Sabah Naim’s intention in her pictures, which include milled-up newspaper such as this combined with photographs of people going about their daily lives, is to draw attention to, and visualize in a concrete way, the widening gap between two often incomprehensible worlds: the international arena of the media and global politics and the everyday world of ordinary Egyptians and their daily effort to survive. ‘Everyday struggles have taken the place of the nationalist struggles in this postcolonial world order while waiting has replaced action.’

(“Paula HA”, 500 x 600, Venice Biennale 2001, press release)
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[Text continues, 50th Venice Biennale 2003, press release]

Mohammed Abba
No more killing
OIL ON CANVAS, 2004
H 150.0 cm, W 145.0 cm
EGYPT
2005 1 10 01
BROOKS SHELL PERMANENT FUND

A commentary on the futility of war and the passivity of Arab governments, this painting depicts three Egyptian policemen, two in summer and one in winter uniform in the foreground, a picture of George Washington from a U.S. dollar, and Arabic and English anti-war slogans resembling newspaper headlines. These include Arabic phrases such as "Arab governments look on but..." "Our people are in a suffocating crisis" and "The price of blood has risen."
Youssef Nabil's Self-portrait, Madrid

Photography: Hand-coloured gelatin silver print, 2002

Youssef Nabil has become increasingly known for his hand-coloured black-and-white portraits of well-known Western and Middle Eastern stars and artists. The intimate Self-portrait series, which he started to produce in 2000, reflects the artist's relationship to situations and the different cities he visited and worked in, including his home town of Cairo where he always feels an outsider. The evocative words in the picture clearly conjure the aspirations and dreams of Youssef Nabil as a rising artist.

In an answer to a question about the cinematic aspect of his work, Nabil answered: They all tell stories. I always liked to tell stories through my work, the more simple the photo is, the more complicated the story becomes. What is the point of making a photo if it does not have something to say?

I want you to know
I'm going to be a hip, bright shining star
That's what I want and it's what I gonna get.
Yousef Nabil has become increasingly known for his hand-coloured black-and-white portraits of well-known Western and Middle Eastern stars and artists. The intimate Self-portrait series, which he started to produce in 2000, reflects the artist's relationship to situations and the different cities he visited and worked in, including his home town of Cairo, where he always feels as an outsider.

I went into town:
I'm going to be a big, bright shining star.
That's what I want and it's what I going to be.

This book contains a series of images that highlight the Lebanese civil war, the terrible conflict that tore Lebanon apart between 1975 and 1989 and set communities against each other. The powerful images are reproduced from charcoal drawings in grey and black. The stark picture illustrated here is called In anticipation of a settlement. People are stacked together, solders aim at a fractured wall of faces, mothers and children are frightened, and all are grim and unsmiling.

The road to peace: images of the Lebanese civil war
BOUND BOOK, 1979
H. 38.5 x W. 48.5 cm
LEBANESE PRIVATE COLLECTION
This work, which received honorable mention at the Norwegian International Print Biennial in 1989, was made at one of the worst points of the Lebanese civil war, just before it ended. It is full of codes. The snapshot of the city of Beirut at the top of the picture has a cross over it for 'cancelled' and a zero meaning 'target.' The face of the child represents panic. The rows of figures based on ancient stones stand for the foreign armies. An image of the absurdity of war, the whole is turned into a stage set; hands are clapping with the world looking on. A strong source of influence for Rawas has been the sequential photographs of figures in motion by Eadweard Muybridge (1904). The represent the idea of moments of time that, as exemplified here, is a key element of Rawas's work.

Walid Raad

The truth will be known when the last witness is dead

Walid Raad established his 'Atlas group' in Beirut in 1999 as a commentary on the recent history of Lebanon. The artist documents the history around fictitious characters such as Dr Fadl Fakhouri, after whom the present file is named. In this work, Dr Fakhouri, until his death in 1993, is the foremost historian of the civil war in Lebanon. He bequeathed numerous documents to the Atlas group, many of which consist of notebooks in which he documented his gambling on horses—the pastime of many Lebanese historians. These extraordinary fictitious records appear in the first part of the book. The second part, from which the illustration is taken, consists of 145 cut-out photographs of cars. These refer to all the makes and colors of cars used in car bombs during the Lebanese civil war (1975–91). This is no. 62, Silver Volos, which on 20 August 1985 killed 56 and injured 120 with 100 kg of TNT. Cars, buildings, and shops were also burned.
As a caricaturist, graphic artist, painter and engraver, Abdelké worked for many years in Syria before leaving in the early 1980s to live in Paris. In his work he constantly criticized authority, which is defined within social and political standards (for example, male authority and political figures). The juxtaposition of three standing figures has been a constant theme in his work. In delicate pastel shades, they stand in a row, in the centre a portly and sinister man. Those on either side seem to stand back in fear; the one on the right with all facial features erased. Pasted in are fragments of newspapers.
In this two-part work Shana highlights the plight of Palestinian children. Her subject is a young boy from the Sheikh Radwan refugee camp in Gaza carrying a stick. After the Oslo agreement in 1993 it was believed that the new potential for peace would change the situation of the Palestinian refugees, particularly the lives of children.

"Unfortunately there has been no change in these children's lives and the trauma and dispossession has carried on. The only apparent difference in the streets of Gaza was the change in the colour of the graffiti which became lighter. However the misery, poverty and the trauma of violence remains."

[artist's statement]

This work follows a series called Walls of Gaza, in which Shana featured the graffiti in the streets of Gaza. Initial groups would make their mark and the Israeli occupiers would spray purple paint to eradicate it. In Children of war, children of peace, the traces of these writings, now deliberately illegible, have merged into the background, an evocative reminder of the context in which these were painted.

As a caricaturist, graphic artist, painter and engraver, Abdelké worked for many years in Syria before leaving in the early 1980s to live in Paris. In his work he constantly challenges authority, which is defined within social and political standards. For example, male authority and political figures. The juxtaposition of three standing figures has been a constant theme in his work. In delicate pastel shades, they stand in a row, in the centre a portly and sinister man. Those on either side seem to stand back in fear, the one on the right, with all facial features erased. Pasted in are fragments of newspapers.