Tom Bogaert - Belgium

‘Ariel 2’
Installation

In 2010, I embarked on a two year Grand Tour of the Near East where I am working on ‘Impression, Proche Orient’ (IPO) a project highlighting issues relevant to contemporary Middle East society including politics, artistic identity and cucumbers. During the workshop, I developed the Palestinian chapter of IPO.

The establishment of Israeli settlements in Palestine is illegal. In spite of this, more than 42 percent of the West Bank land has been allocated to the establishment of over 200 settlements. This process has led to significant changes in the landscape of the West Bank.

On the occasion of a visit to the university settlement of Ariel, I bought 7 boxes of Ariel washing powder in the local supermarket. I then used the boxes combined with everyday detritus to construct a makeshift sculptural settlement in uptown Birzeit. The construction was presented on a bed of washing powder.

‘Ariel 2’ addresses the theme of hubris. In its modern usage, hubris denotes overconfident pride and arrogance; it is often associated with a lack of humility, not always with the lack of knowledge. In this work, I identify my existential struggle with the Israeli construction activities in Palestine.