



JOSEPH SASOON SEMAH

Joseph Semah (24.02.1948) was born in Baghdad, Iraq. From 1950 he grew up in Tel Aviv, Israel. After finishing gymnasium, Semah studied at the University of Tel Aviv. At the same time he was developing his artistic venue.

Joseph Semah's grandfather, Hacham/Rabbi Sassoon Kadoori was the president of the Jewish community in Baghdad, who preached tolerance between the various religious denominations. As a Babylonian Jew who emigrated to the West (Amsterdam), he is part of GaLUT (Exile), an endless cycle of diaspora and return. You long for your country of birth and search for a way to relate to your cultural heritage and traditions. Heritage reminds us of our history.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS SINCE 2010 (SELECTION)

2024

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) V - Between Graveyard and Museum's Sphere,
February 4 - June 30, 2024, Museum Het Nieuwe Domein, Sittard, NL

2023

Transformations of Celan in Contemporary Art, Joseph Sassoon Semah and Alexander Polzin,
Literarisches Colloquium Berlin, Freies Universität Berlin, 2 - 5 March 2023

2021/ 23

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) IV - How to Explain Hare Hunting to a Dead German Artist - [The usefulness of continuous measurement of the distance between Nostalgia and Melancholia] (12 September 2021 - February 2023) with 11 exhibitions, 7 performances, 8 debates, 8 videos

2020/2021

Over Vriendschap ... About Friendship ... Kunstmuseum Den Haag, October 2020 - 29 Augustus 2021
Aul Celan-Gerhard-Marcks-Haus (Bremen), Galerie Ohnesorghe (Bremen)

2019/2020

Retrospective 'Being Touched by an Angel Just Before Birth De Domijnen (all spaces) - Sittard,
October 2019 - February 2020

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) III - The Third GaLUT-Baghdad, Jerusalem, Amsterdam,
September 2019 - January 2020 - 36 places

2017/18

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) II - The Guardians of the Door
(Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam - lecture and 5 performances), De Nieuwe Kerk,
openingsperformance and artistic intervention, Joods Historisch Museum - exhibition and Gallery
talk, Goethe-Institut, exhibition and debate
Art Market Budapest, exhibition and openings performance

2015

Being touched by an angel just before birth - Galerie Nouvelles Images, Den Haag



2015

Canakale Biennial, Turkey In Memory of a sacred Tree

2013

72 Privileges [....]: 'It is precisely this balance between exile and the emotion of the privileged which forms the unique originality of our Breathing in Reverse. As will be clear already, there is no past or future in Exile, only an immediate present, Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kochi, India

2011

Tracing Martin Heidegger's Hut and Paul Celan's Clouds [..], Gemak, Den Haag

2010

After Paul Celan. Tango and Fugue. Goethe Institut, Rotterdam; Maison Descartes, Amsterdam

2009

Ich bin, der ich bin EHYeH ASheR EHYeH, Bremen, Gerhard-Marcks-Haus

2007

Next Year in Jerusalem, a project in 12 churches and 12 cities, Niedersachsen, Germany

2006

Read Full Text, Museum van Bommel van Dam, Venlo

PERFORMANCES/INSTALLATIONS

2021-2023

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) IV -How to Explain Hare Hunting to a Dead German Artist - [The usefulness of continuous measurement of the distance between Nostalgia and Melancholia]

2019/2020

Performances On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) III - The Third GaLUT: Baghdad, Jerusalem, Amsterdam

2018

Performance "Corridors:"- Castle Groeneveld

2017

Performances On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) II - The Guardians of the Door in Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam

2017

Art Market Budapest- Opening performance On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) II - The Guardians of the Door

2015

Kunst und Judentum: "Hebraische" Fussnoten zur zeitgenössischen Kunst mit Joseph Semah. Bode-Museum, Berlin.

2012

Performance with 72 children, Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kochi, India



2010

Amsterdam van boven- Amsterdam van beneden, 4 May solo-performance on The roof of the oldest Observatorium of West-Europe, Felix Meritis

2008

Performance Breathing in reverse, Hannover

GROUP EXHIBITIONS SINCE 2005 (SELECTION)

2022

Kunstmuseum Den Haag, Exhibition Lurie & Vostell, Art after Auschwitz

2021

Art Market Budapest

2021

NATURE AND AESTHETICS, REDEFINED Landgoed Nardinclant- Amsetrdamgarden 12 September-24 oktober 2021

2021

PULCHRI-Studio

2021

UIT<>ZICHT, Provinciehuis Haarlem

2020/2021

Joods Historisch Museum : Een graf in de wolken, December 2020- May 2021

2019

Lumen Travo- 26 January 2019–

2019

SEGRETTE – Tracce di Memoria – Memory of the Holocaust XI Edition, Genua, 24 January-9 February

2018

Fondazione Prada- Venetië- Machines à Penser - curated by Dieter Roelstraete,- Biennale Architecture, 26 May-25 November 2018

2017

Galerie Nouvelles Images, 1 juli-26 augustus 2017

2016 -2017

Heilig Schrift-Tanach, Bijbel, Koran- Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht,

2015

On War and Peace, o.a. Joseph Semah, Armando, Jef Diederer, Ger Lataster, Thom Puckey, Ton Slits, Shinkichi Jajiri, Museum Bommel van Dam

2014

Disasters of War, Joseph Semah, David Bade, Reinier Lucassen, Ilya Rabinovich, Ibrahim Quraishi, Kers Gallery, Amsterdam

2013

Flesh and Blood, Museum on the Seam, Socio-Polical Contemporay Art Museum, Jerusalem



2011

Een wereld vol verhalen, De Nieuwe Kerk i.s.m. Joods Historisch Museum

2009/2010

Martin- Gropius-Bau Berlijn Taswir islamitische bildwelten und moderne

2008

Dessins contemporains des Pays-Bas. Signifiants mourants: Joseph Semah, Hadassah Emmerich, Ni Haifeng. Parijs, Institut Neerlandais

2005

Den Haag Sculptuur, The garden of the Palace, De Paleistuin Den Haag

2005

Respect! Forms of community, Contemporary art from the Netherlands, Marrakech

PUBLICATIONS SINCE 2006

- *Joseph Sassoon Semah: On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) V* - Between Graveyard and Museum's Sphere, Metropool International Art Projects, 2024

- *Joseph Sassoon Semah: On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) IV* -

How to Explain Hare Hunting to a Dead German Artist, production Metropool International Art Projects, 2023

[The usefulness of continuous measurement of the distance between Nostalgia and Melancholia]

- *Joseph Sassoon Semah: On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) III* -

The Third GaLUT : Baghdad, Jerusalem, Amsterdam,

production Metropool International Art Projects, Amsterdam 2020

- *Joseph Sassoon Semah: On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) II* -

The Guardians of the Door, production Metropool International Art Projects, Amsterdam 2017

- *Joseph Semah On Friendship / (Collateral Damage)* -, production Metropool International Art Projects, Amsterdam 2015

- *Joseph Semah Tracing Martin Heidegger's hut and Paul Celan's clouds [...]*, Den Haag 2011

- *Ich bin, der ich bin EHYeH ASheR EHYeH*, Bremen 2009

- *Next Year in Jerusalem*, Bremen 2009

- *Ulco Mes, Joseph Semah (eds.) Joseph Semah. A Journey into PaRDeS*, Venlo 2006

COLLECTIONS (SELECTION)

- Kunstmuseum Den Haag,
- Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;
- Joods Historisch Museum,
- Rijksmuseum Twente, Enschede;
- Israel Museum, Jerusalem;
- Victoria and Albert Museum, Londen;
- Jewish Museum, New York;
- Museum Jan Cunen, Oss;
- Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam;



- Albertina, Vienna ,
- Collectie G+W nederland,
- Roel Arkesteijn Antwerpen
- Museum De Domijnen, Sittard