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Initiative financed according to article 45  
"Regional projects for contemporary art"  
L.R. 1/2004

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# Mona Hatoum

## Interior Landscape

Venice, Palazzo Querini Stampalia  
4 June / 20 September 2009

On Thursday 4th June Fondazione Querini Stampalia will open a major solo exhibition of **new and important works** by Mona Hatoum. The exhibition, entitled **Interior Landscape**, will coincide with the opening of the 53<sup>rd</sup> International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale and will take place over two floors of the museum – both in the contemporary exhibition spaces as well as within the existing Museum collection in this historic building, formerly the home of the Querini Stampalia family. This exhibition will include **over 25 works**, many of which are new or previously unseen in Europe. It has been curated by **Chiara Bertola** in close consultation with the artist, and has been made possible by the partnership of **Fondazione Furla**, main partner, **Regione del Veneto**, institutional partner, and the special collaboration of **Fondazione di Venezia**.

A valuable contribution has been made by The British Council, London; Compagnia di San Paolo; Goethe-Institut, Mailand.

New works in the exhibition include *Interior Landscape* (after which the exhibition is named), a haunting installation of bedroom furniture and domestic elements that imagines the conflict between the dreams and aspirations of a Palestinian individual juxtaposed with the harsh reality they have to face. Another large work created specifically for the space is a delicate and precariously suspended installation made of barbed wire. *Hot Spot III* is a metal globe with its continents outlined in glowing red neon shown in the proximity of what looks like an enlargement of a rosary or "worry beads" where the beads have been scaled up to the size of cannon balls. As well as these new works, Hatoum will be making a number of interventions in the museum collection using the furniture as the container or frame for some new ideas and some existing works which, when placed in this historic setting, generate different meanings.

Her work addresses notions of displacement, uncertainty and conflict through the use of familiar, everyday domestic objects transformed into foreign, uncanny sculptures. Hatoum creates a domestic territory that is no longer the reassuring space of protection through the subversion of familiar forms such as chairs, beds and kitchen implements that transform her clean, minimalist forms into ciphers of ambiguity and threat.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon of Palestinian parents, Hatoum was stranded in London in the mid 1970s after the outbreak of the civil war prevented her returning to her native country. By the mid 1980s she became known for a series of performances and videos that focused with great intensity on the body. At the beginning of the 1990s, her work shifted to large-scale installations that aimed to engage the spectator in contrasting feelings of desire and repulsion, fear and fascination.

**Mona Hatoum. Interior Landscape** has been conceived as part of an ongoing series of projects entitled **Conservare il futuro** (*Preserving the Future*) that focus on the relationship between historic and contemporary art – between the past that needs to be preserved and the future still to be planned. Querini is committed to the idea



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that contemporary artists may offer a different perspective on our past, and the notion that the past requires action and transformation; that it is alive. Mona Hatoum has been invited to respond to the memory and the history of Querini Stampalia and has created an exhibition that brings a new, vibrant context to this museum.

In May, as part of the *Invito al Contemporaneo* series, there will be a conference with the artist who will introduce her work. In addition, during the exhibition there will be educational activities comprising guided tours for the public and workshops for children of different ages.

The catalogue for the exhibition, in English and Italian, is published by **Edizioni Charta** and includes texts by Chiara Bertola and Réda Bensmaïa, Professor of Philosophy and French Literature at Brown University, USA. The publication will also include a series of previously unpublished photographs from Hatoum's personal archives. A full illustration of the works on show will be inserted in a second edition of the catalogue that will be released soon after the opening of the exhibition.

Additional support was generously provided by Alexander and Bonin, New York; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin; Galleria Continua, San Gimignano / Beijing / Le Moulin; Jay Jopling / White Cube, London.

**Press preview: Wednesday 3rd June 2009, h 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

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**For further information on *Mona Hatoum. Interior Landscape* exhibition:  
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