

Ammar al-Beik (Syria, b. 1972)

Since the 1990s, Ammar al-Beik has effortlessly moved between media with an acute sense of capturing narrative structures through subtle nuance and a commitment to the potential of art as an act of rebellion that manifests in various aspects of life. Often alluding to sociopolitical issues, al-Beik's works are inspired by the details of his surroundings as he seeks to reveal the complexities of human relationships.

The subjects of his photographic works and films, for example, have ranged from recovered studio portraits of ordinary Syrians to cinematic essays on seminal filmmakers, artists, and popular figures. In the initial part of his career, al-Beik focused on his native Syria, documenting the ways in which communities navigated the instability of its society under punishing isolation and political control.

At the same time, form and a high level of experimentation are central to his work, resulting in several groundbreaking film and video projects, in addition to conceptual works. Al-Beik is the only filmmaker to represent Syria twice at the Venice Film Festival (La Biennale) with the long film *I Am the One Who Brings Flowers to Her Grave* (2006) and the short film *The Sun's Incubator* (2011), both in the Orizzonti competition.

With the start of the Syrian uprising, al-Beik produced a significant body of work in support of popular resistance, including graphic and digital images and several short films that resume his interest in everyday life while presenting a critical look at the events that led to the country's demise. Since 2014, al-Beik has focused on the subject of exile, reflecting on his own experience as a displaced artist living in Berlin.

Born in Damascus, Syria in 1972, al-Beik has contributed to exhibitions and programs worldwide for nearly two decades, most recently at Künstlerforum Bonn, Germany (2017); EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam, Netherland (2017); For-Site Foundation, San Francisco, USA (2017); Museum Neukölln, Berlin, Germany (2017); Los Angeles County Museum of Arts (2016); Tainiothiki Twixtlab, Athens (2016); Kunstverein Graftschaft Bentheim, Germany (2016); Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice (2015); Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2015); FotoFest Biennial, USA (2014); Samsung Blue Square and the Busan Museum of Art, South Korea (2014); and Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012). His works are housed in private and public collections such as the Centre Pompidou; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Al-Beik's films have screened at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale); International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR); Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival (YIDFF); Cinéma du Réel, International Documentary Film Festival (IDFA); São Paul International Film Festival (MOSTRA); Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF); Carthage International Film Festival (JCC); and Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF); Festival of the Three Continents; Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival (CPH:DOX); Locarno International Film Festival; among other venues.

Al-Beik is the recipient of several awards, including the Jury Prize (Busan, BISFF) (2012); Golden Award (Tétouan, IFF) (2007); Golden Hawk Award Arab Film Festival Rotterdam (2007); Doc/It Award (Venice Film Festival, La Biennale) (2006); Bronze Muhr award (Dubai, DIFF) (2006); Jury Award (Brisbane, BAPFF) (2002); and Special Award (International Federation of Film Societies) (2002).