



**INVESTEC CAPE TOWN ART FAIR
TOMORROWS/TODAY**

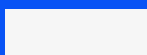
BLUE WIND PROJECT

21-23 FEBRUARY 2025

BOOTH TT1

ASMA BEN AISSA (TUNISIA)

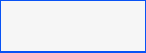
WWW.BLUEWINDPROJECT.COM



PRESS KIT, JANUARY 2025



ABOUT THE BLUE *WIND* PROJECT



THE BLUE WIND PROJECT WAS FOUNDED IN 2021 IN SIDI BOU SAID, TUNISIA, BY KHADIJA HAMDI, AN ART HISTORIAN BASED BETWEEN TUNISIA AND SPAIN. THE EXHIBITION PROGRAM IS CENTERED AROUND THE (RE)DISCOVERY OF EMERGING AND MID-CAREER ARTISTS WHO REFLECT THE SOCIAL CONCERNS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH.

THE GALLERY'S FOCUS IS ON ARTISTS FROM THE DIASPORA, AIMING TO GIVE THEM VISIBILITY ON THEIR HOME CONTINENTS. EXHIBITIONS ARE OFTEN ACCOMPANIED BY TALKS AND ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS WITH CURATORS, ART CRITICS, AND COLLECTORS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS.

WHILE THE BLUE WIND PROJECT'S ACTIVITIES ARE PRIMARILY CENTERED ON THE GALLERY, THEY ALSO INCLUDE AN ACTIVE PROGRAM OF IN-SITU EXHIBITIONS AND COLLABORATIONS BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE TUNISIA.

THE ARTIST

ASMA BEN AISSA B.1992, (TUNISIA)

BORN IN 1992 IN BIZERTE, ASMA BEN AISSA LIVES AND WORKS IN TUNIS. IN HER WORK, ASMA IS FUNDAMENTALLY INTERESTED IN THE LANDSCAPE AS AN AESTHETIC NOTION, WHERE EXPERIMENTATION SERVES HER ARTISTIC VISION. HER WORK EXPLORES THEMES SUCH AS HABITAT, TRANSMISSION, ARCHITECTURE, INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR SPACES, SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS, AND LOCAL HERITAGE, ECHOING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRUCTION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES. HER INTEREST IN THE CONCEPT OF CONSTRUCTION AND THE INCORPORATION OF THREAD HIGHLIGHTS ASMA'S FOCUS ON TEMPORALITY AND THE REAL EXPERIENCE OF CONTEMPLATION.

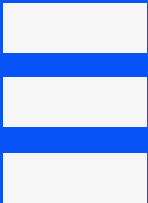
WHETHER THROUGH SCULPTURES, INSTALLATIONS, TWO-DIMENSIONAL WORKS, OR MULTI-DIMENSIONAL EXPERIMENTS, HER CREATIONS INVITE US TO EXPLORE LANDSCAPES AND THEIR REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE USE OF FABRICS, WHICH SHE MANIPULATES BASED ON THEIR MATERIAL QUALITIES. EACH OF HER WORKS IS AN INVITATION TO DEEPLY REFLECT ON ARTISANAL TRADITIONS, EXPRESSED FROM BOTH SOCIAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES.

SINCE 2017, ASMA BEN AISSA HAS PARTICIPATED IN VARIOUS EXHIBITIONS, FESTIVALS, AND ARTIST RESIDENCIES IN TUNISIA. HER WORKS HAVE BEEN EXHIBITED AT B7L9 ART STATION AND KLF, IFA GALLERY, THE GOETHE INSTITUTE AND CENTRAL OF TUNIS, 32BIS, LE VIOLON BLEU ART GALLERY, AGORGI GALLERY, CENTRE DES ARTS VIVANTS DE RADES, YOSR BEN AMMAR GALLERY, AND BNT.

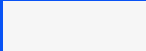
IN 2023, ASMA HAD A SOLO EXHIBITION WITH BLUE WIND PROJECT AND THE CURATOR KHADIJA HAMDI AT LE VIOLON BLEU GALLERY. DURING THE SUMMER OF 2024, SHE COMPLETED A TWO-MONTH ART RESIDENCY AT LA FONDATION MONTRESSO IN MARRAKECH AND A TEN-WEEK RESIDENCY IN SAUDI ARABIA AS PART OF THE INTERMIX RESIDENCY, ART & FASHION REIMAGINED.

IN 2017, ASMA RECEIVED THE FIRST PRIZE AT THE INTERNATIONAL FEMINIST ART FESTIVAL CHOUFTOUHONNA. DURING THE CULTURE SOLIDAIRE INITIATIVE IN 2020, ASMA'S WORK WAS FUNDED BY THE KAMEL LAZAAR FOUNDATION, AND IN 2023, SHE WAS AWARDED THE YOUNG ARTISTS PRIZE AT TGM GALLERY.





SELECTION OF WORKS



ASMA BEN AISSA B.1992, TUNISIA

CAN WE KEEP IT OPEN?

DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON LINEN CANVAS,
182 X 144 CM,
2025.

COME CLOSER,

DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON LINEN CANVAS,
140 X 120 CM
2025.

A STORY OF HER LIFE,

DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON LINEN CANVAS,
192 X 146 CM,
2025.

VIEWS FROM INSIDE,

DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON LINEN CANVAS,
142 X 113.5 CM
2025.

ANOTHER WAY TO BUILD A HOUSE 2

DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON CANVAS,
2024.

CHOUF

شوف 23

TEXTILE

116 X 213CM
2023.

ORIGINS

HAÏK EMBROIDERY,
90 X 135 CM
2025.

SHINING

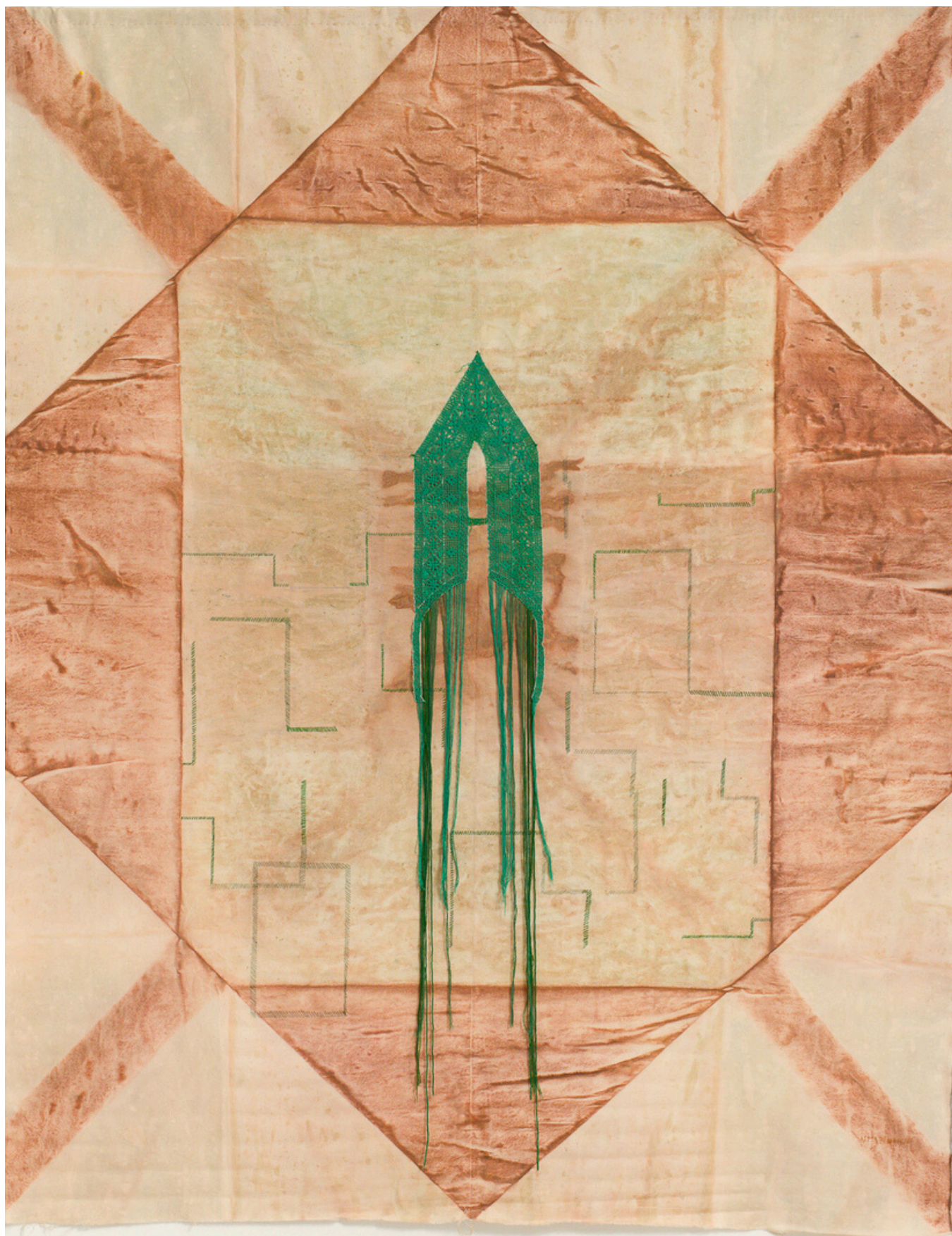
LINEN EMBROIDERY
EDITION 1 TO 7
2025.

THE CITY SERIES

*DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON CANVAS,
32 X 33 CM
EDITION 1 TO 6
2025.*

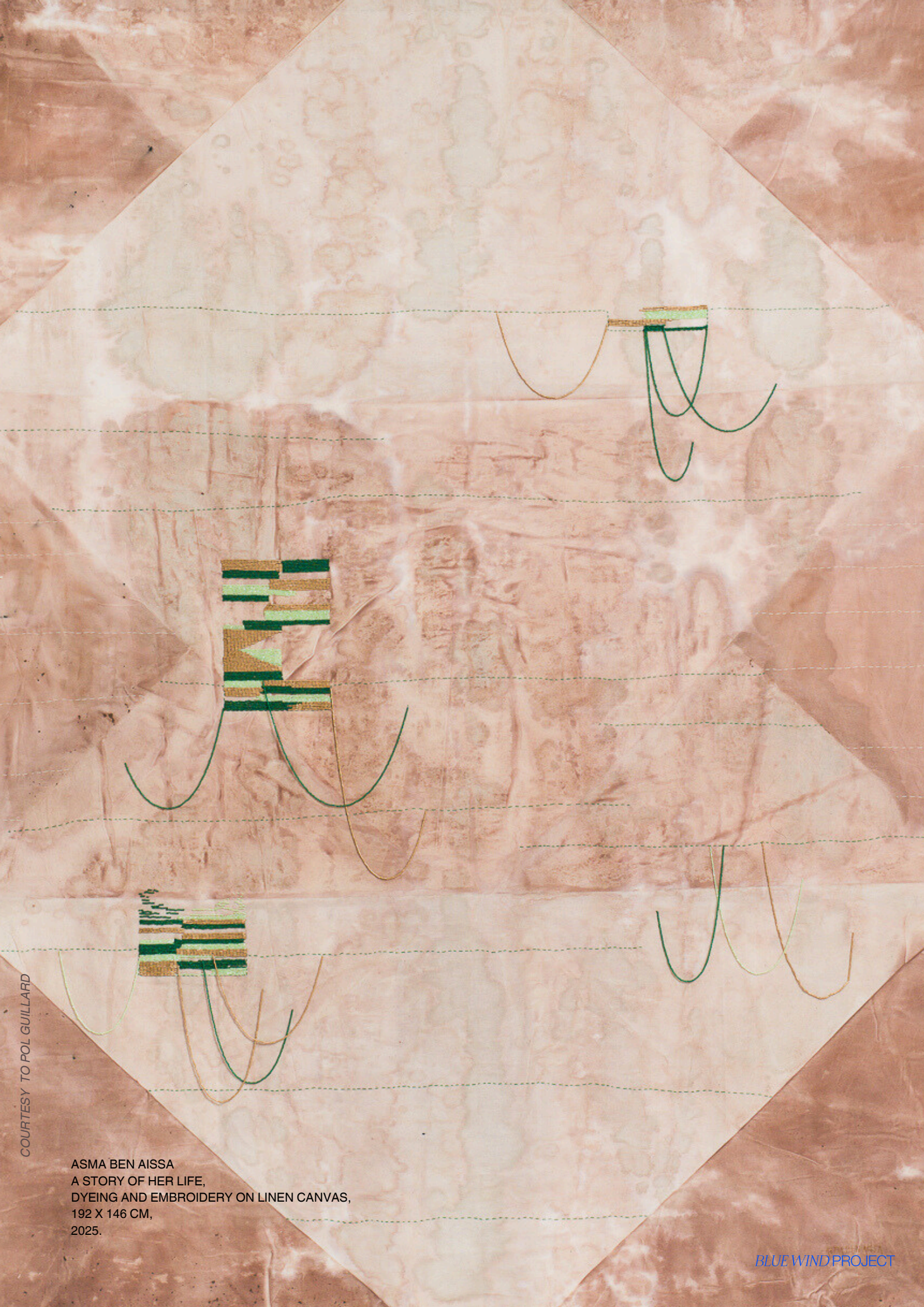
WOVEN STRUCTURE

*DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON CANVAS,
160 X150CM,
2025.*



ASMA BEN AISSA
CAN WE KEEP IT OPEN?
DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON LINEN CANVAS,
182 X 144 CM,
2025.

COURTESY TO POL GUILLARD



COURTESY TO POL GUILLARD

ASMA BEN AISSA
A STORY OF HER LIFE,
DYEING AND EMBROIDERY ON LINEN CANVAS,
192 X 146 CM,
2025.

EL THAER WAL BATTEN/ THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE

BORN IN TUNISIA IN 1992, ASMA STANDS OUT FOR HER UNIQUE ABILITY TO TRANSFORM HER EXPERIENCES AND ENCOUNTERS INTO POETIC VISUAL NARRATIVES. WHAT PARTICULARLY RESONATES IN HER WORK IS HER IMMERSIVE APPROACH—LIVING EACH EXPERIENCE FULLY, RECOUNTING IT AS THOUGH IT WERE A TALE FROM THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS, AND THEN RETREATING TO HER STUDIO. THERE, FOR DAYS, SOMETIMES WEEKS, SHE TRANSCRIBES THESE STORIES WITH NEEDLE, THREAD, AND FABRIC, TURNING THEM INTO CONTAINERS OF EXTRAORDINARY STORIES, MEANT TO BE READ IN SILENCE AND DECIPHERED LIKE POETIC PROSE.

A RECURRING THEME IN ASMA'S WORK IS THE WINDOW, A SYMBOL DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN HER ARTISTIC PRACTICE. IT EVOKES MEMORY, INTIMACY, AND THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTERIOR AND THE EXTERIOR, BETWEEN THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE. THIS THEME BECAME PARTICULARLY POIGNANT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC, A TIME WHEN WINDOWS SYMBOLIZED A VITAL CONNECTION TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD. ASMA EXPLORES THEIR SIGNIFICANCE THROUGH THE STORY OF A MASTER CRAFTSWOMAN IN NORTHERN TUNISIA, WHO RECOUNTED: *"IT WAS THROUGH THE WINDOW THAT I ESCAPED WHEN MY HUSBAND LOCKED THE DOOR, FORBIDDING ME FROM GOING OUT TO BUY THE ESSENTIAL MATERIALS FOR MY EMBROIDERY."*

DURING A RESIDENCY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, ASMA EXPERIENCED ANOTHER DIMENSION OF THIS SYMBOLISM. THE WINDOWS THERE WERE OFTEN LIMITED TO PARTIAL OPENINGS OR HIDDEN BEHIND MOUCHARABIEHS, RESTRICTING ACCESS TO THE WORLD OUTSIDE. UPON HER RETURN, SHE SHARED: *"AS SOON AS I GOT HOME, I OPENED MY WINDOW WITH A SMILE AND A SENSE OF RELIEF THAT I STILL FEEL TODAY."* THIS ANECDOTE UNDERLINES THE SYMBOLIC POWER OF THE WINDOW—BOTH A BARRIER AND A GATEWAY, REFLECTING BROADER SOCIETAL RESTRICTIONS."

IN HER WORK, ASMA OFTEN PAIRS THE WINDOW WITH FABRICS OR VEILS, TRANSFORMING THEM INTO METAPHORS FOR WOMEN: WRAPPED, CONCEALED, YET POSSESSING A STRONG AND UNDENIABLE PRESENCE. THE THREADS AND EMBROIDERY ADORNING THESE WINDOWS BECOME VISUAL IMPRINTS OF THEIR STORIES, WOVEN INTO TEXTILE RATHER THAN GLASS.

THROUGH HER INSTALLATIONS, WINDOWS EVOLVE INTO DEVICES THAT BOTH REVEAL AND CONCEAL, INVITING VIEWERS TO IMAGINE WHAT LIES BEYOND. THIS INTERPLAY OF CURIOSITY AND RESTRAINT TURNS THE WINDOW INTO A POWERFUL SYMBOL OF INACCESSIBILITY AND A SPACE FOR EXPRESSION, WHERE MARGINALIZED VOICES FIND RESONANCE, OFTEN IN SILENCE.

IN ASMA'S PRACTICE, THE WINDOW TRANSCENDS ITS ARCHITECTURAL PURPOSE TO BECOME A SPACE OF EXCHANGE AND IMAGINATION. IT REIMAGINES WOMEN'S ROLES BY TRANSFORMING A CONSTRAINT INTO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DIALOGUE AND POETIC LIBERATION, AMPLIFYING THE WEIGHT OF UNTOLD NARRATIVES.

AS PART OF THIS PROJECT, ASMA'S WORK CRITICALLY REFLECTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY—A SPACE WHERE PROGRESS AND INEQUALITY COEXIST. THE WINDOW BECOMES A SYMBOL OF THIS DUALITY: DOORS OPENING TO NEW PERSPECTIVES, WHILE OTHERS REMAIN BARELY AJAR, SIGNIFYING ENDURING OBSTACLES.

THIS TENSION UNDERSCORES THE CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS OF WOMEN NAVIGATING A WORLD WHERE OPPORTUNITY AND LIMITATION COEXIST. BY INHABITING THIS IN-BETWEEN, ASMA INVITES US TO QUESTION THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STRUCTURES THAT PROVIDE SELECTIVE ACCESS WHILE MAINTAINING INVISIBLE, YET TANGIBLE, BARRIERS.

KHADIJA HAMDI

INTERVIEW WITH ASMA BEN AÏSSA

TRANSMISSION LIES AT THE HEART OF MY WORK, AS THIS TUNISIAN PROVERB BEAUTIFULLY REMINDS US:

“QUI YOUFA MEL EL WELDINE TEB9A SAN3AT EL EDINE”
(THOSE WHO INHERIT FROM THEIR ELDERS PERPETUATE THEIR
KNOW-HOW),

I BEGAN WORKING WITH TEXTILES THROUGH A SERIES OF SMALL-FORMAT PIECES CREATED FROM FABRIC SCRAPS COLLECTED FROM MY MOTHER, A SEAMSTRESS. THESE MATERIALS, STEEPED IN INTIMATE MEMORY, SHAPED MY APPROACH, BLENDING TEXTILES WITH PAINTING. THE NOTION OF LANDSCAPE IS CENTRAL TO MY PRACTICE: THE WINDOW CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE LANDSCAPE IT FRAMES. IT ACTS AS A POINT OF VIEW, A FILTER BETWEEN INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR, AN INVITATION TO SEE BEYOND.

DURING THE PANDEMIC, WHEN CONFINED AT HOME, I EXPLORED THIS DIALECTIC BETWEEN INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR SPACES. INSPIRED BY THE FOUR SEASONS, I BEGAN DECONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING TEXTILES: REMOVING THREADS, CREATING OPENINGS, AND TRANSFORMING FABRIC INTO WINDOWS THAT OPEN ONTO IMAGINARY WORLDS. THIS PROCESS INTRODUCED A SENSE OF VIBRANCY INTO MY COMPOSITIONS—AN ESCAPE TO LANDSCAPES THAT FEEL UNREACHABLE YET FAMILIAR.

NAVIGATING CREATIVITY AND CONSTRAINTS: THE RESIDENCY EXPERIENCE

DURING A RESIDENCY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, I FACED AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE SUSTAINABILITY AND ECOLOGY STOOD IN STARK CONTRAST TO MASSIVE URBANIZATION AND THE DOMINANCE OF ARCHITECTURE OVER NATURE. WHILE THE RESIDENCY PROVIDED VALUABLE FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND PRODUCTION, IT ALSO CAME WITH SIGNIFICANT CREATIVE CONSTRAINTS. ARTISTS ENCOUNTERED.

RESTRICTIONS ON CERTAIN THEMES, AND THE IDEA OF A “BOX,” FOR INSTANCE, WAS CONSIDERED PROBLEMATIC DUE TO ITS CONNOTATIONS OF CONFINEMENT.

I ADAPTED TO THESE LIMITATIONS BY PROPOSING WORKS THAT REMAINED ALIGNED WITH MY REFLECTIONS ON SPACE AND WOMEN'S NARRATIVES. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE CLOSED WINDOW BECAME A POWERFUL SYMBOL—REPRESENTING THE INACCESSIBILITY OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD. IT ALSO EVOKED THE NOTION OF A GILDED CAGE: FREEDOM SEEMINGLY WITHIN REACH, YET UNATTAINABLE.

AN INVITATION TO UNCOVER INVISIBLE STORIES

IN MY WORK, I DELVE INTO WOMEN'S DAILY LIVES, THEIR MEMORIES, AND THEIR STRUGGLES, OFTEN INFORMED BY STORIES SHARED DURING INTERVIEWS. FOR INSTANCE, ONE WOMAN SPENT TWO HOURS RECOUNTING HER LIFE, OFFERING A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE THAT IS TOO OFTEN RELEGATED TO SILENCE.

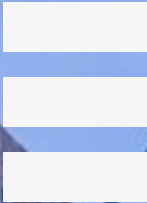
MY CREATIONS—WHETHER PAINTED, EMBROIDERED, OR WOVEN—SEEK TO REFLECT THIS INTIMATE YET UNIVERSAL DIMENSION. EACH PIECE ACTS AS A WINDOW INTO LIVES AND INNER LANDSCAPES, INVITING VIEWERS TO IMAGINE, INTERPRET, AND UNCOVER THE STORIES THAT LIE BENEATH.

KHADIJA HAMDİ



ASMA BEN AISSA
JE ME SUIS BATI SUR UNE COLONNE ABSENTE ,GENERAL VIEW
2023.

COURTESY TO POL GUILLARD



BLUEWIND PROJECT

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