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Spike Island

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Iman Issa

Material for 2018

17 February to 15 April 2018

Preview: Friday 16 February 2018, 6–9pm



Material for 2018 brings together work made by Iman Issa over the last 7 years and includes her most recent work, *Book of Facts: A Proposition*.

In the works included in the exhibition, Issa uses a process of distilling, or drawing out of elements, to make different versions of collectively understood historical artefacts, facts and stories. Although her methodology is to define the instrumental qualities of an object or a text, she does not see it as a reductive approach, but rather as a means of understanding the resonance - in the present moment - of the original elements of past objects or histories.

Material (2010-2012) is a series of ten 'displays' presented as alternative forms to existing monuments and memorials. Works with titles such as *Material for a sculpture proposed as an alternative to a monument that has become an embarrassment to its people* (2010), question the resonance of monuments as times and ideas move on.

A set of six inkjet prints titled *Colors, Lines, Numbers, Symbols, Shapes and Images* (2010) scrutinise the symbolic language of election posters. Each is given the designation 'untitled poster' with a number, while collectively they present a landscape of specific places and events, reflecting what might remain in memory after their initial use of campaigning has expired.

The Revolutionary (2010) is an audio piece composed by the artist and generated using text to speech software. The work presents a fictional narrative weaved around an attempt to understand the term 'revolutionary' and what this means in the present day.

Common Elements (2013) – an installation of texts, photographs and sculpture – also shows how the stories of individuals can speak of wider political and social conditions. Issa mines the autobiographies of four public figures to extract passages that describe not only their own personal circumstances but also wider historical contexts. The texts are complemented by a collection of photographs and sculptures made with reference to various museum displays seen by the artist.

Book of Facts: A Proposition (2017), is presented as a book documenting an exhibition that has never taken place and never will. All the material is formatted in the guise of information geared towards a specific thesis that can only be unraveled through engaging with the book's internal content and structure.

Image credit: Iman Issa, *Material for a sculpture recalling the destruction of a prominent public monument in the name of national resistance* (2010) Installation detail. Photograph by Serkan Taycan. Courtesy the artist and Rodeo.

– Ends –

For further information and high resolution images please contact Jane Faram, Communications Manager on 0117 929 2266 or jane.faram@spikeisland.org.uk

Notes for editors:

- Iman Issa (b. 1979, Cairo) is an artist currently based in Berlin. Recent solo and group exhibitions include Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, MoMA, New York, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 21er Haus, Vienna, MACBA, Barcelona, the Perez Museum, Miami, the 12th Sharjah biennial, the 8th Berlin Biennial, MuHKA, Antwerp, Tensta Konsthall, Spånga, New Museum, New York, and KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin. Her book *Common Elements* was published by the Glasgow Sculpture Studios in 2015 and *Thirty-three Stories about Reasonable Characters in Familiar Places* was published by the SculptureCenter in 2011. She has been named a 2017 DAAD Artist in Residence and is a recipient of the Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise (2017), Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (2015), HNF-MACBA Award (2012), and the Abraaj Group Art Prize (2013). Issa teaches at the Cooper Union School of Art.
- Iman Issa's exhibition is a collaboration with Bielefelder Kunstverein, Germany where the artist presents her exhibition from 18 November 2017 to 28 January 2018. *Common Elements* by Iman Issa was commissioned by The Abraaj Group Art Prize, 2013.
- Spike Island is an international centre for the development of contemporary art and design. It is a place where artists and the public can meet, enabling audiences to engage with artists' research and production. Within the 80,000 square foot building, Spike Island offers visitors a year-round programme of exhibitions, events and activities in the central gallery spaces, as well as providing working space for artists, designers and creative businesses.
- Spike Island is a partner of Tate as part of the Plus Tate network.
- The gallery is open Tuesday to Sunday, 12–5pm. Entrance is free.

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