

# UNDYING CITIES:

Narratives of Erasure and Liberation

**Alezz Hammad**

## Hippocampus

2024. Video, 3 minutes 19 seconds.

Al-Haseen, meaning “the protector” or “the fortifier” in Arabic, conveys connotations of emphasis and intensity; a profound fear of and for something, making us vigilant fearing its loss. In neuroscience, the hippocampus, or Haseen, is the part of the brain responsible for transferring short-term memories into long-term storage, fortifying them against loss. Yet, when we attempt to revisit cherished past memories, interference often distorts our recollections.

In this project, I explore loss and displacement, specifically, from Haret Al Maghariba in the Old City of Jerusalem to the Shuafat refugee camp, as seen through my father’s memories before exile. These fortified memories contain contradictions—where time and place collide—while external forces continuously try to breach this protective fortress and erase the Haseen. Yet, it remains resilient, preserving the essence of the past against all odds.

## About the Artist

A fourth-year student at the Arab American University, studying interior architecture, seeking to explore and enhance his skills in design and architecture. His passion for photography and cinematic production motivated him to expand his artistic horizons and search for new ways to develop his creative abilities, given he realised the overlap between architecture and film production: a quest to engage people in unique experiences. Thus, exploring this intersection between the two worlds became his primary interest.

