



NEW RELEASE

Ara Oshagan *displaced*

Text by Krikor Beledian

Translation by Taline Voskeritchian, Christopher Millis

Designed by Kehrer Design (Lisa Drechsel)

Hardcover, 19 x 25 cm

160 pages

58 duotone illustrations

English, Armenian

ISBN 978-3-96900-014-4

Euro 38,00 /US\$ 48.00

Photographic & literary work on the Armenian diaspora in Beirut

Photographer Ara Oshagan and author Krikor Beledian grew up in Beirut's Armenian communities formed by refugees and survivors of genocide. They came of age in families and streets fraught with the collective memory of extreme violence and dispossession. Both left Beirut decades ago and now return, carrying their own histories of displacement, to immerse themselves in its fractured urbanscape.

Oshagan wades through the spaces and narrow neighborhoods of his past to create dark and lyrical photographs that straddle the line between documentary and narrative: an attempt to articulate his own ambiguous relationship to place and history.

While Beledian, the preeminent author of the Armenian diaspora, drawing from his decades-long research and several novels about these communities, pens an original and poetic semi-autobiographical text based on his own youth in the same spaces. Set in Beirut's dense Armenian neighborhoods of Bourj Hamoud, *displaced* brings these two symbiotic and deeply personal works of literature and photography together: a unique collaboration interrogating diasporic identity, multi-generational displacement, and the ambiguities of narrative.

Excerpt from the text by **Krikor Beledian**:

Down from The Hill, beyond the river, is Giligia, as you call it. Nor Sis, Nor Adana, Nor Marash, Nor Amanos, Nor Tomarza, Nor Yozghatz—you rattle them off in a single breath. Giligia lives again, right here—who knows until when?—in its legendary names. The bridge is its official gate. But in the summer or during autumn days, all of you prefer the alternate route.

When you descend The Hill, you enter directly the shallow flow from the tree-lined street that edges the river.

Ara Oshagan (b. 1964) is an image-based multi-disciplinary artist, who is interested in disrupted and marginalized communities and identity. Oshagan has published two books of photography and created multiple critically-acclaimed public art installations, projects and exhibitions. His work has been exhibited worldwide and presented at the International Center of Photography, New York, TEDx Yerevan, among others. *displaced* is the third canto of a trilogy of work by Oshagan about diaspora.

Krikor Beledian (b. 1945) born in Beirut, Lebanon, is widely regarded as the most important poet writing in Western Armenian. A prolific novelist, essayist, and literary critic, he is the author of more than 30 volumes that have been published in the Middle East, Europe, Armenia, and the United States. He now lives in Paris. *displaced* is the first major literary work by Krikor Beledian to appear in English.

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Kehrer Verlag, Mannheimer Str. 175, 69123 Heidelberg, Germany
Fon ++49 (0)6221/649 20-18 | Fax ++49 (0)6221/64920-20
www.kehrerverlag.com

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