

Hrair Sarkissian

www.hrairsarkissian.com

Hrair Sarkissian (Damascus, 1973) earned his foundational training at his father's photographic studio in Damascus, which to this day informs his perspective and his practice. In 2010 he completed a BFA in Photography at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam. He lives and works in London.

Sarkissian's photographic practice is characterised by an element of search, as well as the dichotomy of visible/invisible. The search relates to answers about his personal memories and background, and he uses this subjectivity as a way to navigate stories that official histories are unable or unwilling to tell. The invisibility versus visibility is evident in Sarkissian's often deserted landscapes and locations, devoid of human presence yet filled with human existence. "I try to engage the viewer into a more profound reading of what lies behind the surface, thereby re-evaluating larger historical or social narratives."

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024	Fotografisk Center, Copenhagen, Denmark.
2022	Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden. Bonniefantemuseum, Maastricht, Netherlands.
2021	Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.
2020	Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.
2017	Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Wellesley, U.S. Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon.
2015	Fondazione Carispezia, La Spezia, Italy. Mosaic Rooms, London, UK.
2013	Kalfayan Galleries, Athens, Greece. Darat al Funun, Amman, Jordan.
2011	SALT Beyoglu, Istanbul, Turkey. Podbielski Contemporary, Berlin, Germany.
2010	Kalfayan Galleries, Athens, Greece.
2008	Kalfayan Galleries, Athens, Greece.
2007	The Museum of Photography of Thessaloniki, Greece.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023	'Alexandrie: futurs antérieurs', Mucem – Museum of the Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean, Marseille.
	'World Classroom: Contemporary Art through School Subjects', Mori Art Museum, Tokyo.
2022	'In the Heart of Another Country', Deichtorhallen, Hamburg.
	'Alexandrie: futurs antérieurs', Bozar – Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels.
2021	'Voids of Past and Future', Galerie Nord Kunstverein Tiergarten, Berlin.
	British Art Show (BAS 9), Manchester, Wolverhampton, Aberdeen, and Plymouth, UK.
2020	'Trembling Landscapes', Eye Filmmuseum, Amsterdam.
	'The Architecture of Memory', Landskrona Foto Festival, Landskrona.
2019	'Mara'ina', King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra), Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.
	21 ^a Bienal de Arte Contemporânea Sesc_Videobrasil Comunidades imaginadas, São Paulo, Brazil.
	"Living In The Mediterranean", Valencia Institute of Modern Art (IVAM), Valencia.
	"Personal Structures", GAA Foundation, Venice Biennial, Venice.
	"Leaving the Echo Chamber", 14th Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah.
2018	"The New Europe", Brighton Photo Biennial, Brighton.
	"Video Echoes: Waves From The Eastern Mediterranean", Counihan Gallery, Brunswick.
	"In The Still Of The Night", Fotohof, Salzburg.
	"Nonlinear Histories Transgenerational, Memory of Trauma", Downtown Central Library, Glendale, CA.

- 2017 "Flatlands", Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD) Manila, Philippines.
 "Age of Terror", Imperial War Museum, London.
 "La Terra Inquieta", La Triennale di Milano.
 "Make a Change", Norrtälje konsthall, Norrtälje, Sweden.
 "DISAPPEARANCE AT SEA", BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, United Kingdom.
 "Wounded cities. Hyphenated places — hyphenated identities." Parson School for Design's, New York, U.S.A.
- 2016 "ATLAS of the ruins OF EUROPE", CentroCentro, Madrid, Spain.
 "Built, World", SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia.
 "Critical Archives I", Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete, Rethymno, Greece.
 "Make a Change", Kulturcentrum Ronneby, Sweden.
- 2015 10th Bamako Encounters, The African Biennial of Photography, Bamako, Mali.
 "To What End" Camera Austeria, Graz, Austria.
 "Fire and Forget" KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany.
 "Armenity" Armenian Pavilion, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (Golden Lion).
 "Time, Conflict, Photography" Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany.
 "Sitter" Columbus College of Art & Design, Columbus OH, U.S.A.
- 2014 "Time, Conflict, Photography" Tate Modern, London, UK.
 "Alienated of every country, unite!", La Folie, Quebec city, Canada.
- 2013 "Death of a Cameraman", Apexart, NY, U.S.A.
 "Here, elsewhere", Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille Capital of Culture, Marseille, France.
 "Power, Photos, Freedom!", Foto Museum Antwerp, Belgium.
- 2012 7th Asia Pacific Triennial (APT7), Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia.
 Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.
 "Lines of Control" Herbert F Johnson Museum at Cornell University, New York, US.
- 2011 "Facing Mirrors", Photography Museum, Thessaloniki, Greece.
 3rd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece.
 Sharjah Biennial 10, Sharjah, UAE.
 "Out of Place", Tate Modern, London, UK, and Darat al Funun, Amman, Jordan.
- 2010 "Breaking News" Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena, Modena, Italy.
 21st International Photography Meeting, Thessaloniki, Greece.
- 2009 "Disorientation II" The Rise & Fall of Arab Cities, Abu Dhabi, UAE.
 11th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey.
 "Treasures of Wisdom", ReMap2, Athens, Greece.
- 2008 "Visual Arts in Greece III", Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece.
 "New Ends, Old Beginnings", The Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool, UK.
 "Constructio", Galeria Antonio De Barnola, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2005 "Meeting Points", Amman, Jordan and Damascus, Syria.
- 2004 "Voies Off", Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles, France.
- 2003 Centre d'Art le Creux de l'enfer, Thiers, France.
- 2001&2003 "Journées de la photographie", Damascus, Syria.
- 2000&2001 International Photographic Gathering, Aleppo, Syria.

SELECTED PUBLIC TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

"Last Seen (2018–2021): a Conversation About the Architecture of Violence" between Hrair Sarkissian and Eyal Weizman, Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, 30 April 2022.

["The Other Side of Silence: A Conversation with Hrair Sarkissian on Memory, History and Photography"](#), Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, 30 October 2021.

["Making History: Hrair Sarkissian and Omar Kholeif in Conversation"](#), Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas, 29 January 2020.

["Hrair Sarkissian | 21ª Bienal de Arte Contemporânea Sesc Videobrasil"](#), Sao Paulo, October 2019.

An International Symposium on the Art and Visual Culture of War, Conflict and Political Violence,

London: [Keynote 3: “Hrair Sarkissian In Conversation with Prof Vivienne Jabri, Kings College London.”](#) 31 May 2019.

[“Back to the Future” - Hrair Sarkissian](#), Fondazione Carispezia, Italy, 4 February 2016.

[“TateShots - Hrair Sarkissian”](#), Tate Modern, London, 22 August 2013.

BOOKS AND CATALOGUES

The Other Side of Silence (Stockholm: Bonniers Konsthall, 2021).

Hrair Sarkissian (Amman: Darat al Funun-The Khalid Shoman Foundation, 2016).

Maggia, Filippo, ed., *Hrair Sarkissian – Back to the Future* (Milan: Skira editore SpA, 2015).

Hrair Sarkissian – Background (London: The Mosaic Rooms, 2015).

Murtaza Vali, ed., *Hrair Sarkissian – extra | ordinary* (Dubai: The Abraaj Group Art Prize, 2013).

Paul Sloman, ed., *Contemporary Art in the Middle East* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2009), pp.148-151.

SELECTED ARTICLES

Nadine Khalil, [“HRAIR SARKISSIAN - Photographing warfare’s invisible toll”](#), *ArtForum*, 9 December 2021.

Melissa Gronlund, [“My work is about trauma”](#), *The National*, 26 February 2020.

Jumana Abdel-Razzaq, [“Hrair Sarkissian’s debut solo show in the US is an homage to Syria through photography”](#), *Architectural Digest*, 2 February 2020

Marlyne Sahakian, “Hrair Sarkissian: Specters and spaces”, *ArtAsiaPacific*, No. 108, May/June 2018: 54-55.

Marlyne Sahakian, 'Homesick, Hrair Sarkissian', *ArtAsiaPacific*, No. 106, Nov/Dec 2017: 131.

Allison Meier, [“Photographs Revisit the Places Terminally Ill Patients Chose to See Before They Died”](#), *Hyperallergic*, 13 October 2017.

Clément Ghys, Clémentine Mercier et Marie Ottavi, [“PARIS PHOTO 2015, 10 SUR 10”](#), *Libération*, 13 November 2015.

Neery Melkonian, [“Undoing Denials at the Venice Biennale’s Armenian Pavilion”](#), *Hyperallergic*, 25 August 2015.

Gareth Harris, 'Armenia in Venice: The past and the furious', *Financial Times*, 1 May 2015.

Hrag Vartanian, [“Your Concise Guide to the 2015 Venice Biennale”](#), *Hyperallergic*, 5 May 2015.

Cassie Packard, [“An Artist Considers the Trauma of His Two Homelands”](#), *Hyperallergic*, 22 April 2015.

[“Hrair Sarkissian. Imagined Futures”](#), *Wall Street International magazine*, 17 February 2015.

Murtaza Vali, [“Beyond Exile: Hrair Sarkissian’s Homesick”](#), *Nafas Art Magazine*, January 2015.

Victoria Sadler, 'Facing History: Leon Golub & Hrair Sarkissian at Tate Modern', 2 September 2014.

Nat Muller, “Hrair Sarkissian”, *Metropolis M*, N° 4-2011, pp.42-43, 116.

Kaelen Wilson-Goldie, “Dream Color”, *Bidoun*, Winter 2010, pp. 30-31.

Kaelen Wilson-Goldie, “Arguing the World”, *The National* (special art issue), UAE, 20 November 2009, pp. 6-7.

Charles Esche, “11th International Istanbul Biennial”, *ArtForum*, no. 4, December 2009, pp.196-199 (p.197).

11th International Istanbul Biennial 'What Keeps Mankind Alive?', Istanbul, 2009 (exhibition catalogue, pp. 236-237).

Art Dubai Web-Journal, March 2009 issue (no longer online).

Visual Arts in Greece III, 'And Now?', State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece (exhibition catalogue, pp. 46-47).

Sönke Gau, "Hrair Sarkissian, In-Between Times and In-Between Spaces", *Camera Austria*, no. 102, Summer 2008, pp.43-48.

Financial Times, 17 March 2008 (work illustrated on the back cover of the supplement: Art of Our Time).
Eyemazing Dubai, Special Issue, March 2008 (p.17 and illus., p. 9-12).

SOURA-A Nonconformist Magazine, Special Edition, Art Dubai, March 2008 (illus. pp. 26-27, 28).

Canvas: Art and Culture From The Middle East and Arab World, vol.4, issue 2, 2008 (illus. p. 56 and on the back cover of the supplement: Canvas Guide).

AWARDS

2012 The Abraaj Group Art Prize 5th edition

2010 Steenbergen Stipendium, Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

WORK IN COLLECTIONS

Bonnefanten, Maastricht, The Netherlands.

The Farjam Collection, Dubai.

Fondazione Cari Spezia, Italy.

Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena, Italy.

The Khalid Shoman Collection, Amman.

Modern Art Museum of Forth Worth, U.S.A.

Mori Museum, Tokyo.

Sharjah Art Foundation, United Arab Emirates.

Tate Modern, London.

Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City.

Various private collections.