

صفير زملر غالييري SFEIR-SEMLER GALLERY

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Lawrence Abu Hamdan Someone Chewing Sfeir-Semler Karantina, Beirut Opening 3 April, 2025

Sfeir-Semler Gallery is happy to announce Lawrence Abu Hamdan's solo exhibition in the Beirut Karantina space, opening on Thursday 3 April 2025.

Abu Hamdan is a researcher, filmmaker, artist and activist or, as he puts it, a 'Private Ear'. His audio investigations can be found in trials, advocacy campaigns or journalistic reports as well as live performances, films and multimedia installations.

For his upcoming solo show at Sfeir-Semler, Abu Hamdan has used the idea of noise as an aggregator of his recent and new works. Abu Hamdan states that '*power resides with those who define what constitutes noise*' is as fundamental to his exploration of the urban noise-scape of Cairo in the post 2013 military coup as it is to his most recent work in the Syrian Golan Heights occupied territories – recently witnessing political unrest brought about by the planned installation of wind turbines in proximity to people's homes. Raising awareness about the effect of such noise, Abu Hamdan has also developed a video game with fellow researchers at Earshot* based on the sound recordings of similar turbines in Gaildorf, Germany and recordings of ambient noise captured in the Golan Heights. The installation mimics the nowadays popular style of streamers, showing a recording of the game commented by the artist.

In the new works from 2025, Abu Hamdan deals with noise and interference in media equipment, with an installation that uncovers the imperceptible electromagnetic fields that accompany us all the time through our portable electronic devices; as well as the systematic targeting of cameras, livestreams and journalists since the start of the genocide in Gaza and during the invasion of Lebanon by the Israeli army, using the last sometimes distorted frames of the targeted recording equipment to create an installation that shows the persistence of media through forces of erasure.

In the cinema space of the Gallery, we are presenting *45th Parallel*, the artist's award-winning work from 2022. Shot in the Haskell Free Library and Opera House – a unique municipal site that straddles Canada and the United States, it questions the im(permeability) of borders and the jurisdictions they fall under.

Showcasing installation, film, and sound pieces, the exhibition adds another layer to Abu Hamdan's ongoing commitment to leverage the pervasive nature of sound in order to resist oppression.

*In 2023 Lawrence Abu Hamdan founded *Earshot* the world's first not-for-profit organization dedicated to the study of audio for human rights and environmental advocacy.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan (b.1985) is a Lebanese-British independent investigator or Private Ear. His investigations focus on sound and have been used as evidence at the UK Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, as advocacy for organizations such as Amnesty International and Defence for Children International and presentations at the UN security council.

Abu Hamdan has held fellowships and guest professorships at the University of Chicago, the New School, New York, the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and currently at Cornell Tech. His cultural projects that reflect on the political and cultural context of sound and listening have been presented at MoMA New York, MUAC Mexico, the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, the 58th Venice Biennale, the 11th Gwangju Biennale, the 13th and 14th Sharjah Biennial, the 34th Biennial of São Paulo, the Tate Modern, Hammer Museum L.A and the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin.

His works are part of collections at Reina Sofia, MoMA, Guggenheim, Hamburger Bahnhof, Van Abbe Museum, Centre Pompidou and Tate Modern. Abu Hamdan has been widely recognized internationally with awards such as the Grand Prix at Winterthur International Film Festival, the 2020 Toronto Biennial Audience Award, the 2019 Edvard Munch Art Award, the award for best short film at the 2017 Rotterdam International Film Festival and the 2016 Nam June Paik Award for new media. He was a co-winner of the 2019 Turner Prize, with the temporary collective he formed with fellow nominated artists.