

**Michael Rakowitz**  
*I'm good at love, I'm good at hate,  
it's in between I freeze*

Solo show at Galerie Barbara Wien  
April 28 – July 29, 2023  
Extended until August 12

**Barbara Wien**  
gallery & art bookshop  
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barbarawien.de



*I'm good at love, I'm good at hate,  
it's in between I freeze*

2017/2023

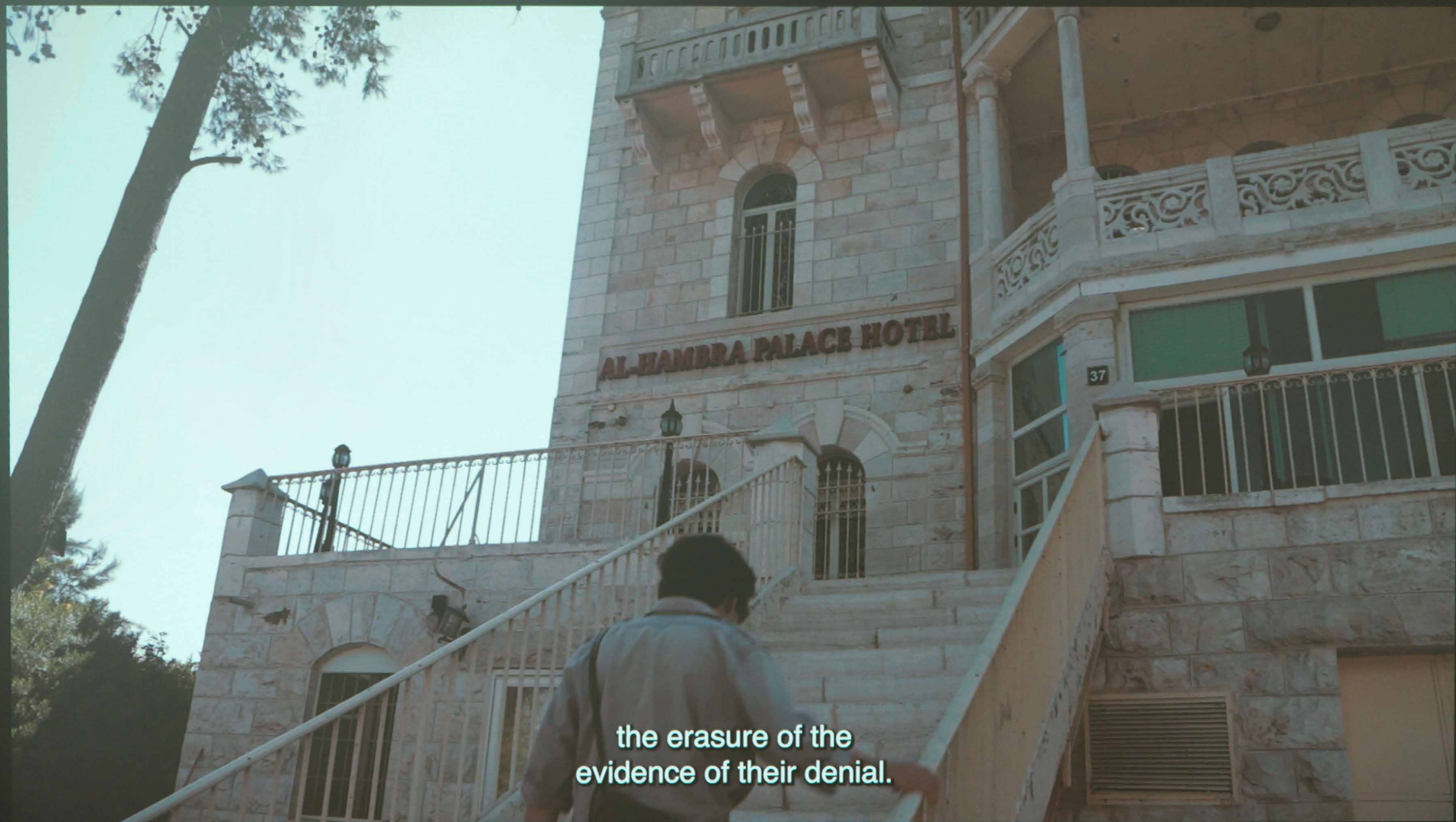
Video

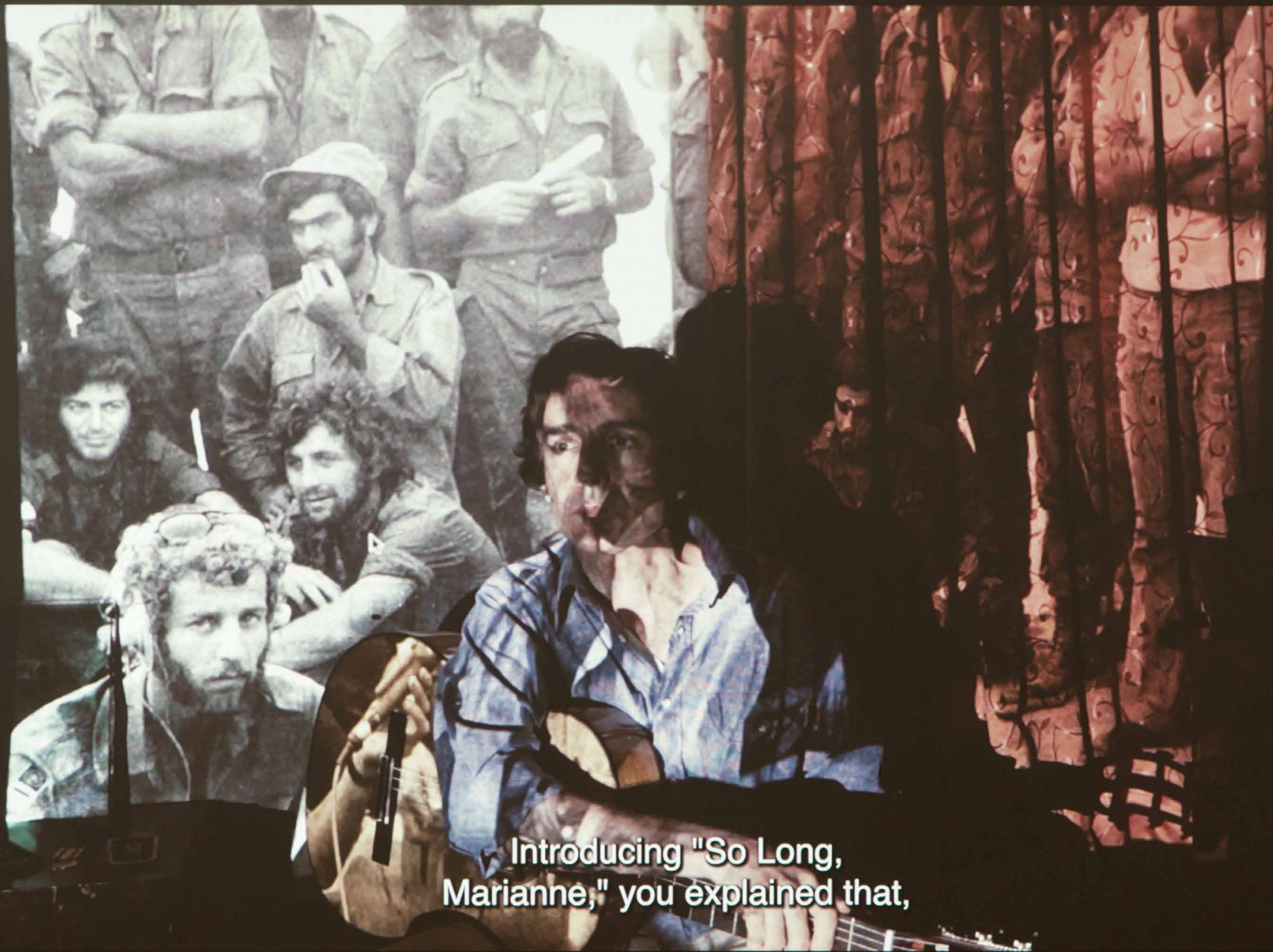
Colour, sound, 32 min.

Farbe, Ton, 32 Min.

Edition: 7 (+ 3 A.P.)

Video excerpt: [vimeo.com/823376030](https://vimeo.com/823376030)





Introducing "So Long,  
Marianne," you explained that,



*I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze, 2017/2023*



*I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze, 2017/2023*



In his response, he said  
that you and I should meet

# Michael Rakowitz

## *I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze*

Michael Rakowitz's third solo exhibition at the gallery explores the intersection of art and politics through his project *I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze*. Centering around a concert that never happened, the project originated from Rakowitz's long-standing interest in the work and life of the late Canadian singer-songwriter and poet, Leonard Cohen.

Cohen was scheduled to perform in Israel and Palestine in 2009. However, the concert in Ramallah was seen as a hollow symbolic gesture of solidarity attempting to pacify the backlash that had risen against the concert in Tel Aviv. As a result, the performance in Palestine was boycotted and ultimately cancelled.

As a Leonard Cohen fan, and a signatory of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), Rakowitz started researching Cohen's stance on the conflict in the region. He bought Cohen's old Olivetti typewriter on eBay and began typing out a screenplay about the unrealised concert. He then wrote a letter to Cohen, asking permission to perform his songs in Ramallah, but Cohen never replied.

In 2015, Rakowitz was invited to complete the project as part of an exhibition responding to Cohen's work at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. *I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze* took the form of a film co-directed by Robert Chase Heishman. The film delves into Cohen's complex

relationship with the Jewish homeland, exploring the historical context and aftermath of the concert that never happened. Although approved for the exhibition, Cohen's estate grew increasingly displeased with the film, accusing Rakowitz of presenting a one-sided (pro-Palestinian) account of the story. After Cohen's death in 2016, his estate refused further permission for Rakowitz to use Cohen's music outside the context of the Montréal show unless the film was changed according to the management's demands, which Rakowitz refused to do.

For this new exhibition, Rakowitz continues his project, *I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze*, taking into account the pressures that have been exerted on the work and what has been lost along the way. Invited colleagues speak about the estate's withdrawal of Cohen's songs and a new musical score fills their place. The adapted version of the film is accompanied by an installation of documents, books, photographs, and memorabilia connected to the project, including Cohen's typewriter and a facsimile of the letter Rakowitz wrote to the singer.



***I'm good at love, I'm good at hate,  
it's in between I freeze***

2009/2023

Installation consisting of:

Video, colour, sound, 32 min., edition 1/7 (+ 3 A.P.)

Documents, books, photographs, and memorabilia  
including a typewriter purportedly owned by Leonard  
Cohen, and a facsimile of the letter written by the artist

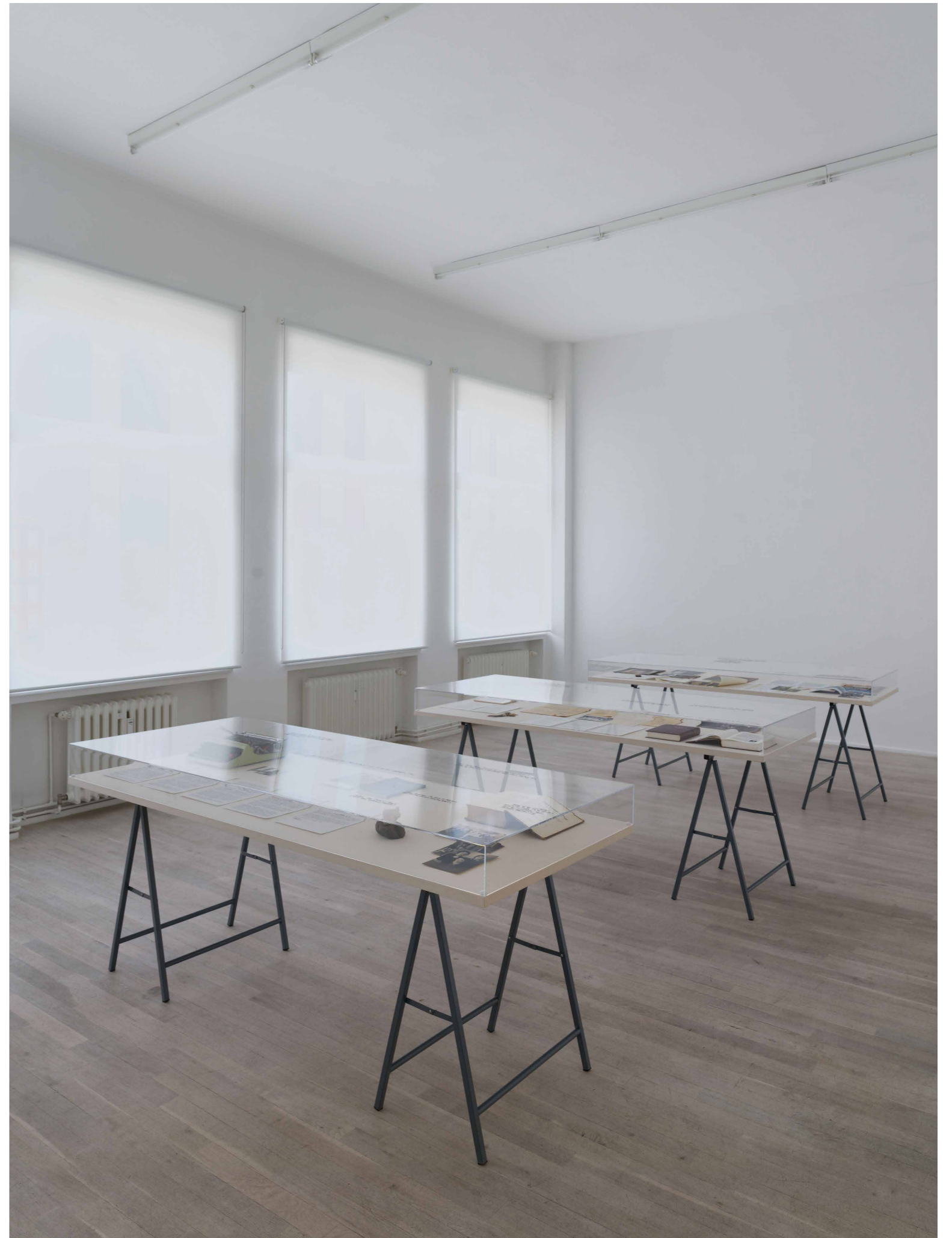
Dimensions variable

Installation bestehend aus:

Video, Farbe, Ton, 32 Min., Edition 1/7 (+ 3 A.P.)

Dokumente, Bücher, Fotografien und Memorabilia,  
einschließlich einer Schreibmaschine, die vermeintlich  
Leonard Cohen gehörte, und eines Faksimiles des  
vom Künstler verfassten Briefes

Maße variabel



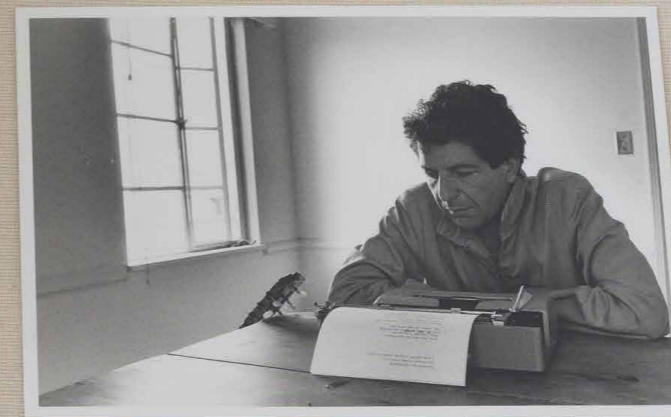


*I'm good at love, I'm good at hate, it's in between I freeze, 2009/2023*

Detail



Olivetti Lettera 22 typewriter purportedly owned by Leonard Cohen. Serial number S713115. Made in Glasgow, 1959.



August 14, 2015

Dear Leonard,

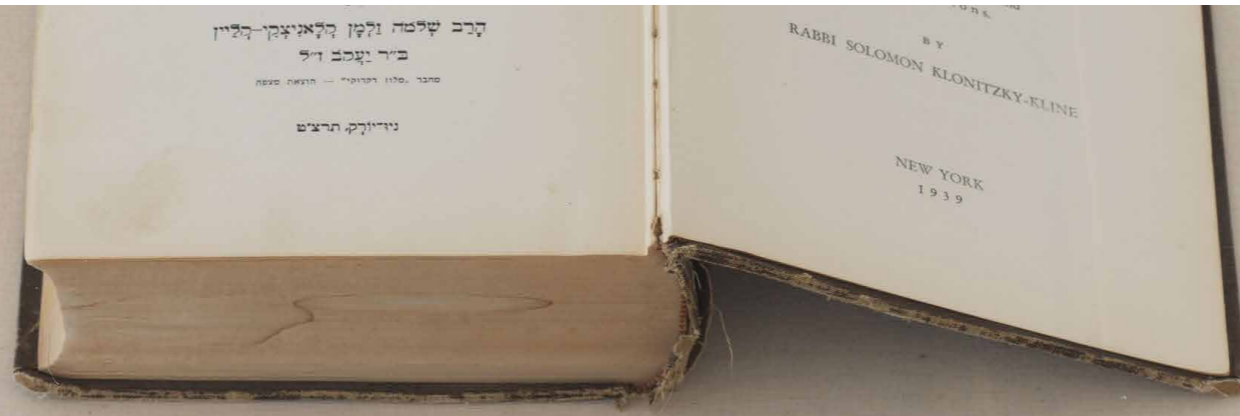
2

to play in Ramallah in September at the invitation of the Palestinian Prisoners Club. But then the restrictions of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) forced the gig's cancellation, as you were also scheduled to play Tel Aviv on September 24, just three days after your 75th birthday.

footage of the inferno that was the Holocaust. A and one that led to overwhelming support for a Jew a Europe in exile.

Your desire to balance your presence in Palestine

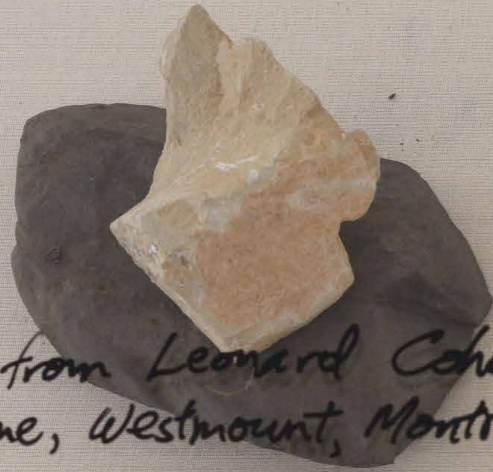
Iran.



Photos of my grandfather  
Nissim bin Ishaq Da'ud bet Aziz  
and my grandmother, Renée  
Shamoon, Baghdad, Iraq.



Stone found near the grave of Palestinian  
poet Mahmood Darwish, Ramallah, Palestine.



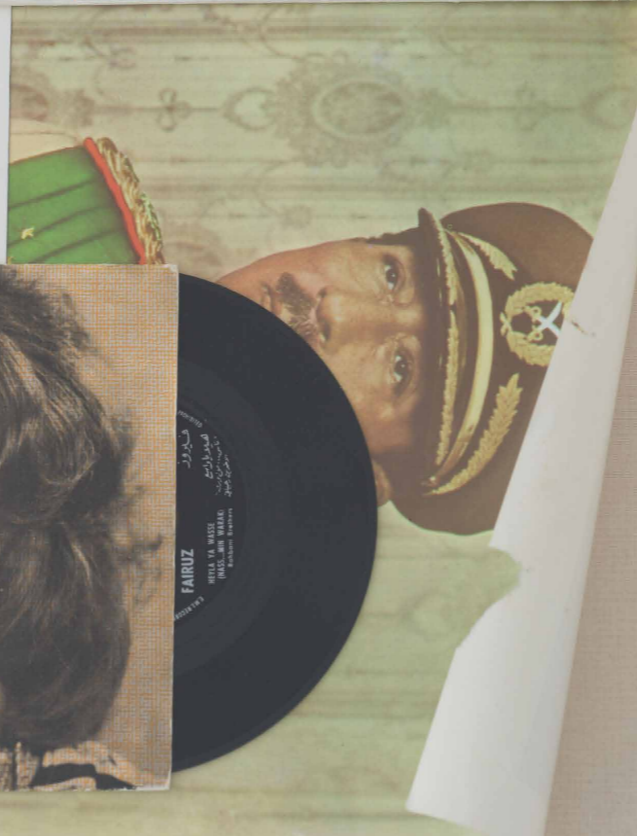
Bedrock from Leonard Cohen's  
childhood home, Westmount, Montréal.



Records by Fairuz and Umm Kulthum, whose songs inspired Syrian and Egyptian soldiers during the wars with Israel. Kulthum recorded several songs of war, including "Asbaha al-Ana indi Bunduqiyyah" (I have now got me a rifle), a poem by the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani set to music by 'Abd al-Wahhab:

"I have now got me a rifle, to Palestine, take me with you  
To hills that are sad, like the face of Magdalene  
To the green domes and the prophetic stones...

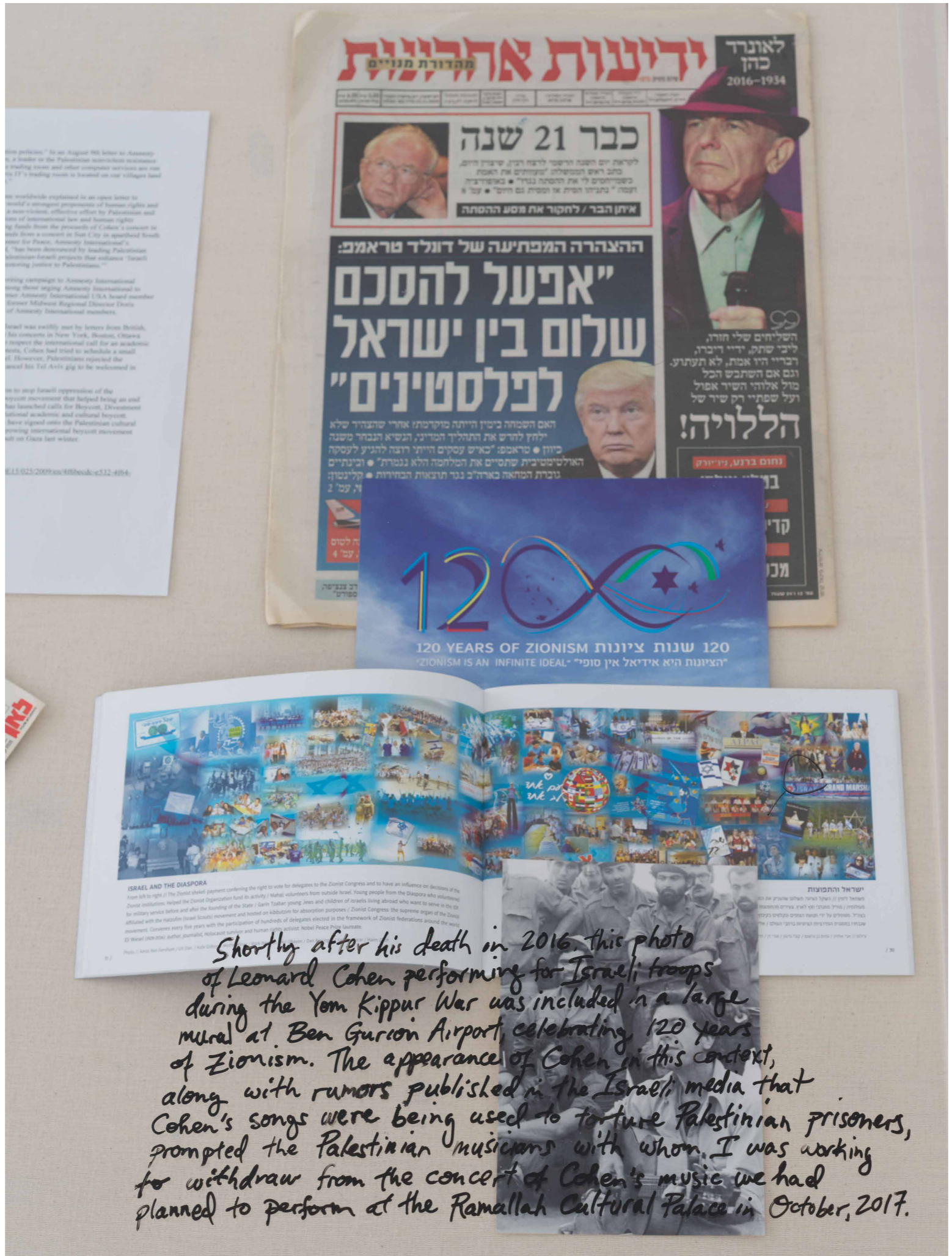
I am with the revolutionaries,  
I am of the revolutionaries  
Ever since the day I carried my rifle,  
Palestine became only meters away  
O revolutionaries, in Jerusalem, in Hebron,  
In Sisan, in the Jordan Valley, in Bethlehem,  
Wherever you may be O free men  
Advance, advance, advance to Palestine,  
For there is only one path to Palestine,  
And it passes through the barrel of a gun."



Amnesty Inter  
Cohen's Israel  
Media Contacts: pachi.La  
New York, NY, August 1  
from any involvement in  
funds that benefit from it  
Amnesty International is  
Cohen's concert in Israel  
international's announced  
organization's reported  
international call for Co  
Omar Barghout from I  
(PACBI) commented,  
project which is clearly  
rights. By abandoning  
Cohen and his public  
prestige and respectab  
A statement confirm  
International website  
After reports in late  
Leonard Cohen's son  
to pressure Amnesty  
governmental Organ  
International to reject  
Cohen's planned St  
similar appeal to A  
to Amnesty Intern  
only Palestinian or  
announced that it  
Palestinian Israeli  
Cohen concert fur  
that the group has  
accept any funds  
PNGO explained  
sponsor of Cohen  
Israeli settlement  
on Palestinian li  
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I'm good at love, I'm good at hate,  
it's in between I freeze  
2009/2023  
Detail



I'm good at love, I'm good at hate,  
it's in between I freeze  
2009/2023  
Detail

Shortly after his death in 2016, this photo of Leonard Cohen performing for Israeli troops during the Yom Kippur War was included in a large mural at Ben Gurion Airport, celebrating 120 years of Zionism. The appearance of Cohen in this context, along with rumors published in the Israeli media that Cohen's songs were being used to torture Palestinian prisoners, prompted the Palestinian musicians with whom I was working to withdraw from the concert of Cohen's music we had planned to perform at the Ramallah Cultural Palace in October, 2017.



**Michael Rakowitz**

***The invisible enemy should not exist***

On view at the showroom (across the courtyard)  
at Galerie Barbara Wien, April 28 – July 29, 2023





Small informational card or label placed on the wall below the artwork.

Two electrical outlets on the wall.





**The invisible enemy should not exist –  
Room G, Northwest Palace of Nimrud, Panels a-4, a-2, a-3 & I**  
2019

4 reliefs from Middle Eastern packaging and newspapers,  
glue, cardboard on wooden structures, museum labels

4 Reliefs aus Verpackungsmaterial und Zeitungen aus dem Nahen Osten,  
Klebstoff, Pappe auf Holzstrukturen, Museumsschilder

Panel a-4: 237 × 87 × 8.5 cm

Panel a-2: 237 × 83.5 × 8.5 cm

Panel a-3: 237 × 85 × 8.5 cm

Panels I: 237 × 44 × 8.5 cm; 237 × 92.5 × 8.5 cm



The invisible enemy should not exist – Room G, Northwest Palace of Nimrud, Panels I, 2019

Detail

***The invisible enemy should not exist –  
72 cylinder seals and their impressions***

2021

96 of 144 objects from cardboard, Middle Eastern packaging  
and newspapers, glue, museum labels

96 von 144 Objekte aus Karton, Verpackungsmaterialien und Zeitungen  
aus dem Nahen Osten, Klebstoff, Museumsschilder

Dimensions variable / Maße variabel





The invisible enemy should not exist – 72 cylinder seals and their impressions, 2021



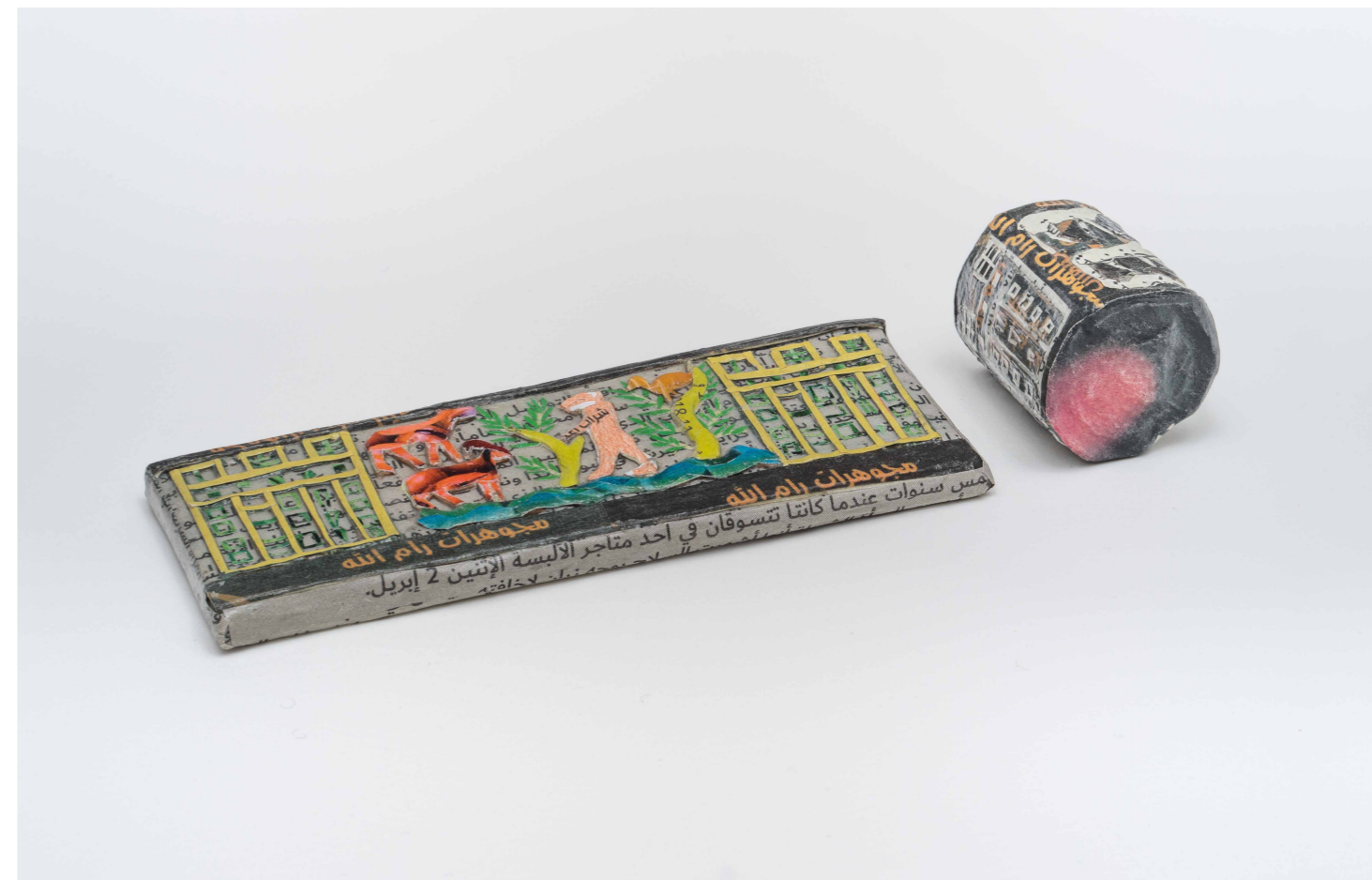
The invisible enemy should not exist – 72 cylinder seals and their impressions, 2021



museum number: unknown  
excavation number: As. 34:102  
provenance: Tell Asmar  
dimension(s) (in cm): 2.7 x .8  
material: clay  
date: unknown  
description: geometric pattern  
status: feared to be stolen

*In some cases were hundreds of stone cylinders, each the size of a child's finger.*

— William R. Polk



museum number: unknown  
excavation number: Kh. VII 256  
provenance: Khafaje  
dimension(s) (in cm): 4.1 x 3.5  
material: gray limestone  
date: Jemdet Nasr (ca. 3000 - 2800 BC)  
description: tailless lion or bear standing erect behind tree; two goats feeding at other side of tree; another tree, with bird in branches, behind monster; three-towered building with door at left side; watercourse along bottom of scene  
status: feared to be stolen

*These items will appear for sale for \$50 or \$100 in antique stores all over the Middle East, Europe and North America or on eBay.*

— Eleanor Robson



*The invisible enemy should not exist – 72 cylinder seals and their impressions, 2021*