

*Operation Nose Nose Operation* took place in Beirut over two months in 1999. The project aimed to make hundreds of plaster noses by taking plaster casts from as many people as possible. This process was continually documented, and now provides the work exhibited at Gallery 4A.

*Operation Nose Nose Operation* was initially exhibited in Beirut early last year. Throughout the duration of this exhibition and the opening night the audience was invited to have their nose cast and the procedure photographed. Throughout a two month stay in Beirut as many as a 150 noses were cast, that of men, women and children. The men's noses proved the most challenging: large and proud and often taking as much plaster as needed by three women.

Now the real mission was to find a female nose that had not been under the knife of a plastic surgeon, as it would appear that the female nose is presently and historically a popular feature to have surgically altered. In fact many of the women that participated in this project found their surgical experience to be amusingly identical to the process of this work. When asked WHY? The explanation seemed simple. That is, a simple desire, for a cute, small, petite nose - what we would ridiculously call the "ski jump". It is for this reason alone that there was no place more appropriate than Lebanon to have performed this work. To be concerned with one's nose, size and shape is something that seems to be genetically inherited by all those who live there and the millions of others who have migrated to countries like Australia. Not a dinner time discussion will pass where the nose does not dominate conversation. It's size and shape will always be compared, scrutinised, analysed, and even ridiculed. Poor nose.

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