



Nour Bishouty

Rock Paper Scissors

March 21 - April 26, 2025

COOPER COLE is pleased to present Rock Paper Scissors, a solo exhibition from Nour Bishouty. This marks the artists first solo exhibition with the gallery.

The following text by Danica Pinteric accompanies the exhibit.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HANDS, OR, HOW TO SPEAK WITH SHADOWS

This manual is intended for all who wish to speak with shadows. For centuries, many have communed with the shadows for a variety of purposes. This guide provides written instructions for hands, wrists, eyes, and minds. Bear in mind, a successful shadow is achieved partially through the manipulation of one's hands, but just as importantly, the attunement of one's vision.

THE TOOLS YOU NEED

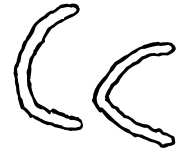
1. Hands - stretch the fingers and palms to encourage elasticity
2. Light - candlelight (suggested), or a flashlight, or any small spot of light will suffice
3. Screen - a wall, a curtain, a scrim, a firm piece paper, a blank slate

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Look carefully at your hands. Many know their hands to be tools for work and everyday tasks, this will be different.

Pay attention to your breathing. Accept that all shadows are born a deception.

Allow your eyes to adjust. Remember that you will be performing in the dark.



ROUTINES

1. PARTING THE SEA

Bring fingers and palms together, prayer-like. Slowly rotate hands in opposing directions, creating waves. Increase in speed and relax fingers, as though washing the hands. Stop the motion. Align elbows, arms, wrists, and fingers for an instant, and move hands in opposing directions, keeping elbows together.

2. PALM TREE

Layer one wrist in front of the other, crossing them slightly. Relax your hands. Let your fingers be fronds. Let the breeze move them.

3. A CHIMERA BREATHING AND HUNTING

(Performance enhanced when wearing rings)

Relax your wrist, arm, and shoulder. Bring your thumb to your fingers, as if holding a letter. On the other hand, spread your fingers wide. Bring your hand to the opposing wrist to become a mane, or wings, or scales. Soften and stiffen your fingers and thumbs. Move hungrily. All movements flow from the head of the beast.

4. QUIET NIGHT

Hold one arm out parallel to the floor. With your opposite hand, use your index and middle finger to “walk” across the arm. Each “step” brings the hand further across the arm until you reach the other side. Sigh audibly with relief, or dread, when you reach the other side.



5. ECLIPSE DANCE (For two players)

PLAYER ONE (CHILD), hold your hands out parallel to the wall. Widen the spaces between your fingers.

PLAYER TWO (PARENT), your first action is to assist them. Bring your thumb to your index finger and thread a needle. Stitch the Child's fingers together, closing all gaps until the remaining shadow becomes a sturdy hill.

CHILD, shake, shake, shake the hands until the fingers come apart. Hang your hands from limp wrists. Your fingertips become rainfall.

PARENT, bring your hands together to make a shallow basin. Collect the sun's tears. Return them to the Child, who has brought their hands to form their own basin.

CHILD, release the rainfall. Breathe into your wrists. Let the air inflate your hands and hold them far from the light. Part your precious fingers, and wait for the Parent to pose them for you. With their help, your hand becomes a seed, then a stem, then a rose. (A cinnamon rose, as red as yesterday's). After blooming, pause to rest.

PARENT, enhance the way the Child's hand becomes a seed, then a stem, then a rose. While they rest, allow the trouble inside you to build. With one hand, hold up fingers and tuck your thumb to your palm. Point your index finger with the other. Notice which utensil is Discipline. (The other is Comfort.) The Child may or may not imitate this sequence.



Nour Bishouty (b. 1986, Amman, Jordan) is an interdisciplinary artist working across media including video, sculpture, works on paper, digital images, and writing. She received her BFA School of Visual Art and Design from the University of Jordan in 2008, and an MFA Studio Arts from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 2014.

Her work is concerned with gaps in archival memory and the Western production of knowledge and fantasy, her practice explores notions of articulation, permission, the failure of language, and the generative possibilities of ambiguity and misunderstanding.

Bishouty's work has been exhibited internationally including at Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool (forthcoming June 2025); Art Jameel, Jeddah; La biennale de Québec, Quebec City; Stewart Hall Art Gallery, Pointe-Claire; Gallery 44 and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto (2021); Darat Al Funun, Amman; Casa Arabe, Madrid; Access Gallery, Vancouver; the Mosaic Rooms, London; and the Beirut Art Centre, Beirut. She will present a solo exhibition at Museo Universitario del Chopo in Mexico City (January 2026).

Her artist book *1–130: Selected works Ghassan Bishouty b. 1941 Safad, Palestine – d. 2004 Amman, Jordan*, edited by Jacob Korczynski, was co-published in 2020 by Art Metropole (Toronto) and Motto Books (Berlin). Bishouty lives and works in Toronto, Canada.