

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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illinois state university  
**university  
galleries**  
college of fine arts

# Nadia Hotait

*preferring the fleeting happiness on earth*

**Exhibition: October 26-December 18, 2010 - Gallery 1**

**Artist Reception: Tuesday, October 26, from 5-7pm**

**Special Screening at the Normal Theater: Wednesday, October 27, 7pm**

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University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to present works by internationally exhibited, multi-media artist, Nadia Hotait. Hotait uses sound and video to deal with the boundaries of culture and the nature of identity. With dual Spanish-Lebanese citizenship and ties to Illinois (she received her M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2009), she uncovers beauty within complex geopolitical issues, making her subjects both relevant and accessible to any audience. Although Hotait has exhibited in France, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Spain, and throughout the U.S., *preferring the fleeting happiness on earth* is her first museum survey. The accompanying programs present a unique cultural opportunity for the Bloomington-Normal community.

Hotait will exhibit six video installations at University Galleries, as well as an outdoor video projection appearing nightly on the façade of the Center for Visual Arts, and two films at the historic Normal Theater. These works include cultural narratives stemming from Mexico, Lebanon, and the United States. In *Do you know who I am?*, Hotait visits a small Mexican village and films a reversal of the typical journalistic investigation. Hotait's voice is heard from behind the camera asking numerous residents: "Do you know who I am?" Their answers are demonstrative examples of the assumptions and stereotypes we all make as we attempt to identify *the other* in our midst.

Hotait returns to Lebanon to uncover love (*58 Degrees*), loss (*Preferring the Fleeting Happiness on Earth*), and the metaphysics of humor (*The Eternal Happiness in Heaven*). She further explores her cultural heritage using melodic storytelling—a tradition used throughout the Arab world—as a lullaby for clothed bodies simultaneously suspended in a state of freedom and detention in *Besides the Sea*.

Join the artist for a special screening of her videos *58 Degrees* (2009, 8 min.) and *The South is Back/Rayah al yanub* (2006, 50 min.), on October 27, from 7-9pm at the historic Normal Theater in Uptown Normal. A public discussion will follow the event.

University Galleries is located on the south end of ISU's campus in room 110 of the Center for the Visual Arts. Parking is available at 90¢ per hour on the first level of the South University Street parking garage. Our hours are from noon until 4 pm Saturday-Monday, Tuesday 9:30 am until 7 pm and Wednesday-Friday from 9:30 am until 4:30 pm. If you need special accommodations to participate in any event, please contact University Galleries at 309.438.5487. Please allow sufficient time to arrange the accommodation. This document is available in alternative formats upon request. For more information, please contact University Galleries at 309.438.5487 or gallery@ilstu.edu.

This exhibition is co-sponsored by MECCPAC, a Dean of Students Diversity Initiative at Illinois State University and The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. The screening at the Normal Theater is co-sponsored by the Unit for International Linkages at I.S.U