

The strategies of appropriation used by Saadé, Joreige/Hadjithomas, and Mourad enquire into the changing contexts of artworks and other images following a (surpassing) disaster. By incorporating shutters and glass, they include elements that are emblematic for the destruction of Beirut and, thus, materials that embody the violence of the blast. Like the makers of *Nancy*, Saadé, Hadjithomas/Joreige, and Mourad are picture-users who select and present existing images and change the context of their presentation. Violence is inscribed in all three artworks through shots, burnings, and the non-sanitised, endlessly repeated moving scene of the blast. Futures seem to be absent.

5.2.3 Artworks Past a Surpassing Disaster

I have identified two strategies found in artistic encounters with images of the blast: first, a documentary strategy, and second, a strategy of appropriation. What all five of the discussed works have in common is that they never directly show the faces of those who died in the explosion and that they instead visualise the haunting presences of the dead, and the aftereffects it produced—such as the destruction of the city's fabric, particularly the silos. Furthermore, none of these works imagines a future. They do not, like the NGOs, look for justice, nor, like Karam's and Nazer's statues, do they express hopes that Beirut will recover soon; they rather seem to translate a depressing status quo into artworks that all bear traces of violence, either via depictions of the destroyed city, as in the documentary strategy, or via violence done to images, as visible in the appropriation strategy.

5.3 A Continuation of Violence, Ghosts, Ruins, and Impossible Truths

During the time of writing there were mainly three types of dead on the walls: sectarian martyrs, martyrs of the thawra, and those who died in the explosion. Photographs that changed their function, symbols, and slogans were still to be found in all these images. Nuances of remembrance still existed, because some of the dead appeared more frequently than others in posters, and gender roles were still performed, as they were during the *Wars*. For the thawra, however, this cannot be observed, as there were no female casualties, whereas regarding those who died in the blast, the performance of gender happens more in the discourse around the images than in the pictures themselves. While there are posters of the thawra that continue the inclusion of Mazzacurriati's Martyrs Statue, as has been already practised in the memorialisation of Hariri (Fig. 2.9), some images of those who died in the blast are juxtaposed with the silos, which I understand as a continuation of the meaning of the Holiday Inn and Murr Tower, in the sense that all these structures carry a heavy weight and elicit strong emotions.

The sectarian martyrs who died in recent years, as well as the shuhada of the thawra, remain on the walls as spectral ghosts, while with the dead of the blast a new kind of ghost emerged. They oscillate between the images of the martyrs and the images of the missing not only iconographically, but also conceptually, since they haunt via their presence as revenants but do not announce a future.

I suggested that there are two visual approaches by which image-makers reflect on images regarding 4 August. While artists who are following a documentary strategy capture the loss and destruction of the blast, artists who are following an appropriation strategy register the violence that artworks and images have experienced due to the explosion. As in *Nancy's* use of appropriation art, these works deal with questions of the meaning of architectural traces of the disaster, but also haunting presences, which are now void of a future.

