

## **An Accident by the Mediterranean**

Relli De Vries

My project deals with the power relationship between the Mediterranean sea and the only unmixed Arab village on the Israeli coast. The project presents an intersection of the solid and the liquid, the rocks and the sea strata. This happens in the presence of inhabitants who live close to them, and represent the linkage between the geological structure and political and spatial perceptions. The inhabitants live in the large coastal village of Jisr al-Zarqa (demographically almost a town) whose inhabitants were originally Arab Bedouins who settled in a swamp area on the Kabbara plain close to the sea. The movements of the inhabitants along the history of this space took place on particular latitude. The longitude is stretched as a skeletal thread along the State. Israel refuses to define its borders, and expands illegally and aggressively. In this way the coastal line of the Mediterranean, its 'natural' border, overlaps the country's Western line. It is a long and narrow country, and so are its geomorphologic structures.

The location of the sea, and in particular the mingling of the water with the land, gives birth to life-stories. One such life story is that of a group of people who live in Jisr Al-Zarka whose life is deeply affected by the presence of water. This effect is not only physical, but also a metaphor of their conditions and close proximity to the coast. Like water the people of Jisr have to be somewhere. The project focuses on the crucial events in the lives of the inhabitants and on the political forces that impact their space. These events are examined through the lens of how life merges with time and space and parallel to existing geological cross-sections. The historical events that took place in Palestine, in particular during the 1948 war, created an earthquake that shaped the landscape and continues to reverberate.