



Fazal Sheikh: The Erasure Trilogy

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The Erasure Trilogy explores the anguish caused by the loss of memory-by forgetting, amnesia or suppression-and the resulting human desire to preserve memory, all seen through the prism of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. *Memory Trace*, the first book in the trilogy, depicts the ruins caused by the Arab-Israeli War of 1948: portraits of those traumatized by violence, devastated landscapes and fragments of buildings. This visual poem suggests the irreparable loss of a lingering past that augurs a painful and difficult future. Tracing the ironic consequences of David Ben-Gurion's dream of settling the Negev and making the "desert bloom," the aerial photographs in Sheikh's *Desert Bloom* reveal the myriad actions that have displaced and erased the Bedouins who have lived in the desert for generations. Here we see the extreme transformation of the landscape through erosion, mining, military training camps, the demolition of villages and afforestation. Through Sheikh's lens the desert becomes both an archive of violence and a record of human attempts to erase it. *Independence / Nakba* consists of 66 diptychs-one for each year since 1948-pairing people from both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and of gradually increasing age. The double portraits query the relations between Israelis and Palestinians before the founding of the Israeli State (each image depicts either someone who lived in Palestine before the founding of the Israeli State, or someone whose ancestors did). A final volume with texts by Eduardo Cadava, Professor and Master at Wilson College, Princeton University and Eyal Weizman, Professor of Visual Cultures and Director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London, closes *The Erasure Trilogy*.

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Editorial Review

Review

One of the most comprehensive works about the land of Israel, visual or otherwise, succeeding at once as artistic creation and critical inquiry. (Alex Cocotas *The Owl*)

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From reader reviews:

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