

## ALFRED TARAZI - A MOMENT OF TRUTH

OPENING FRIDAY, MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2011 AT 7 P. M.

DURATION: MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> – JUNE 25<sup>TH</sup> 2011

Krinzinger Projekte presents from May 6<sup>th</sup> - June 25<sup>th</sup> 2011 the exhibition **A moment of truth** by the artist Alfred Tarazi. All the works were produced during his Residency in Vienna in the Spring of 2011. Lebanon, its history and his hometown Beirut are the major topics of the large-sized paper works. In all the drawings a specific project returns and gives the background for the whole series: *Silent Square*, a temporary memorial for the victims of the civil war in Lebanon.

*Silent Square* is a hypothetical moment of national reunion; a reunion designed around a massive commemoration of all the people who have lost their lives in Lebanon because of wars and violent events since 1975. The project acts as a blank canvas inviting people to interact with it in order to pay a last tribute to their loved ones. The project adopts a simple and radical approach stepping away from symbolism: each and every victim is represented by a physical entity. Those entities will all be identical: 2 cm wide metal pipes with heights varying from a meter to three meters. Those anonymous steles will have on their top a led light blinking from red to white. People will be able to inscribe the names of the persons they have lost on a time capsule attached to the stick thus stabilizing the light to white. The light of the steles that will not be appropriated will keep on flickering from red to white. The plan is to have 200.000 one of those steles spread at the interval of a meter and a half from each other's, thus forming a 290.000m<sup>2</sup> square, it is a tremendous urban gesture, in comparison the Peter Eisenman's Berlin Holocaust Memorial is 20.000m<sup>2</sup>.

**A moment of truth** belongs to the *Silent Square* cycle. Alfred Tarazi works often in cooperation with the *The Feel Collective*, a multi disciplinary group of cultural activists with whom he is developing narratives to invite people to rethink the violently charged history of Lebanon; the group has been initiated by the Lebanese artist in 2009. Alfred Tarazi attempts with his works to tear the Lebanese people out of their everyday life and confront them with their often-violent history.

Historical events are supposed to be reconsidered from a new and different perspective but most importantly should never be forgotten. With *The Feel Collective* he hopes to break the repetitive pattern of violence in Lebanon. This aim manifests itself with the memorial *Silent Square* in Beirut, a moment that could belong to all the Lebanese. So far Alfred Tarazi has taken several steps to raise awareness about the absence and necessity for such a memorial in Lebanon. In this exhibition at Krinzinger Projekte he is presenting the project through a new set of drawings pointing out the great moment of catharsis a memorial such as *Silent Square* represents.

*"On the 13th of April 1975 the Lebanese civil war began. It lasted 16 years, more than 200 000 persons were killed, more than 17 000 went missing... At the end of the war, a law of amnesty was passed exempting all the various warlords and perpetrators of massacres and atrocities from any responsibility to what had happened.*

*After the war, very little has been done to reunite a country torn by years of fratricidal killings. After the war each community and political faction remained isolated in its own ideology, and no real effort was vested into a national reconciliation.*

*Today, Lebanon is still a divided country, a place where people are still killed for their belonging to a certain community.*

*Today, we would like to call for the end of the violence in Lebanon.*

*Today, we call for a moment of truth."*

Alfred Tarazi