Exhibition of the Month

Hide and Seek

By Hassan Sandouka and Malik Abu Salameh

Bab idDeir Gallery Bethlehem

April 17 to May 20, 2026



Malik Abu Salameh, *Front Yard*, 2026, oil on canvas.



Hassan Sandouka, *Palestinian Snack*, 2025, oil on canvas.



Hassan Sandouka, *Summertime*, 2025, mixed media on canvas.

Bab idDeir Gallery presents the exhibition *Hide and Seek* that showcases works by the promising artists Hassan Sandouka and Malik Abu Salameh. The gallery brings together these works in a deeply reflective and emotionally charged exploration of childhood, memory, and loss. Through vibrant colors, intimate interiors, and imagined landscapes, the exhibition unfolds as a fragile space that is suspended between presence and disappearance – between what is remembered and what can no longer be found.

At first glance, the works draw us into familiar worlds: the warmth of a home, the quiet poetry of everyday objects, the innocence of childhood scenes where reality and fantasy gently blur. Tables, rooms, toys, parks, ancient alleys, fragments of landscape, these are not merely depicted spaces but also emotional terrain shaped by memory and longing. Both artists recall childhood not as a fixed past but as a condition of perceptions that shift within the inner and outer worlds.

Yet *Hide and Seek* is not a nostalgic return. It is a confrontation. In light of the ongoing war on Gaza, the artists reflect on the sudden rupture of what was once taken for granted: homes, objects, routines, relationships, and the very continuity of life. What once formed the fabric of daily existence has, for many, vanished without warning. In this sense, the title becomes painfully literal. Like in the children's game, things disappear. But here, what is hidden cannot always be found again.

Hassan Sandouka's works turn our attention to the overlooked details of domestic life: the quiet dignity of objects, the rhythm of routine, the abundance within ordinary moments that tends to pass unnoticed. Through restrained compositions and the subtle use of color and space, his paintings evoke both presence and absence, reminding us that what we often fail to see may, under different circumstances, become unattainable.

In contrast, Malik Abu Salameh's works move fluidly between reality and imagination, reconstructing childhood as it persists in memory. His scenes and spaces feel both familiar and estranged, dynamic and, at times, dreamlike when figures, spaces, and emotions intertwine in a language that resists fixed meaning.

Malik Abu Salameh, *Escape*, 2026, oil on canvas.



In a time where loss is not abstract but lived, childhood is not simply remembered; it is unsettled. The joy of play, the safety of home, and the spontaneity of early life are recontextualized within a present that is marked by grief and uncertainty. The viewer is drawn into a paradox: We are invited to "seek" yet confronted with the impossibility of fully recovering what has been lost.

SCAN TO SHARE