation. The work is accompanied by *Palestinians* (2010), a collection of toy-like astronauts bearing the Palestinian flag which makes explicit the playfulness, humour, and irony that underlies Sansour's work.

Larissa Sansour describes the important role that the science fiction genre plays in her work, highlighting existing social realities.

'Sci-fi has an inherent ability to communicate the most fundamental ambitions of a people or a civilization in a way that is naturally inspired by, but never hampered or restricted by a non-fictional reality. It lends itself well to reframing the Palestinian predicament.'

In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain will be at New Art Exchange from Friday 15 January 2016 and will run until 13 March 2016.

Launch event details

What: *In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain*

Where: New Art Exchange, 39-41 Gregory Boulevard, Nottingham NG7 6BE

When: 14 January 2016, 6pm – 9pm

Admission: FREE

Editor's notes

A selection of images can be downloaded from Dropbox: <http://bit.ly/1OhUKSB>

For further images and to arrange interviews/photo opportunities contact Laura-Jade Klee:

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Film Credit

Sci-fi short, 30', Larissa Sansour/Søren Lind, 2015.

In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain is co-commissioned by FLAMIN Productions through Film London Artists' Moving Image Network with funding from Arts Council England; New Art Exchange, Bluecoat, Liverpool; Wolverhampton Art Gallery; and The Mosaic Rooms, A.M.Qattan Foundation, London; with support from Doha Film Institute; The Danish Arts Council, Arts Council England, Iambic Film, Knud Højgaard's Fond and Contemporary Art Platform – Kuwait. Produced by Spike Film and Video, Bristol.

About New Art Exchange

New Art Exchange is a contemporary art space committed to stimulating new perspectives on the value of diversity within art and society. A RIBA award winning building, New Art Exchange is the largest space in the UK dedicated to culturally diverse contemporary visual arts, and is rooted in the community with a strong history of working with minority communities. NAE presents major international exhibitions and every season presents work from the highest quality, renowned artists. NAE partners locally, nationally and internationally, connecting audiences and artists with new and innovative collaborations and opportunities. Past exhibitors have included: Zarina Bhimji, John Akomfrah, Rashid Rana, Zineb Sedira, Hurvin Anderson, Nari Ward, Christian Marclay and Elizabeth Price (British Art Show 7), Leo Asemota, Raghu Rai, Tanya Habjouqa, Okhai Ojeikere and Hetain Patel.

NAE's mission is to raise the impact, profile and development of culturally diverse contemporary visual arts and artists in a global context by: nurturing and promoting creative talent locally and worldwide, creating thriving creative businesses, and engaging minority ethnic communities as audiences and patrons of art.

Larissa Sansour

Born in Jerusalem, Sansour studied Fine Art in Copenhagen, London and New York. Her work is interdisciplinary, immersed in the current political dialogue and utilises video, photography, installation and sculpture. Sansour's work has featured in the biennials of Istanbul, Busan and Liverpool. She has exhibited at venues such as Tate Modern, London; MoMA, New York; Aga Khan Museum, Toronto; Centre Pompidou, Paris; LOOP, Seoul; Queen Sofia Museum, Madrid; Louisiana Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark; House of World Cultures, Berlin and MOCA, Hiroshima. Recent solo shows include Lawrie Shabibi in Dubai, Photographic Center in Copenhagen, Montoro 12 in Rome, Sabrina Amrani in Madrid, Kulturhuset in Stockholm and DEPO in Istanbul. Sansour is represented by Lawrie Shabibi in Dubai, Sabrina Amrani in Madrid and Montoro12 Contemporary Art in Rome. She lives and works in London.