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## Press Release

**MAHMOUD KHALED**

*Fantasies on a Found Phone, Dedicated to the Man Who Lost it*

22 June - 25 September 2022

Exhibition Open: Tues-Sun, 11am-6pm, FREE

The Mosaic Rooms, 226 Cromwell Road, London SW5 0SW



Mahmoud Khaled, *Fantasies on a Found Phone, Dedicated to the Man Who Lost it*, 2022, multimedia installation. Installation view at The Mosaic Rooms. Photography: Andy Stagg

The Mosaic Rooms presents *Fantasies on a Found Phone, Dedicated to the Man Who Lost it*, the first UK solo exhibition by Mahmoud Khaled. Through a series of unfolding installations and interventions Khaled ambitiously transforms The Mosaic Rooms period domestic architecture into the imagined dwellings of the owner of a lost phone. The work continues Khaled's interest in historic house museums and the memorialising of individual perspectives found in them. In this new immersive commission, the artist repositions this museological form as a device to imagine a history of marginalised queer life.

The artist notes: "the exhibition is a spatial portrait of an absent person revealed through the (quite strange) contents of the phone he left behind in a public bathroom. A mysterious portrait of a man with a passion for 'décor' and beauty, a highly eroticised man, afflicted with anxiety, insomnia, and melancholy at the same time."

In the exhibition, Khaled explores the tension between desire and anxiety, dream and reality. A state of sleeplessness permeates the space, acting as a metaphor for political states of being, of not belonging, and being displaced. This sense of disquiet is experienced in the installations where the visitor, as a voyeur, simultaneously feels at home and unsettled.

*Calm*, sees the main room covered in draped velvet and voile curtains, with a daybed in the middle of the room. This piece of furniture conjures references to Freud, and his work *The interpretation of dreams*. However, the proportions of this piece are disproportionately long, made from leather and wood and adorned with bondage straps. Centrally positioned, this daybed becomes an object of apprehension, desire, and kink. A sense of anxiety is evoked through the wall murals inspired by an etching from Max Klinger's series "A Glove". An accompanying sound piece transforms the room into a subverted version of a sleeping app, inviting the visitor to engage in a mindfulness exercise.

Another installation, *For Those Who Can Not Sleep*, features a rotating leather bed in perpetual motion. The work is a reference to Hugh Hefner's iconic 1960s office-bed which became a pervading image of heterosexual masculinity in a domestic space. This round bed also became an appropriated design depicted in Egyptian TV and cinema, which the artist grew up watching. The circular surround framing the bed features another one of the etchings from Klinger's series, and there is a looping soundtrack of discordant melodies.

While the phone or indeed its owner are never seen in the exhibition, the location of its loss is hinted at through the wallpaper motif and other objects found in the first room of the fictive home. On the bookshelf in this room is the accompanying publication, featuring images from the unlocked phone. Moving between the erotic, intimate, baroque and everyday, the compulsive sequence of images in the book references the dissonant and voyeuristic experience of scrolling through social media and swiping in dating apps, and the clash of hyper-capitalist forces of productivity and technology with the intimacy of a queer male gaze. Alongside, a large photograph of a bedroom hangs in the room, with the sentence "I can't sleep without you anymore" handwritten across it.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Mahmoud Khaled

Khaled was born in Alexandria, Egypt, and currently works in Berlin. His practice is both process-oriented and multidisciplinary, can be regarded as formal and philosophical ruminations on art as a form of political activism, and a space for critical reflection. He has presented in international solo shows and group shows such as Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2019), Kunststituut Melly, Rotterdam (2018), Istanbul Biennale (2017), Sharjah Biennale (2017), Whitechapel Gallery, London (2016). He was a guest artist at the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin programme in 2020.

### About The Mosaic Rooms

The Mosaic Rooms are situated on the corner of the Cromwell Road and Earl's Court Road in Kensington, London, a short walk from the V&A and Design Museum. The Mosaic Rooms are open 11am–6pm Tuesday to Sunday, entry is free.

The Mosaic Rooms are a non-profit art gallery and bookshop dedicated to supporting and promoting contemporary culture from the Arab world and beyond. We do this through contemporary art exhibitions, multidisciplinary events (including film screenings, current affairs, talks, book launches and more) artist residencies and learning and engagement programme. We work in partnership with local, national and international organisations to disseminate our arts programme to a wide and diverse audience. Previous collaborations include partnerships with Chisenhale Gallery, Delfina Foundation, ICA, Shubbak Festival, London Design Festival, among others. They are a project of the A. M. Qattan Foundation.

### About the A. M. Qattan Foundation

The A. M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF) is an independent, not-for-profit developmental organisation working in the fields of culture and education, with a particular focus on children, teachers and young artists. Founded and registered in 1993 in the UK as a charity (no 1029450) and as a charitable company limited by guarantee (no 2171893), it has had a registered branch in Palestine as a nonprofit organisation (no QR-0035-F) since 1998. The Foundation's operations are mainly in Palestine, with interventions in Lebanon through Selat: Links Through the Arts, and in the United Kingdom through The Mosaic Rooms.

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