

All That Remains

The work All That Remains was presented to the public on May 15, 2018. the day of the 70th anniversary of the start of the expulsion of 700,000 Palestinians from the land of Palestine - an event known as Nakba or "catastrophe" for the Arabs of Palestine.

The day before the inauguration on May 14th, the seat of the American embassy was moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in the building in the Arnona district already hosting the American consulate. That symbolic and one-sided gesture and its concomitance with the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the birth of the State of Israel created great disappointment on the Palestinian side. While Sabella's work was inaugurated, 59 Palestinians died and over two thousand were injured in the mass protest in Gaza. Despite the past 70 years on the Palestinian question a new page of lack of dialogue was being written in those days of contrast, violence and death.

The work All That Remains consists of a cubic installation containing pieces of mural painting detached from the Old City of Jerusalem. On their surface there are photos of a Palestinian house occupied in 1948. Above the cube hangs a piece of wood from the tracks of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp.

A game of mirrors creates a cross-reference between the materials contained in the cube. The silence and the light effects produce an environment of profound reflection. In putting the materials together, a relationship of proximity is established between them and at the same time their autonomy is recognized.

The combination is strong and speaks for itself, placing the observer in front of big questions. How could what had already happened happened? Can a mortally wounded people procure for another people the same people they suffered? Was another solution possible? Will that paradox ever end? The themes that the work leads to face are immense, universal and yet concrete at the same time. Healthy themes that burn every day for over 70 years on the skin of those who live the paradox and of those who observe it. In the great circle of history can events repeat themselves with an inversion of the parts that leaves no hope for the progress of humanity?

Sabella, a Palestinian artist born in Jerusalem, often riffs in his works, on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. All That Remains is a project that offers new spaces for discussion and is a further step in the construction of the message of liberation of the Palestinian people launched in several works by Steve Sabella.

By Daniela Brignone

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