

Title: *Face of the City* and *FROM THE HOLE OF A NEEDLE* / 2022

Author(s): Shereen Abed

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## **Face of the City and FROM THE HOLE OF A NEEDLE / 2002**

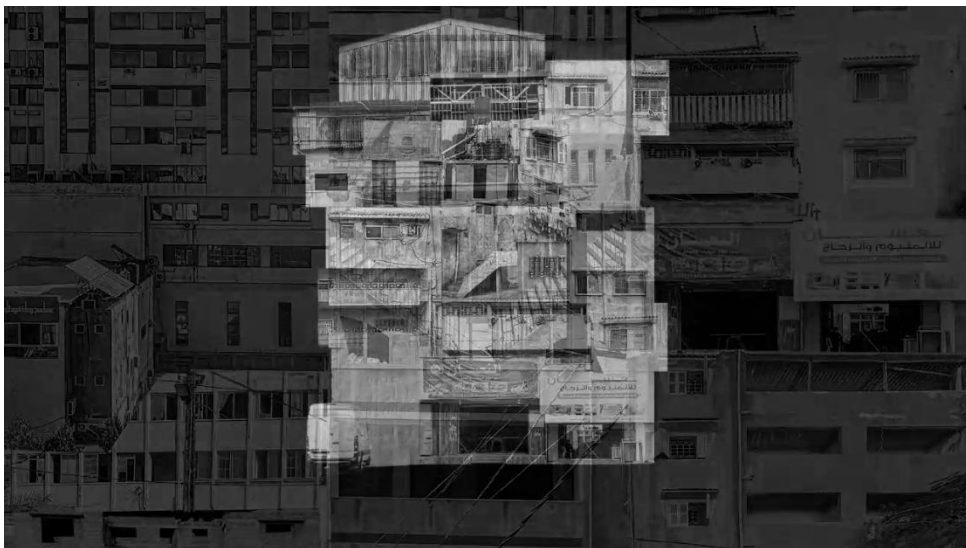
Shereen Abed



This work adopts architecture as its primary language of expression, not as a building, but as an injured body and a fractured memory under the weight of war. The architectural space here is not neutral; the collapsed walls, exposed layers, and broken ceilings transform into psychological sections, revealing what once lay hidden beneath an illusion of stability. Each architectural level appears as a stage of conflict, as if the structure erodes from within, before collapsing physically.

The composition relies on the overlap between the destroyed, tangible structure and translucent narrative drawings, where repeated faces emerge like a collective specter, appearing and disappearing within the walls. These faces do not belong to a single individual, but represent a burdened consciousness, accumulated memory, and the psychological pressure of living within a continuous state of war. Architecture becomes a vessel for suppressed voices, and silence here is not emptiness, but a heavy presence. The light entering through irregular openings does not function as salvation, but, rather, exposes the traces of destruction and reinforces the fragility of the space. There is no clear boundary between inside and outside; war has penetrated everything, and the architectural

shell has lost its capacity to protect. This exposure mirrors a similar psychological condition, where the body and memory are no longer able to shield themselves. The work's approach is based on dismantling architecture and visually reconstructing it as an emotional state, where structural details turn into signs, and cracks become narrative lines. Architecture here is not a backdrop to conflict, but the conflict itself: a space suspended between what once was, what has collapsed, and what remains trapped in memory, bearing witness to a war that does not only destroy stone, but reshapes the psyche and consciousness.





*Face of the City* is an ongoing visual and spatial project that investigates the fragility of memory within Gaza's constantly changing urban landscape. Rooted in the idea that activating images resists erasure, the project questions the past and future of place through the present, producing narrative images and large scale collages that document and reinterpret specific architectural scenes. Architecture is treated as a living archive, where form, memory, and lived experience accumulate over time. The work draws on layered materials including photo-graphic documentation, residents' testimonies, collected ambient sounds, and fragments of personal and collective memory. These elements construct a mul-ti-temporal conceptual space in which buildings appear as stratified layers of time, allowing the viewer to move between past, present, and imagined futures. Developed through close observation and documentation, the project bears witness to streets, homes, mosques, universities, workplaces, and everyday urb-an spaces—many of which have since been destroyed or concealed during the ongoing Israeli aggression on Gaza—leaving images as the last remaining tra-ces.

Through fragmented panoramic collages, Gaza emerges as a dense, puzzle like, urban fabric, where heritage buildings are obscured by improvised modern structures, and rooftops, alleys, signage, and construction remnants intertwine. Oscillating between realism and fiction, 'Face of the City' reveals a sociological geography shaped by unpredictability and spatial encroachment. Ultimately, the project is not about concrete, alone, but about lives, memories, and belonging, asserting remembrance as an act of resistance against disappearance.





*FROM THE HOLE OF A NEEDLE /2022* is a personal cinematic and spatial project with a collective resonance, emerging from an inability to pinpoint a clear beginning—neither a first moment of awareness nor a single origin of the story. Instead, it unfolds as an accumulation of scenes that have relentlessly shaped daily life in Gaza City. These scenes, suspended between satire and harsh realism, expose social conditions that have persisted and repeated for more than fifteen years, becoming inseparable from the city’s physical and psychological reality. The work transforms individual memories of suffering into a shared archive, where the public space becomes a stage for blocked paths, deferred wishes, suspended lives, and survival stretched across time.

The project reconstructs fragments of Gaza’s urban environment through digitization, 3D modeling, and virtual reality, creating immersive environments that allow the viewer to move sensorially within these spaces. Through VR, soundscapes, material textures, and spatial sequences, the viewer is placed inside the scene (rather than positioned as an external observer), experiencing proximity to the architecture, the atmosphere, and the emotional weight embedded within it. These virtual environments continue to expand conceptually, mirroring the ongoing blockade and its impact on the natural and built landscape. The Needle’s Hole thus becomes an attempt to imagine how the present scene exists and persists—an embodied encounter with a city where space, memory, sound, and human presence converge into a shared, enduring convention.

## Biography

**Shereen Abdel-Karim Hassanein**, born in Gaza City (1996), is an architect and visual artist. She holds a bachelor’s degree in architecture from the Islamic University of Gaza- IUG. Years ago, I began fusing architecture with art. Now

I am active in visual arts. My career in the arts started by self-learning and many experiences in the field of architecture and arts inside my studio and through participation in some local exhibitions. My recent studies relied on research of the process of space production and spatial representation to express some societal issues, using architectural abstractions to create a dialogue between artwork and conceptual space, and to represent daily stories and events. I focus on many methods and tools in my artistic practice, such as painting, sculpture, installation arts, 3D spatial rendering, in addition to producing artistic videos. My work presents the city and outer space in general as a field of artistic work and interaction, not from a formal, aesthetic or decorative perspective, but as a specific field of questioning and criticizing our society, customs and ideas with a new proposal and vision. I seek to study the state of place with the human dimension and to interact with the constructions and materials in the environment that I work on through drawing or spatial embodiment to represent different realities, imagined places with real memories and stories, and blur the line between "truth" and realistic simulation through the use of virtual reality.

**Solo exhibitions:** *From a needle hole*, Shababek Contemlinkages 2022. **Group exhibitions:** *The Palestine Animated* and *For you*, Oslo 2025; *TALENT LATENT SCAN*, Tarragona 2024; *"S" Festival (/si:n/) of Video Art and Performance*, Paris; *I will write our will above the clouds*, Paris, London, Berlin 2024; *The Face of the City* Reina Sofia 2024; *Contemporary Art*, NICOLAS COMBARRO 2023; *Gaza after 15 years*, International Committee of the Red Cross 2022; Art Residency Exhibition /2022/ Shababek Contemlinkages; *Art in the Public Space*, Professional Windows 2021.

<https://www.behance.net/shereenhasanin96>.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg1SsSolkXi1Bb5I2gkHdnA>.