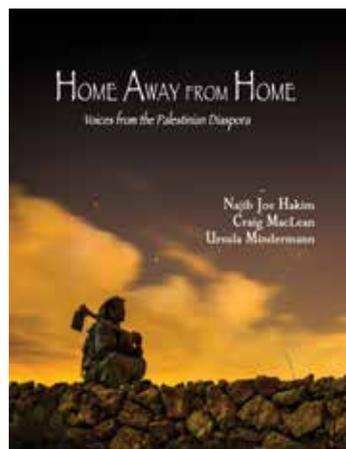




Home Away from Home

Voices from the Palestinian Diaspora



By Najib Joe Hakim, Craig MacLean, and Ursula Mindermann

The Network of Photographers for Palestine Publications, 2020,
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The heart of Palestine beats strong and proud through this collection of portraits, montages, and testimonies from the Palestinian diaspora. At a time when the story of the Palestinian people needs to be told and retold ever more urgently, The Network of Photographers for Palestine (NPP) brings that story to us in the new book, *Home*

Away from Home.

The NPP is a small collective of photographers and activists who are dedicated to telling the Palestinian story through photography. They have published both live and online exhibitions in Bethlehem, Gaza City, Copenhagen, London, Tunis, and all the major cities in Scotland, where NPP is based. In 2020, inspired by the work of one of their most prolific members, Najib Joe Hakim, they published their first online exhibition, *Home Away from Home*. This subsequently became the book of the same name.

Hakim, a Palestinian photographer who lives in San Francisco, had already collected a range of beautiful portraits of Palestinians young and old (one of whom was 100 years old in 2020), who described their lives past and present, and their own individual relationship to the motherland. What a wealth of experience was contained therein! Hakim was joined by Scottish photographer Craig MacLean, and Ursula Mindermann, vice president of the German-Palestine Society. The three collaborated to complete the final exhibition and ultimately this book.

Craig MacLean is a major documentary photographer in Scotland. He engaged with Palestinians in Edinburgh and Glasgow, encouraging them to find objects that represent their personal links to Palestine. He then arranged these items to produce a series of intriguing montages linking each person's life in Palestine with that in Scotland now.

The photographs of Ursula Mindermann offer a sensitive and moving visual documentation of Palestinians who settled successfully in Germany. Her commitment to international solidarity shines

through in her work. Indeed, the international collaboration that brought this book to life is embodied in the care that has been taken to ensure that it can be read by Arabic, English, and German speakers alike. The testimonies are presented in all three languages.

But the Palestinian experience always remains central. *Home Away from Home* has universal appeal for all who struggle for freedom and justice. Our country of birth is part of who we are, and nobody can take that away however hard they try. This volume is a fitting tribute to the millions of Palestinians forced from their land, and a testament to the resilience and fortitude of those who continue the struggle wherever they make their new home.

In the words of Ramzy Baroud: "To be pro-Palestine is to respect the centrality of the Palestinian voice, because without the Palestinian narrative there can be no real or meaningful solidarity, and also because, ultimately, it will be the Palestinian people who will liberate themselves." The voice of Palestine in exile certainly rings out loud and clear in this important book.