

And Gazelles? And Gazelles. is a 19-panel cycle embodying the collision of topical and art historical images, documentary reportage, personal studio photography, digital painting and electronic manipulation. Aesthetics are ruptured. Despite formal constraint, outrage cannot be quelled. The title functions as a ritualistic call and response, primordial question and answer, mirroring, doubling and reflecting on external habitat and internal nature. The gazelle morphs in Greek mythology, provides sustenance in the Old Testament, embodies the beloved in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, graces Islamic philosophy, springs again in Medieval Hebraic mysticism, stands self-possessed in Rilke, lays shadowed in Diaspora, flees quarantine in the remains of Babylon.

And Gazelles? And Gazelles. evokes the 1970 Art Worker Coalition's My Lai massacre poster entitled *Q. And Babies? A. And Babies.* While this cycle's images are more allegorical, their call is no less clarion. The name "gazelle" denotes both attack helicopters and benign bovine. The gazelle is a salient image of exigency in the wars of the Middle East. The Persian poet Sa'di (born about 1184 A.C.E., 580 A. H.) wrote: "No wonder when a gazelle falls into a snare/ but wonder it is when a gazelle traps a man." The gazelles in these digital collages are represented in daily activities, leaping, sprinting, standing, resting, smelling, eating, feeding, urinating, and as carrion. Anthropocentric interpretations view them as praying, in acts of retribution, conspiring, as well as victims, innocents, and without agency.

The gazelle, as a metaphor for peace, proves elusive but not beyond yearning. As a contemporary Iraqi proverb states: "If you want a rabbit, take a rabbit. If you want a gazelle, take a rabbit".