

AFAC Announces 35 New Grant Recipients from its First Call in 2011

29 August 2011

The results of the AFAC's first call in 2011, which opened for proposals on February 14th earlier this year, are announced today after careful and systematic evaluation of 400 applications, received from 32 countries in the categories of Literature, Performing Arts and Visual Arts.

35 applicants – 21 individuals and 14 institutions - are awarded with grants amounting to \$350,000.

The distribution of grants by category is as follows:

- \$90,000 to Literature
- \$110,000 to Performing Art
- \$150,000 to Visual Arts

Visual Arts received the larger budget allocation as it witnessed a remarkable 230 % increase in number of applications when compared to last year.

AFAC's 35 new awardees come from a wide geographical scope, including 10 Arab countries, 2 European countries, and the Unites States.

This is the first time AFAC adopts an online system for receiving project proposals, and the number of applications increased by 80% compared to last year.

Calls are now open for round 2 of AFAC 2011 grants, which covers the three categories of Music, Cinema, and Research/Training/Regional projects (RTR). The deadline for receiving applications is on October 21st 2011.

Literature Grantees

In Literature, 15 projects were selected by jurors Alawiyya Sobh from Lebanon, Najwan Darwish from Palestine, and Nouri al-Jarrah from Syria.

Name of Grantee	Title of project	Country
Mansour Idris Mohamad	The Last Sultan	Sudan
Al Beyt Arts and Cultutre Association	Zahr Al Adab (Blossoms of Literature)	Algeria
Sameh El Gabas	Portosaid	Egypt
Youssef Rihani	Rocking Chair- Say, Youssef	Morocco
Hassan Blasim	The Goat's Song	Iraq
Shaker Louaibi	Surrealist Architecture: an Architectural and Aesthetic Study of Tatawin, Matmata and Nafusa Mountain	Iraq
Maya Abul Hayyat	Untitled Novel	Palestine
Hilal Chouman	A Collection of Short Stories with Illustration	Lebanon
Baree Khalil	Texts I Found in the Washing Machine	Syria
Voice of Women- Nassawiya	Tarek's Daughters: a Tribe of Contemporary Arab Women	Lebanon
Wassim Al Moghrabi	A Sea's Tale	Egypt
Abir Esper	The Ingenuity of Flowers	Syria
Abdullah Alkafri	Mrs. Ghada's Threshold of Pain	Syria
Assabil Association	My story, your story, our story – making up a story at the public library	Lebanon
Hanane Darkaoui	The Next Neighborhood (Al-7ara Al-Mujawira)	Morocco

Performing Arts Grantees

For Performing Arts, 10 projects were selected by jurors Lina Abyad from Lebanon, Latefa Ahrrare from Morocco, and Fadel Khalil from Iraq.

Name of Grantee	Title of Project	Country
Mohannad Hadi	Oriental Jazz	Iraq/Palestine
Bab Iebhar Cinetheatre	Tangitanus	Morocco
Nora Amin	Theatre of the Oppressed: Supporting Dialogue and Innovative Thinking to Manage the Struggle	Egypt
Leish Troupe	It's a girl...! (The third show of the Identities program 2006-2016)	Syria
Aspis Production	Chaos (infilat)	Tunisia
Assirk Assaghir Association	Dancing Colors	Palestine
Teatro	Teatro for Performance Arts Workshops	Syria
Sulayman Al Bassam	The Speaker's Progress	Kuwait
Rezodanse	The Breeze of Dance 2	Egypt

Visual Arts Applications

In Visual Arts, 10 projects were selected by jurors Zeina Arida from Lebanon, Assem Al-Basha from Syria and Kamal Boullata from Palestine.

Name of Grantee	Title of Project	Country
Fatima Al Qadiri & Khalid Al Gharaballi	Mandeel Um A7mad	Kuwait
Olivia Snaije and Mitchell Albert	Keep Your Eyes on the Wall”: an artistic representation of the separation wall between Israel and Palestine	United States
Documenta13	Documenta13	Germany
Frederique Cifuentes	The Disappearing Heritage of Sudan	France
Dar Al M’amoun	The international art residency at Dar Al M’amoun	Morocco
Zineb Sedira	Pilot Residency Program, "Artist Residency in Algiers" (A.R.I.A)	Algeria
B’chira Art Center	Collecting Art	Tunisia
Mass Alexandria	Mass Alexandria: Program 1	Egypt
98 Weeks	Why do you publish, Beirut/An Art Publishing Encounter	Lebanon
Roy Deeb	Attention : Objects in mirror are closer than they appear	Lebanon



Frederique Cifuentes – Cinema in Sudan

Projects' Briefs

Literature:

Grantee: Mansour Mohamad El Souwaim (Sudan)

Title: The Last Sultan

Project briefing: The Last Sultan is a narrative historic work that tackles the history of Darfur during the end of the Turkish era and the beginning of English-Egyptian rule. The story unfolds around the life of the main character, Sultan Ali Dinar of Darfur, while also using that narrative as a platform for offering a creative survey of the artistic, societal, and historical developments of Sudan at the turn of the 19th century. The tale begins in 1898, with the quelling of the Mahdi revolts and the penetration of Sudan by British forces up until Sultan Ali's murderous end at the hands of the British in 1916 after having at last succeeded in re-establishing his ancestral kingdom. He is therefore at once both the first and the last of the sultans of this era.

Grantee: Al Beyt Arts and Culture Association (Algeria)

Title: "Zahr Al Adab" (Blossoms of Literature)

Project Briefing: A multi-cultural literary and poetic translation project which the association has dedicated itself to since its inception. Building bridges and opening pathways to a variety of literary worlds, the project features a collaboration of Arab writers and poets for the translation, editing and publishing of selected works from Colombian, German, Kurdish and Spanish poetry, as well as excerpts from Eritrean literature.

Title: "Portosaid"

Project Briefing: An epic narrative that documents the history of the city of Port Said from 1956 until the present day. The main character is 'Al-Bambooti' who lives on the sea port and spends his time servicing ships, guiding tourists, and selling knick-knacks to passing sailors. Through his eyes, the economic, political and social changes that are impacting the citizens of Port Said are highlighted. The quasi-satirical end of the tale is the prediction of the city's disappearance, submerged by the sea, as foretold by the latest environmental studies on climate change.

Grantee: Youssef Rihani (Morocco)

Title: "Rocking Chair- Say, Youssef"

Project Briefing: First edition Arabic translations of two short works by the renowned Irish author Samuel Beckett, meticulously edited and revised, in the spirit of contribution to cultural exchange of international literature.

Grantee: Hassan Blasim (Iraq)

Title: "The Goat's Song"

Project Briefing: A series of black comedies and fantasy tales that explore Iraqi anxiety during the decades of totalitarian rule and American invasion. Characters include an Iraqi citizen experiencing exile and alienation and

Europeans struggling to relate to illegal immigrants. The stories also include little vignettes of life in Finland, where the author currently lives.

Grantee: Shaker Louaibi (Iraq)

Title: “Surrealist Architecture: an Architectural and Aesthetic Study of Tatawin, Matmata and Nafusa Mountain”

Project Briefing: A study of architecture in southern Tunisia, Matmata and Tatawin, which are areas often marginalized in mainstream academic texts for being “uncultured” or “vernacular.” Nevertheless, they possess a very unique architectural style that reveals the essentials of authentic creativity and imagination.

Grantee: Maya Abul Hayyat (Palestine)

Title: “Untitled Novel”

Project Briefing: A novel about the lives of two women; a Greek midwife living in Jerusalem and a PLO member’s daughter. Retelling of Palestinian history from the Ottoman period to the present day, spoken from the perspectives of the young girl and her elderly neighbor.

Grantee: Hilal Chouman (Lebanon)

Title: “A Collection of Short Stories with Illustrations”

Project Briefing: Short stories of varying lengths inspired by the works of young graphic designers and illustrators. Works include black and white drawings as well as color designs, adding new visual dimensions to each literary sampling.

Grantee: Baree Khalil (Syria)

Title: “Texts I Found in the Washing Machine”

Project Briefing: A group of poems for children written with imaginative and child-like spontaneity. Moving away from traditional children’s books laden with lessons and morals, this collection adopts a free and playful approach, encouraging creativity, imagination and a sense of discovery.

Grantee: Voice of Women- Nassawiya (Lebanon)

Title: “Tarek’s Daughters: a Tribe of Contemporary Arab Women”

Project Briefing: A first-time collection of 15 literary works of Arab women from Lebanon and abroad, offering an alternative view from the traditionally patriarchal field of writing and knowledge production. Linking their current work and knowledge to their hidden past, the collection retells the history of the Arab region through reviving forgotten events and documenting marginalized dialogue of women, carrying gendered discourse from the academic fields back to the heart of society.

Grantee: Wassim Al Moghrabi (Egypt)

Title: “A Sea’s Tale”

Project Briefing: A literary workshop aiming to train 15 young writers over a period of 6 months to create original short stories. The project envisions two seminars per week for discovering and developing the creativity of the participants, aged between 18 and 30, in writing and linguistic skills. The workshop will document the process and produce a book that presents the works of its writers to a larger Arab audience.

Grantee: Abir Esber (Syria)

Title: “The Ingenuity of Flowers”

Project Briefing: A novel based on the challenging realities of modern Arab history, it tells a journey that starts with disappointment and ends with forgiveness. It also makes the point that history is no longer solely written by the powerful and the wealthy, rather it stems from the heart of society, giving voice to life.

Grantee: Abdullah Alkafri (Syria)

Title: Mrs. Ghada’s Threshold of Pain

Project Briefing: A theatrical text written in classical Arabic that tackles the relationship between memory and plastic surgery in the context of shifting socio-economic realities. The author draws a parallel between the increased affordability and availability of plastic surgery, and the decline of the socialist agenda, through the changing faces of the city.

Grantee: Assabil Association (Lebanon)

Title: “My story, your story, our story – making up a story at the public library”

Project Briefing: A cooperative project that links together ten public libraries in Lebanon with the aim of jointly writing two stories while exploring different ways of expression. The project makes the point about how public libraries play an essential role in encouraging people to express themselves freely and peacefully, while offering a space for local gatherings and experiencing shared cultural heritage.

Grantee: Hanane Darkaoui (Morocco)

Title: “The Next Neighborhood” (Al-7ara Al-Mujawira)

Project Briefing: A novel that discusses social changes in Morocco during the 70s and 80s of the last century through the story of Aziza and her father who had to keep moving from city to city leaving first their home, Rachidia, in Tafilalt Oasis to settle in Azrou and then to Sawira. With an eye on realism, the novel incorporates the royal speeches given by former King of Morocco Hassan II.



Specter IV – Fatima Al Qadiri

Performing Arts

Grantee: Mohannad Hadi / Tahani Salim (Iraq)

Title: "Oriental Jazz"

Project Briefing: A monodrama exploring the inner struggles of an Arab girl living in Europe, torn between Eastern and Western cultural values. The performance includes the participation of Arabs living in Arab countries as well as Arabs living in European countries. It explores the inner divisions in the girl's mind, between 'personality' and 'self', body and mind, desires and societal pressures, and examines her ongoing struggle for coherence.

Grantee: Bab lebhar Cinetheatre (Morocco)

Title: "Tangitanus"

Project Briefing: A play that revisits the ancient Greek legend of the 11th labor of Hercules, which takes place in furthest western reaches of the then-known lands, Mauritania Tangitania. Setting the story in a modern day perspective, the text takes the battle between Hercules and Antonio to enter the magical Garden of the Hesperides as an allegory of conflicts in the world today.

Grantee: Nora Amin (Egypt)

Title: "Theatre of the Oppressed: Supporting Dialogue and Innovative Thinking to Manage the Struggle"

Project Briefing: Taking theatre outside of theatrical institutions and into public spaces and the streets, this performance is interactive and unique every time. It uses the theatrical model of the "Theatre of the Oppressed" by Brazilian writer Augusto Boal to feature real scenes from Egyptian society where oppression and conflict exist. The audience interacts with the actors to find a solution to the conflict, thus becoming a training for managing conflict in real life.

Grantee: Leish Troupe (Syria)

Title: "It's a girl...!" (The third show of the Identities program 2006-2016)

Project Briefing: A performance presented by 7 Syrian and 3 European artists that tells the story of a woman today. She raises questions about her femininity, her experiences with men, and describes her confusion about the image that society has drawn for her and which does not resemble her at all. The subjects are explored through the dramatic relationship between body language and live voices, and the inspiration is drawn from pregnancy and childbirth rituals from the Arab world (Islamic, Christian and Jewish).

Grantee: Aspis Production (Tunisia)

Title: "Chaos" (infilat)

Project Briefing: A reading of Tunisia's current reality in the aftermath of the popular revolution, a time of insecurity and political chaos. It is a play featuring a man and a woman who live in an old neighborhood where fear from the unknown reigns. They argue about their differing evaluations of the situation, one calling for a rationalization of the revolution and other calling for active confrontation.

Grantee: Assirk Assaghir Association (Palestine)

Title: “Dancing Colors”

Project Briefing: A theatrical show based on lighting effects, using instruments that reflect light differently and a technique called black lighting. The show is produced with highly specialized actors in a circus-like performance of the highest quality.

Grantee: Teatro (Syria)

Title: “Teatro for Performance Arts Workshops”

Project Briefing: Teatro is an independent non-profit theatre company that was established at the syndicate of Syrian artists in 2004 and includes graduates from the Higher Institute of Performing Arts, Acting, Dance and Music. A series of workshops will aim at promoting artistic talents, especially among the youth, and at creating a space for cultural innovation.

Grantee: Sulayman Al Bassam (Kuwait)

Title: “The Speakers Progress”

Project Briefing: The third and final performance of an Arabic Shakespearean trilogy presented by eminent actors from all over the Arab world, in collaboration with the international group of experts that participated in the first two plays.

Grantee: Rezodanse (Egypt)

Title: “The Breeze of Dance 2”

Project Briefing: A project of contemporary research and artistic creation which enables participating artists to stay in selected areas of Alexandria and explore it through total immersion, discovering ways of interacting with the city through dance and performance. After a stay of several weeks, audiences are invited to selected locations to watch the artists’ performances.

Grantee: Tania Khoury (Lebanon)

Title: “This Sea is Mine”

Project Briefing: A "protest performance" by the Dictaphone Group. It emanates from the state of revolution the Arab world is going through, using public spaces as stages in order to open dialogue on how to claim back these spaces. The project tackles the role of live art as a mean of protest and starts by claiming back the beaches of Beirut. We will protest and perform from a little boat in the middle of the sea.



Bit Teleferique – Performance by Tania Khoury

Visual Arts:

Grantee: Roy Deeb (Lebanon)

Title: "Attention : Objects in mirror are closer than they appear"

Project Briefing: An artistic installation video project seeking to overcome the boundaries between Lebanon and Palestine and their respective people, precipitated by the Nakba - the establishment of Israel in 1948. Despite forced separation, communication continues with a shared hope that mutual visits will one day be possible again. The art work invites audience to ponder, how to imagine beloved cities that can be neither visited nor seen?

Grantee: Fatima Al Qadiri & Khalid Al Gharaballi (Kuwait)

Title: "Mandeel Um A7mad"

Project Briefing: A multimedia artistic installation designed and executed by the two Kuwaiti artists Fatima Al Qadiri and Khaled Al Gharaballi. The work, which features a screening of a movie inside a sculpture of giant dimensions, will be exhibited in Al Sultan Hall in Kuwait in January 2012

Grantee: Olivia Snaije and Mitchell Albert (USA)

Title: "Keep Your Eyes on the Wall": an artistic representation of the separation wall between Israel and Palestine

Project Briefing: A high-quality illustrated book featuring various interpretations and documentations of the Israel-Palestine "Separation Barrier" using photographs and graphic work. Twelve established artists/photographers (ten Palestinians, a dissident Israeli and a long-term German resident of Gaza) are contributing their visual work, while six renowned Palestinian and European writers will offer essays that discuss not only the art on the wall, but also the wall as art and the wall in art.

Grantee: Frederique Cifuentes (France)

Title: "The Disappearing Heritage of Sudan"

Project Briefing: Between 2004 and 2010, Frederique Cifuentes conducted research in Sudan and compiled a unique collection of photos and films covering the periods of Ottoman, Egyptian and British colonization. A touring exhibition of his collection will be launched in both the UK and Sudan starting from April 2012, offering visitors a new way of understanding colonial history. Exhibition locations include the Brunei Gallery in London, Durham University, and the Khartoum University in Sudan.

Grantee: Documenta 13 (Germany)

Title: "Documenta 13"

Project Briefing: A periodic exhibition of contemporary art, recurring every five years in Kassel, Germany, Documenta 13's upcoming edition will take place between June 9th and September 16th 2012. Over 150 international participants will be represented with contributing artists from the Arab world. Also featured in Documenta (13) will be an on-loan exhibition from the National Museum of Lebanon in Beirut.

Grantee: Dar Al M'amoun (Morocco)

Title: "The international art residency at Dar Al M'amoun"

Project Briefing: Dar Al M'amoun is an international center for art residency situated 14 km away from

Marrakesh that includes work spaces for artists in addition to a research center for literary translation (Arabic-French- English) and a library. The project aims at supporting young artists in the field of visual arts and introducing Moroccan and African cultures to wider audiences through programs of cultural exchange.

Grantee: Zineb Sedira (Algeria)

Title: Pilot Residency Program, "Artist Residency in Algiers" (A.R.I.A)

Project Briefing: A pilot project seeking to create a network of relations between Algerian artists and different art societies around the world. It gives young and established artists from the Maghreb region and other countries the opportunity to conduct artistic and cultural research and production.

Grantee: B'chira Art Center (Tunisia)

Title: "Collecting Art"

Project Briefing: An exhibition and two-day conference about Collecting Art in Tunisia. B'chira Art Center aims to present the most important art collections in Tunisia and to explore different strategies on collecting art by bringing together local and world experts.

Grantee: Mass Alexandria (Egypt)

Title: "Mass Alexandria: Program 1"

Project Briefing: An independent learning area for artists in Egypt, "Mass Alexandria: Program 1" will complement a studying period that lasts for six months and will help 12 students conduct a research program, prepare an arts exhibition and visit the "Documenta 13" exhibition in the German city Kassel in 2012 (also a grantee of AFAC in 2011).

Grantee: 98 weeks (Lebanon)

Title: "Why do you publish, Beirut/An Art Publishing Encounter"

Project Briefing: WDYP is the first international encounter that focuses on independent publishing in the Middle East and beyond. Over a period of 4 days, publishing houses, artists and writers will meet in Beirut to present their current production and discuss the status of contemporary art publishing through a series of panels and workshops.

[The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture](#) is an independent Arab initiative established in 2007. AFAC funds individuals and organizations in the fields of cinema, performing arts, literature, music and visual arts, while facilitating cultural exchange and cooperation across the Arab world and globally.