

## **Black Rock**

What quiet places, full of possibility

*I am arrested by softness, the softness of the coal. The edges, corners, planes, melt before my eyes. This is not a silky softness, like a child (we will return to the child) but a softness that is dense, wild, and somehow mute, refuses speech, sound. It is a barrier to sound, this material.*

The coal used by Saaid Baalbaki is ordinary, as far as this can still be said, and comes from Indonesia. He uses it to heat his Berlin studio, a formerly common material in his locale, that has become increasingly scarce.

The coal structures displayed here are executed with precision and care, and they are familiar, if ambiguous. Neo-classical architecture, places of worship, something old that creaks and tugs in recognition of the civic, the philanthropic, the religious, the structures of an aging world. But it is the material that takes us over, seizes the mind, pulls us into form, the way of making and the joy of the attempt. The human in the world.

And yes, Baalbaki likes the coal, the way it looks, how it reminds him of building blocks, of being a child, of play. This work comes from innocent instinct, desire, leans towards exploration, possibility, and through this play he works his way deep into the soft blackness, through that joy and into the adult world. And there, from this instinct to play Baalbaki renders what are perhaps the most adult of edifices, temple, church, mosque, museum, bank.

It's a work of faith, of instinct, a reach for a connection that can be felt more than explained. In the softness of the coal, its healing, velvet coat, and in our knowledge of its properties, its scarcity, its increasingly golden allegory, there is a contemplative moment, a reflection on what it is that drives us, what we really need.

One thing becomes another, one form of knowledge becomes another, one place becomes another, one beginning becomes another. Among all of this, built from joy, the coal structures are silent, soft and dense.

*Said Baalbaki*  
*(Lebanon, b. 1974)*

**Black Rock**



**SBI-020**

Coal  
15x15x19 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

**Black Rock**



**SBI-021**

Coal

7x14x12 cm

2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

**Black Rock**



**SBI-022**

Coal  
15x13x22 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
*(Lebanon, b. 1974)*

**Black Rock**



**SBI-032**

Coal and asphalt  
15x11x12 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

**Black Rock**



**SBI-023**

Coal  
16x16x18 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
*(Lebanon, b. 1974)*

**Black Rock**



**SBI-024**

Coal  
18x18x33 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

**Black Rock**



**SBI-025**

Coal  
20x16x30 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

**Black Rock**



**SBI-027**

Coal  
15x22x22 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
*(Lebanon, b. 1974)*

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**SBI-033**

Coal and asphalt  
20x10x16 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

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**SBI-036**

Coal and asphalt  
15x15x15 cm  
2023

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**SBI-026**

Coal and asphalt  
18x12x20  
2023

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(Lebanon, b. 1974)

## Black Rock



**SBI-028**

Coal  
27x22x30 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

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**SBI-029**

Coal  
20x16x10 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

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**SBI-031**

Coal  
25x25x25 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
*(Lebanon, b. 1974)*

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**SBI-034**

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

## **Black Rock**

Coal  
22x17x17 cm  
2023



**SBI-035**

Coal  
15x13x30 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

## **Black Rock**



**SBI-030**

Coal and asphalt  
20x16x19 cm  
2023

*Said Baalbaki*  
(Lebanon, b. 1974)

## **Black Rock**



**SBI-037**

Coal and asphalt  
19x21x21 cm  
2023