



EXHIBITION GUIDE

BASSAM ISSA
AL-SABAH

24 OCT 2025 - 22 FEB 2026



BASSAM ISSA AL-SABAH
*THE MISSION IS THE END,
THE END IS ALL I WANT!*
24 Oct 2025 - 22 Feb 2026

GALLERY OPENING TIMES
Wed - Sun, 11:00 - 18:00
Free entry



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Bassam Issa Al-Sabah, *THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT!* (2025), commissioned by FACT Liverpool and supported by The Arts Council of Ireland, Culture Ireland and The Henry Moore Foundation. Courtesy of the artist.

BASSAM ISSA AL-SABAH

THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT! (2025)

Two-channel video with sound (28:26); installation environment

Curated images, polished narratives, and carefully packaged experiences saturate our everyday lives. We are sold fantasies as lifestyles to aspire to, which shape our desires and how we see ourselves and the world. In digital spaces that promise connection and freedom, we often become flattened to profiles that reflect how we want to be seen. Our appearance to others becomes determined by algorithms and the systems behind them.

Bassam Issa Al-Sabah works across digital animation, painting, sculpture, and textiles to create dreamlike environments that offer visions of resistance, transformation and queer possibility. At the centre of his work is an interest in how digital culture influences our response to trauma, displacement and loss. His imagined worlds offer room to reconsider personal and collective existences - places where fantasy becomes both a shelter and a site of reckoning. In this new immersive work, Bassam explores the dreamlike quality of digital media, from its glossy surface to its seductive imagery. Do these idealised images reflect our desires, or have our identities been moulded to desire the impossible?



Bassam Issa Al-Sabah, *THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT!* (2025)
Images courtesy of the artist.

THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT! reflects on the patterns and cycles that shape our experience of the world. Different systems—whether political, digital, or architectural—determine how we perceive and interact with the world. In the gallery, sculptures appear as though smashed into each other. Artefacts with their own history and identity collide, creating new objects that offer reflections of this pressure and force. A new film work follows a cast of fantastical characters as they explore the tension between following, resisting, and choosing their own paths. The work questions whether a utopia can ever be neutral: whose future are we imagining when we build idealised digital spaces? Drawing from video game mechanics and digital aesthetics, Bassam builds environments that feel immersive but tightly controlled—worlds we can explore, but not quite alter. Through this lens, he explores how hidden ideas and beliefs can seep into worldbuilding: from dangerous ideologies to the fake, polished lifestyles sold through social media. The installation and sculptures create a space that feels like it is shifting and collapsing around us, pulling us in.

Rather than offering answers or closure, *THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT!* creates space for reflection. It asks us to look again at the world we live in, and the future we hope for. In a time marked by collapse and contradiction, the imagined world becomes a place to face hard truths and rethink what is possible - where fantasy becomes a tool for survival, not escape.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sound design by Jack Colleran. Voice acting by Sian Ní Mhuirí and Sam Monaghan.

BASSAM ISSA AL-SABAH BIOGRAPHY

Bassam Issa Al-Sabah is a visual artist working with digital animation, painting, sculpture and textiles. He often builds installations that interrogate the intersection of fantasy and trauma, employing speculative worlds as a lens through which to explore the mechanisms of memory and identity formation. Frequently drawing on the visual lexicon of video games, anime, and popular culture, he constructs alternative realities that function as both a means of escape and critical commentary. At the core of his practice is an investigation into how digital culture and virtual environments mediate experiences of trauma, displacement, and loss. These constructed worlds provide a framework for reimagining personal and collective histories, where the fantasy serves not only as a refuge but as a site of confrontation.

He completed a BA in Visual Art Practice from Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology in 2016. Recent solo exhibitions include: Biolytic Daughter, VSSL studios, London (2025); you are in heaven but suddenly everything begins to burn, Kunstverein Aughrim, Ireland (2024); Uncensored Lilac, Transmediale, Silent Green, Berlin (2024); ITS DANGEROUS TO GO ALONE! TAKE THIS, The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2022); I AM ERROR, Gasworks, London (2021), and De La Warr Pavilion, Sussex (2022).

In 2023 he received an award of distinction in New Animation Art from Prix Ars Electronica and in 2021 he received the Golden Fleece Award. He is currently a studio member at Wilton Park. Al-Sabah lives and works in Dublin.



Bassam Issa Al-Sabah, *THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT!* (2025)
Image courtesy of the artist.

TOURS, TALKS + EVENTS

ARTIST TOUR WITH BASSAM ISSA AL-SABAH AND NINA DAVIES

Sat 25 Oct / 12:30

Free, booking required

Learn more about our current exhibitions from the artists themselves, as Bassam Issa Al-Sabah and Nina Davies (with collaborators Eve, Luke and Mel) give us a guided tour of Bassam's *THE MISSION IS THE END, THE END IS ALL I WANT!* and Nina's *MEET ME IN THE DIGITAL TWIN*.

ARTIST TOUR WITH NINA DAVIES

Mon 24 Nov / 18:00 - 19:00

Free, booking required

Join artist Nina Davies and collaborators Eve, Luke and Mel – three young people who access support through the Teenage and Young Adult Unit at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre in Liverpool – for a guided tour of *MEET ME IN THE DIGITAL TWIN*, a new film and fictional podcast.

THE GLIOBABES PODCAST: LIVE

Tue 25 Nov / 18:00 - 19:00

Free, booking required

Mel and Mol invite us to a special live recording of their unfiltered, dark-humour filled podcast: The GlioBabes. This episode features artist Nina Davies and collaborators Eve and Luke who, along with Mel, have created an immersive exhibition at FACT.

IRISH ARTISTS SHORT FILMS: ROLEPLAYING ONLINE

Tue 20 Jan / 18:30 - 20:00

Free, booking required

Step into the world of online roleplay with a selection of short films by Irish artists, curated by artist Bassam Issa Al-Sabah. Playful, unsettling and revealing, these films centre on the ways we are seduced, made vulnerable and claim agency through our online performances. Featuring works by Lana May Flemming, Jennifer Mehigan, Caoimhín Gaffney, Sibyl Montague and Luke van Gelderen.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE... OUR
LEARNINGS FROM *MEET ME IN
THE DIGITAL TWIN*

Wed 21 Jan / 17:00 - 19:00

Free, booking required

Join us for an evening of talks exploring art, care, and collaboration as we share learnings from our long-term collaboration with The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre.

BASSAM ISSA AL-SABAH
AND NINA DAVIES
IN CONVERSATION

Tue 10 Feb / 18:00 - 19:00

Free, booking required

In the final weeks of their solo exhibitions, Bassam and Nina join us for an in-conversation about their new commissions, artist practices and creative processes.



BOOK TICKETS

For more information and bookings, visit fact.co.uk/whats-on or speak to a member of our team.

Discover more events online and in our season guide.