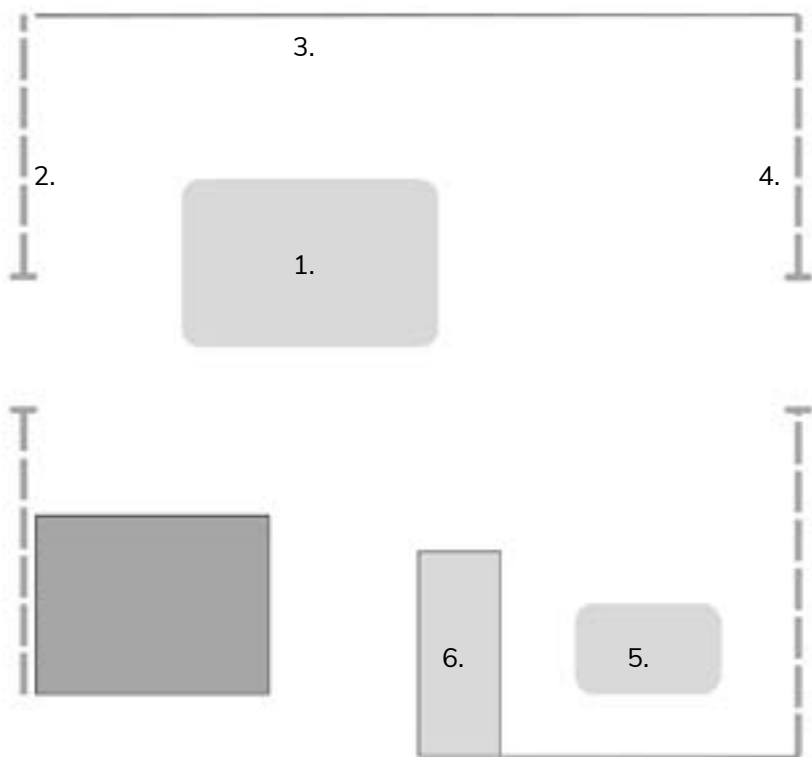


# **Misbaḥa / The Prayer Beads / مسبحة**



**Ayman Kaake**

10 May – 27 July 2025



## List of works

1. *Stones Will Remain Stones*, 2025

Mixed media

230 x 285 x 100 cm

2. *Repeat*, 2025

Single channel video

3 minutes 37 seconds

3. *See*, 2025

Single channel video

6 minutes 47 seconds

4. *Read*, 2025

Single channel video

8 minutes 44 seconds

5. *My Abaya is a Blank Canvas*, 2025

Abaya and coloured markers

140 x 240 cm

6. *The Prayer Beads*, 2025

Print on fabric

140 x 240 cm

Price on application

Misbaḥa serves as a visual representation of Ayman Kaake's identity and a reflection of his experience within a patriarchal Middle Eastern environment. The work explores the weight of societal expectations and the constraints placed upon queer individuals.

By incorporating prayer beads in his work, as a symbol of concealing one's true identity, Kaake conveys the pressures to conform to societal norms surrounding marriage, children, and the preservation of family names.

In a world where homosexuality remains illegal in over 74 countries, Kaake's work raises a poignant question: how far can a queer person go to fit social, political, and cultural norms in order to survive?



## Artist Biography

Ayman Kaake (he/him) is a Lebanon-born Australian photo-media artist based in Naarm's inner northern suburbs. His work delves into themes of diasporic melancholy and exile, expressed through contemplative portraiture and sculptural, stylised compositions.

Among his notable achievements are being a finalist in the National Photographic Portrait Prize (2022, 2023, and 2025), the Nillumbik Prize for Contemporary Art (2023), and the Bowness Prize (2022). He is also the recipient of the Midsumma and Australia Post Award (2022), the Brunswick Street Gallery Small Work Art Prize (2022), and the Room to Create residency at Collingwood Yards (2020).

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Macarena López for assisting me in building the sculpture, and to Camille El Feghali for helping me record the audio. Special thanks to Lilian, Jon and Henry Ebzery for their invaluable support.

## Artist Publication

Ayman Kaake's debut monograph *99 Names* explores the necessity of authentic connection and the pain caused by archaic and violent criminalisation of homosexuality.

*99 Names* is available for purchase at  
<https://tallpoppypress.xyz/product/99-names>

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Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.



**Merri-bek**  
City Council

