

## Description of Series

### Avocado Birds

### طيور الأفوكادو

The Avocado bird is a fictional bird that lives in Palestine. Hatched to life through carefully brooding Palestinian avocados by wrapping them in terry towels preferably bought at the Friday market in front of the mosque and placing them in the warmth of the morning sun in Ramallah.

Avocado birds are ideas of the political and emotional subversive potential of poetry. That fiction can be used not only to make people smile but also to make them listen. That beauty as well as being used to please the ruling powers can be used to force them to see.

Through planting a distortion in the aspects of beauty the Avocado bird strives for a beauty that can make us sense the distortion with in ourselves. Rather than going for the pleasing aspects of beauty, the Avocado Bird tries to consciously use them, pointing them back towards us. The subversive poetry and beauty are at least as beautiful and poetic as the hegemonic ones but possess qualities that enables it to creep into us planting its seeds of change.

The Avocado bird's idea of beauty and poetry hopes to extend beyond its relative the surrealist term 'convulsive beauty' through its use of sensitivity, emphasis on togetherness and inspiration from sorrow and grief. – *Tears may be for the Avocado bird what disgust was for the surrealists.*

This series of photography seeks to explore potential meanings of the Avocado bird and these ideas of subversive beauty and poetry mentioned above through going into dialogue with occult objects and leavings found in a crack at the shore of the dead sea in Palestine. This shore, a stone's throw from the Israeli military checkpoint Ein Gedi, is the fictional birthplace of the Avocado bird as well as through its location inside what is called the *Area C* one of several examples of the situation in Palestine under occupation.

The dialogue is realized through an experimental photographic method which corelates to spiritual mysticism; namely Islamic, Christian and Jewish mysticism as well as north Scandinavian folklore; through its extensive use of crystals, glass, gemstones, mirrors and prisms.

The project consists of 10 pictures, 6 large and 4 medium format analogue studio photographs.

*The motives/objects are as follows:*

*Photo 1: Burned book*

*Photo 2: Glass ball and head of a metallic nail*

*Photo 3: Burned bone*

*Photo 4: Snake skin and part of a metallic brooch*

*Photo 5: Burned bone and crushed glass*

*Photo 6: Nails and crushed glass*

*Photo 7: Pieces of broken glass*

*Photo 8: Burned book and crystal*

*Photo 9: Feather and snake skin*

*Photo 10: Snake skin*

***The photographic method and technicalities not to be ignored – they may embody the spirits:***

In order to create the plurality of vibrant colours that may look unrealistic and surreal I use materials like acrylic plastic, gemstones, crystals, mirrors, prisms and glitter as well as canvases painted with fluorescent colours either as backdrops, details placed in the scenes or as walls/objects placed not in the picture itself but in such a way that it reflects the flash/flashes back into it but with distorted colours.

The camera acts and interacts with the objects in the scene – sometimes by leaning on as well as supporting each other. I come closer to the objects in the scene through using several extension tubes or bellows and by photographing with the lens turned backwards, with the face of the lens inwards towards the body of the camera and with the mount of the lens outwards, a photographic enlargement of the object is created.

The loss of light that occur in the extensions and bellows, sometimes up to half a meter, require heavy light compensation to achieve sufficient exposed pictures. I did this through opening the lens and fire off the flash multiple times before closing the lens again, which furthermore allows me to play with the shadows in the picture through moving the flash around in between each time I fire it off. This might need a pedagogical exemplification; if you look at the second picture you can see that there are no reasonable shadows; in this case I let the lens open for close to one hour in order to fire off one flash around 70 times from different angles and places in the room.

This method of photographing makes the depth of field extremely short. If you let me use one more exemplification; we can look at the longest and shortest depth of field. Where the longest can be seen in eight photography, in which we are able to read in the burned book a few letters in row. To see a difference from the shortest depth of field can be a bit tricky at first, but if you look at the third picture there is a depth of field roughly just as wide as a pore in the burned bone. And technically the difference is substantial between the size of a burned bone's pore and a pair of graphemes in a burned book.

This emphasis on areas lacking focus is the core of this method – giving room for abstraction and the qualities of bokeh. Gazing in to what's unknown, imagine and re-imagine what only can be subtly sensed but never clearly seen. To feel how the surroundings gently stroke your skin.

Teared eyes are the aesthetical guiding stars for this photographic technique, after all teared eyes can reach the highest amounts of bokeh. The world you see through teared eyes, is painful yet beautiful, individual yet shared, concrete yet unspecified and political yet poetical – it is numb, but still yet highly subversive. Through these eyes we can see that there are more true things to this world than simple binarities and narrow dualisms.

*A turning to poetry without, but through risking and sometimes failing to, turning into poetry.*