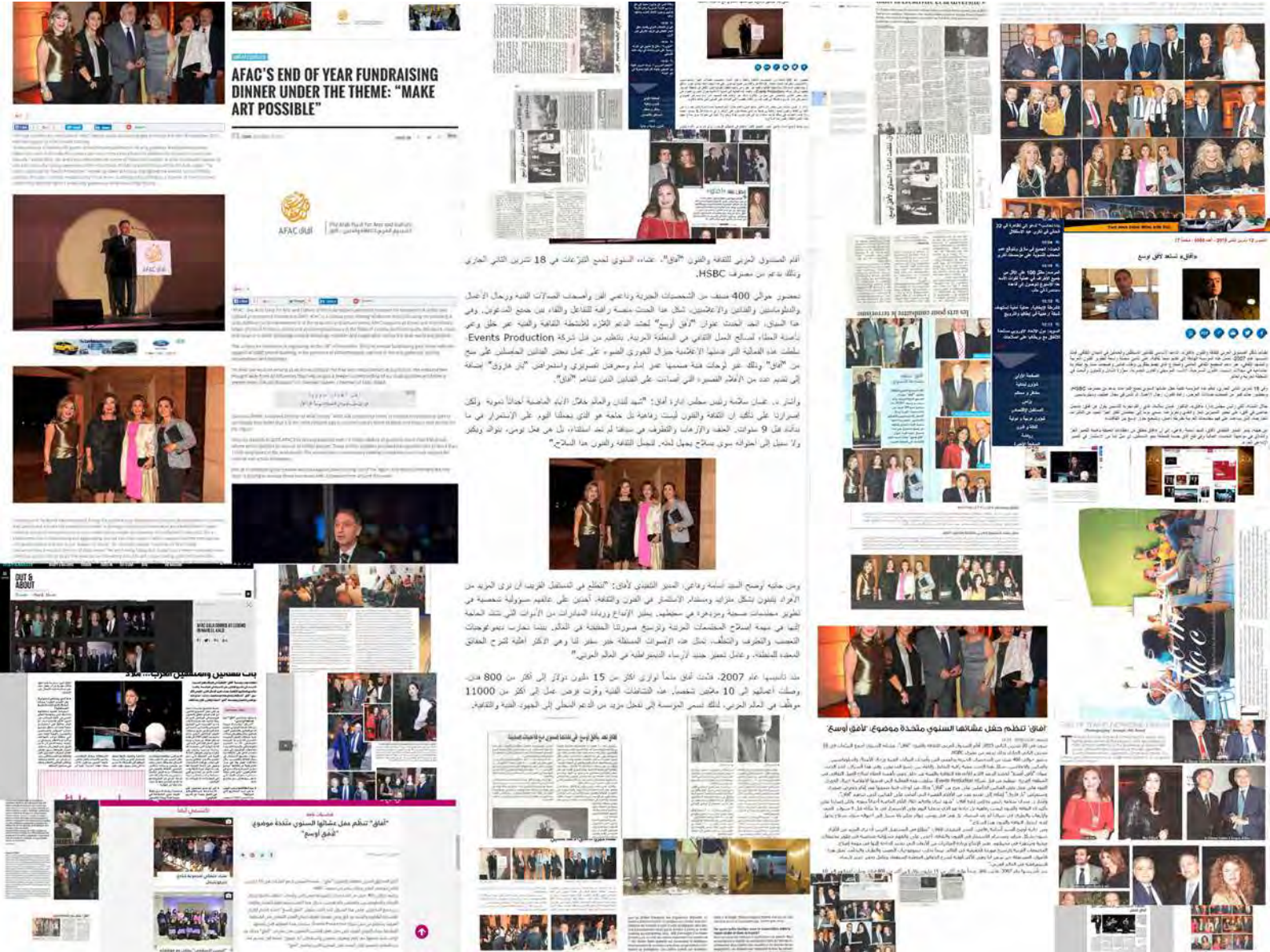


Un-cover
Dis-cover
Re-cover



آفاق AFAC

AFAC
2015 Annual Report



AFAC is an independent Arab initiative generously supported by a number of foundations, corporations and individuals in and outside the Arab region.



Media partners



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*AFAC is also grateful to a number of donors who prefer to remain undisclosed.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Message from the Chairman	6
Message from the Director	7

Themes And Narratives 8

Un-cover	8
Dis-cover	8
Re-cover	8

Summary Of Year..... 9

Grants	9
Advocacy.....	10
Philanthropy for the Arts	10

Outlook Year 2016 11

The Year's Granting Schedule 12

Statistics 13

Applications Statistics	13
Grantees Statistics	15

The Annual General Grants..... 18

Visual Arts	21
Performing Arts	28
Research, Training & Regional Events - RTR.....	34
Music.....	41
Cinema	48

Special Programs 55

AFAC Novel Writing Program	57
Arab Documentary Photography Program.....	62
AFAC Documentary Program	77
Crossroads.....	85

Field Visits And Outreach 90

Covered Social Justice Themes 94

International Recognition & Awards 97

Breakdown by Program	99
Timeline	100
Advocacy for Arts and Culture	102
New Communication & Fundraising Material.....	103
AFAC featured in Canvas Magazine	103
AFAC Film Week.....	103
AFAC Cultural Week in New York	104
Beirut Gala Dinner Media Coverage	105
Measuring the impact of Arts and Culture	105
Meetings and Participation to Events.....	106
Webpage Statistics	108
Grantees Stories and Voices.....	111
Philanthropy For The Arts	112
AFAC Governance Model.....	114
Committees.....	114
AFAC Board Of Trustees.....	115
AFAC Team	117
Financials.....	119

Message from the Chairman



While the current situation in our region is that of a dire humanitarian crisis that is worsened by the expansion of war, conflict and extremism, we remain steadfast in promoting arts and culture and lobbying for long-term support for artists of the region in the absence of public funding.

Despite this invaluable contribution by the artists to uncover hidden narratives, discover forgotten pasts and recover a sense of collectiveness, their resources remain very limited. Institutions such as AFAC and many others are working alone, with little means, and striving to secure sustainability. Without this sustainability, they operate with vulnerability, depriving these artists from the support they deserve.

Art is playing a primary role in this generalized conflict situation: It is providing us unusual and complex perspectives on situations prone to oversimplification. It is offering us solutions and alternative narratives that go beyond stereotypes and the sensationalism of mainstream media.

We continue to make the case for engagement and intervention, not through politics but rather through arts and culture. There is a way to engage today, and to make a difference. We invite you to invest into such work for a better future for all of us, and the future generations.

– Dr. Ghassan Salamé

Message from the Director

Today, we live in a schizophrenic world where instantaneous and global connectivity lives hand in hand with large-scale fragmentation along the fault lines of wealth and ideology. We are constantly made aware of the differences to the "Other" from across the fence. Our initial aspiration to explore, understand and accept those differences is ever more quenched by induced fears, by our desire to prevail and assimilate.

Cultural exchange has proven so far to be the most effective antidote to these divisive trends of modern times. What else could substitute that? Across borders, culture is a basic human expression that is traded actively by individuals and institutions alike to narrate, create, inspire, reflect on our shortcomings and celebrate our successes. It is through the rich diversity of cultural expressions, the mobility of artists and the advancement of artistic freedom that we stand the best chance to promote better understanding and transcend the difficult times we live today in our region.

Well into our 10th year of operation, we shall continue to support and advance the cause of independent cultural production as a main component of development for our societies, and encourage a larger segment of stakeholders to play a role in it. We shall critically reflect on our past years with the help of experts in the cultural field, and devise an ambitious strategy for the next 5 years to expand the footprint and impact of Arab artists and cultural institutions, locally, regionally and internationally.

– Oussama Rifahi



Themes and Narratives



Early in 2015, we have set out to examine the topics addressed by our grantees, trying to make sense of the richness of their narratives, impact of their work on their communities, or simply the power of their creative artistic expression. We endeavored to order some of these projects under main underlying themes to communicate to our stakeholders the importance of their works. We decided to structure some of these projects under the actions of uncovering, discovering and recovering.

In the midst of the growing trend of extremism and a tendency for communities to become trapped in their own stories of threatened identity, AFAC grantees set out to uncover issues that underlie these trends, discover alternative solutions and re-engage their communities in imagining a shared and better future. It is indeed these independent voices that are best positioned to portray the region's complex realities and usher in a new era of openness.

Un-cover

A selection of projects from our documentary film and photography programs aim to uncover social issues, shedding light on them and creating awareness about different aspects of the Arab region today. These projects uncover and document possibilities, while also identifying obstacles standing in the way of progress in the Arab region, and in some cases providing tools to overcome them. They showcase and discuss topics such as Syrian refugees in Lebanon, checkpoint births in Palestine, the social landscape in Kuwait, and strong independent women in Yemen and Morocco.

Dis-cover

Imagination is a very powerful tool. It helps us discover new perspectives, it inspires creation, and it provides a space for a group of people to imagine a better world. By doing so, it offers us a glimpse of or at least hope for a more inspiring future. A number of AFAC supported projects propose alternative solutions to existing problems and allow for different points of view to come together and imagine a better future. Projects in theater, photography, music, dance, contemporary art and literature, are offering new perspectives on topics such as women's sexuality in Egypt, political corruption in Libya, public spaces in Dubai, community ties in Palestine, as well as the production and digital archiving of audiovisual material in the Arab region as a whole.

Re-cover

The projects under this theme invite the audience into their realms. They offer platforms that encourage various stakeholders to take part in engaging activities and lead them to take action. Arab societies can only completely recover through inspiring projects that reach out to the different communities and bring people together, allowing them to think freely, speak out, create new projects, and make the world a better place. This section showcases projects that range from engaging the Lebanese community with its public spaces, preserving traditional music in Mauritania, supporting craftsmen in Morocco, to launching various art and music festivals and promoting Arab culture.



Zakharief in Motion, Nomads Dance Camp

Amira Al-Shanf, A Love Song to Socotra Island

Doa Ali, Deer in the Headlights, Invisible Public Art Commission



AFAC Gala Dinner, Beirut 2015

Summary of the Year



Bar Farouk, AFAC Gala Dinner, Beirut 2015

2015 was another busy and fruitful year for AFAC. In our 9th year of operation, we moved offices from Hamra to Gemmayze in Beirut, hosted a successful cultural week in New York and one in Egypt, and conducted a field trip to Sudan while we carried on with our core grant-making work. Our grantees continue to produce bold and impactful projects that go on to win prestigious prizes at international film festivals, a typical example would be Silvered Water, Syria Self-Portrait which received the Prince Claus Award. Another project that was celebrated at festivals around the world is Ely Dagher's Waves '98, the Palme d'Or laureate for Best Short Film at the closing ceremony of the 68th Cannes Film Festival. The AFAC-supported 15-minute animated short is the first Lebanese film to win the Palme d'Or at the Festival (Maroun Baghdadi was awarded the Jury Prize for Out of Life in 1991) and the second Arab film in the festival's history to win a Palme d'Or (after Chronicle of the Years of Fire by Lakhdar Hamina in 1975).

Grants

In addition to our General Grants, we continued with our three Special Programs, the 2nd round of the AFAC Novel Writing Program (ANWP) and the Arab Documentary Photography Program (ADPP), and the 3rd round of the AFAC Documentary Program (ADP), while finalizing projects from the Crossroads program. The total applications received in 2015 were 1229 with 139 grantees selected, receiving about 2 million USD for grants with half a million USD for professional support.

Advocacy

This year, AFAC produced the Arab Creativity and Entrepreneurship Fund book. Published on April 15th 2015, the book includes the list of beneficiaries, interviews with the 50 grantees and people impacted by their projects, as well as an assessment of the overall performance of the Fund through a pre-defined set of 14 indicators. A Cultural Week was organized in New York with the support of the Ford Foundation and in partnership with a number of organizations (MoMA, Magnum Foundation, Photoville, Artists Space) and both AFAC's work and grantees gained in visibility and exposure to a new audience. AFAC also benefited from a substantial amount of coverage in the press and was featured in a number of television interviews on local and regional outlets prior to and at the end of the yearly gala dinner in Beirut as well as during field visits. Two videos were commissioned in 2015 as part of our strategy in bringing forth compelling and touching narratives around the work of our grantees. The trailer that described the story of ADPP grantee Syrian photographer Omar Imam was shared extensively, creating positive feedback and going beyond raising awareness to achieving impact on donor's policy.

Philanthropy for the Arts

This year heralds new donors from the Arab region, the US and Europe into AFAC's Circle of Friends. We compiled data and published an infographic measuring outreach and impact, and produced our ACEF2014 publication. HSBC Private Bank continues to sponsor our events and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also joined AFAC's pool of multi-year donors. In terms of individual donations, we achieved 90% of our target for the ACEF fund 2015 edition, in part driven by a gala dinner hosted by the Ford Foundation in our honor in New York and our own end-of-year gala dinner organized in Beirut. We have also reached the \$3million mark in part thanks to a five-year pledge made by three of our board members at \$100,000 each with others making smaller multiyear pledges. And we continue to lead the way in enabling the infrastructure for philanthropy in the Arab region, hosting a seminar in Lausanne with HSBC, as well as publishing info graphics measuring outreach and impact and publishing our ACEF2014 publication.



Outlook Year 2016

In 2016, AFAC will strengthen its institutional capabilities by establishing a new governance model, activating a number of committees and special working groups, reviewing and assessing the first ten years of operation, and developing a strategic plan for the next ten years. We will also look into developing a special trailer to present a glimpse of the multitude of impactful projects that have been funded by AFAC in the past ten years.

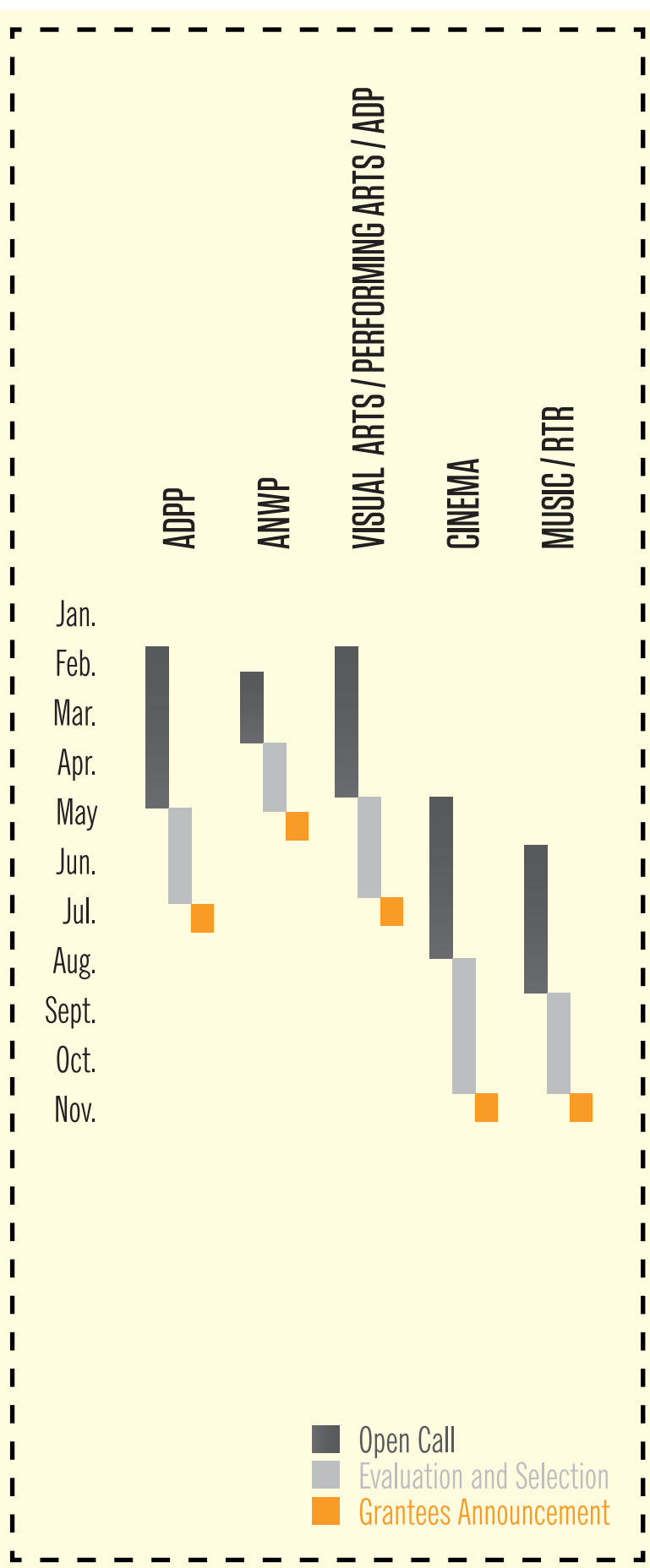
The grants schedule will be the same as in 2015, including the Annual General Grants program, the Arab Documentary Photography Program, the AFAC Documentary Program and the AFAC Novel Writing Program.

The 3rd edition of AFAC Film Week is planned to take place in Tunisia this year, with a potential collaboration and screenings in London. Outreach field trips are planned for Jordan and a series of fundraising events will also be underway in 2016 including an AFAC end of the year event in Kuwait.

News, stories and announcements will continue to be shared on AFAC's website and social media. Grantees Stories will be collected and published on a monthly basis and we will produce new trailers towards the end of 2016.



2015 Granting Schedule



AFAC General Grant

Performing Arts & Visual Arts

Open Call: February 1st

Close Call: May 1st

Announcement of Grantees: July 17th & 20th respectively

Cinema

Open Call: May 1st

Close Call: August 7th

Announcement of Grantees: November 24th

RTR and Music

Open Call: June 1st

Close Call: September 1st

Announcement of Grantees: November 24th

AFAC Special Programs

Arab Novel Writing Program - ANWP

Open Call: February 15th

Close Call: March 28th

Announcement of Grantees: May 7th

AFAC Documentary Program - ADP

Open Call: February 1st

Close Call: May 1st

Announcement of Grantees: July 22nd

Arab Documentary Photography Program - ADPP

Open Call: February 1st

Close Call: May 10th

Announcement of Grantees: July 7th

Statistics

Applications

TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS

1229 / 1299

2015

2014

402 / 634 / 192

Female

Male

Institutions

VISUAL ARTS

165 / 210

2015

2014

PERFORMING ARTS

130 / 146

MUSIC

104 / 118

RTR

178 / 141

CINEMA

329 / 220

SPECIAL PROGRAM APPLICANTS

AFAC DOCUMENTARY PROGRAM

63 / 81

AFAC DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM

108 / 84

AFAC NOVEL WRITING PROGRAM

152 / 283

APPLICANTS' GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD IN THE ARAB REGION

21 / 8 / 319 / 23 / 44 / 4 / 196

Algeria Bahrain Egypt Iraq Jordan Kuwait Lebanon

6 / 1 / 101 / 3 / 137 / 13 / 3 / 37

Libya Mauritania Morocco Oman Palestine KSA Somalia Sudan

118 / 67 / 4 / 26

Syria Tunisia UAE Yemen

NON-ARAB GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD

74 / 17 / 3 / 1

Europe North America Asia South America

Grantees

TOTAL NUMBER OF GRANTEES

143 / 132

2015

2014

44 / 69 / 30

Female

Male

Institutions

VISUAL ARTS

21 / 17

2015

2014

63 / 80

Emerging

Established

PERFORMING ARTS

17 / 16

47 / 61 / 35

Local impact

Regional

International

MUSIC

21 / 20

RTR

23 / 18

CINEMA

24 / 19

CROSSROADS

1 / 5

SPECIAL PROGRAM APPLICANTS

AFAC DOCUMENTARY PROGRAM

15 / 10

AFAC DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM

11 / 10

AFAC NOVEL WRITING PROGRAM

10 / 10

TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT

2.3 million

VISUAL ARTS

222.1 k

PERFORMING ARTS

221.6 k

MUSIC

254.4 k

RTR

384 k

CINEMA

431.1 k

CROSSROADS

119 k

SPECIAL PROGRAM APPLICANTS

AFAC DOCUMENTARY PROGRAM

283 k

AFAC DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM

150 k

AFAC NOVEL WRITING PROGRAM

244 k

GRANTEES' GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD IN THE ARAB REGION

6 / 21 / 4 / 6 / 33 / 15 / 16

Algeria

Egypt

Iraq

Jordan

Lebanon

Morocco

Palestine

2 / 1 / 6 / 19 / 7 / 1

KSA

Somalia

Sudan

Syria

Tunisia

Yemen

NON-ARAB GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD

6

The Annual General Grants

Yazan Khalili, *The Forgotten Ruins*



Established as a reliable resource for artists working in a variety of fields, AFAC's Annual General Grants Program has traditionally catered to six categories: Literature, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Cinema, Music and RTR (Research/Training/Regional events). Since 2014 and until the end of 2016, the Literature call is being replaced with the AFAC Novel Writing Program. We have distributed general grants to 102 projects this year out of about 1,000 general grants applicants.

Our annual open call for the General Grants program is announced on our website and social media platforms and through press releases to our extensive network of regional media.

Applications for general grant categories are received for duration of three-months at varying times in the year (February through April for Visual Arts and Performing Arts; May through July for Cinema and June through August for Music and RTR, or Research/Training/Regional Events).

AFAC's General Grant for Visual Arts supports painting, sculpting, photography, installations, audio-video arts and multi-media works of a contemporary and innovative nature. The grant can support exhibitions, visual arts book publications as well as art production.

AFAC's General Grant for Performing Arts is open to classical, folk and experimental theatre and dance performances from across the Arab region, including contemporary dance, public intervention performances, street arts and festivals. It also supports playwriting, acting, directing, dancing and choreography workshops.

AFAC's General Grant for Research/Training/Regional Events is open for projects in all fields of cultural production and gives AFAC the flexibility to support capacity-building workshops, residencies, artistic and cultural research, training projects, as well as regional events like festivals, competitions and cross-cultural collaborations.

AFAC's General Grant for Music is open to all kinds of music composition and production in the Arab world including classical, tarab, Arab folk music, hip hop, reggae, jazz, and fusion, electronic sound and Arabic alternative music. It offers funding for music conservatories, music production, collaborations, performances, album recordings and other musical projects. The grant also supports music archives, research, workshops, performances and festivals at local, inter-Arab and cross-cultural levels.

AFAC's General Grant for Cinema is open to all kinds of film projects – shorts, feature-length fiction and documentaries, animation and experimental. AFAC offers funding for development, production and post-production. Projects applying for a development grant are eligible for a maximum of \$10,000 while projects applying for a production/ postproduction grant are eligible for a maximum of \$50,000.



Dina Haddadin

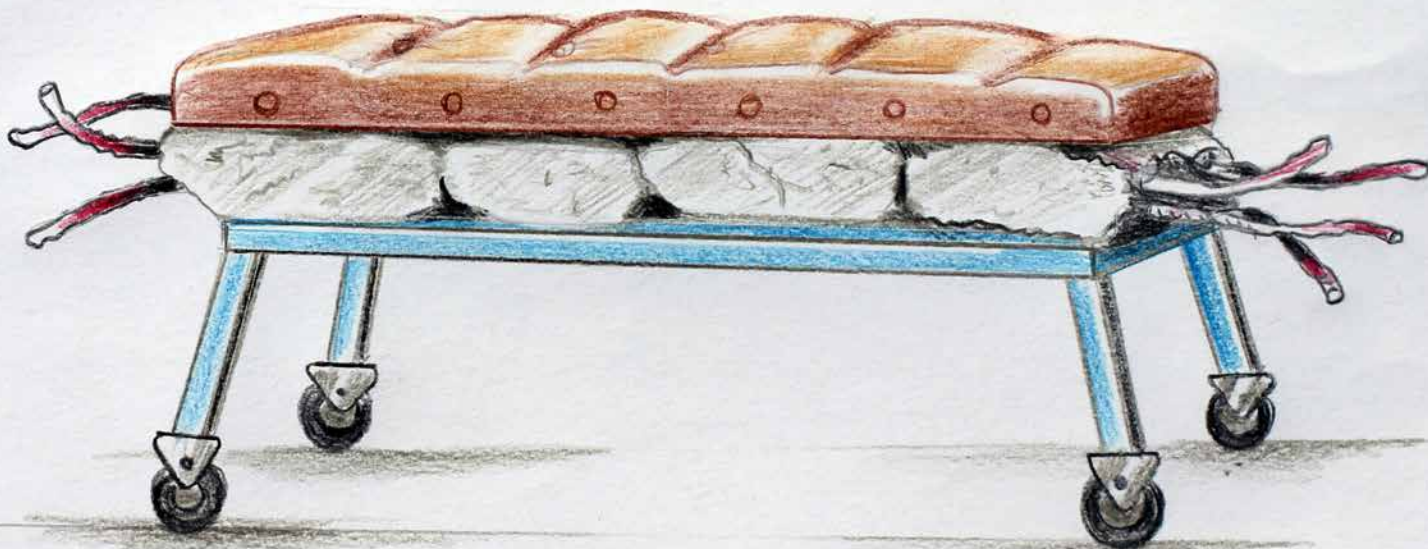


Grantee Mohanad Alyacoubi from Palestine on his “Off Frame” project:

“The quality and passion behind militant cinema challenges many film production notions in our days.”

Visual Arts

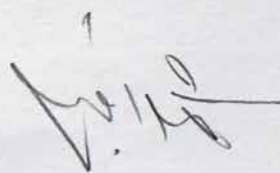
NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Mohammed El Makouti	The Body and the Space-time	Morocco
Kinda Hassan	The Tone So Prolonged-Interrupted	Lebanon
Lara Tabet	A Geography of Tears	Lebanon
Yazan Alkhalili	The Forgotten Ruins	Palestine
Dina Haddadin	Symphony of Absence - 861	Jordan
Fakhri Ghezal	The After	Tunisia
Ymane Fakhir	The Lion's Share	Morocco
Mohamed Abdelkarim	Dramatic Episodes about Locomotion	Egypt
Iyad Issa	Palestine Tracks	Palestine
Nour Bishouty	Not Dispersed but Assembled	Lebanon
Dalia Yassine	Dissect the Insects	Lebanon
Mohamed Adulla	Waiting for the Elephant to Alight on a Tree	Iraq
Abderrahmane Doukkane	Breath of an Arabian body	Morocco
Mohamed Abusal	PainFortable	Palestine
Inass Yassin	Sparkling City	Palestine
Imane Ibrahim	Symmetric, Isometric and Equivalent	Egypt
Medrar for Contemporary Art	Cairo Video Festival 7	Egypt
Eltiqa for Contemporary Art	Gaza for Contemporary Art Program	Palestine
Sefsafa for Arts Consultancy	Art Exhibition-Second Comics Week in Egypt	Egypt
Khaled Malas	Power to the People	Syria



The Visual Arts Jury Committee for 2015 included curator Reem Fadda (Palestine), artist Kader Attia (Algeria) and artist Marwan Rechmaoui (Lebanon).

Jury Statement

"We have found a tendency of works that tackle a similar trajectory of subjects and viewpoints. The plights of the Third world (not exclusive to Arabs) are presented through concepts of disappearance and change be it through immigration, transformations in the urban landscape, blockades, and of course tragedies of wars. We believe that to move responsibly forward in society, one should start critically from the self and not exclude it. Through the works of these artists, we felt we are leaving the materiality of the modern and concrete worlds to reclaim and capture the immaterial, through the digital, the gesture, the action, the book and the other manifolds of contained expression. We also looked towards the artists that advanced ideas and mechanisms to push the frontiers of art into a borderless terrain, where art intermingles responsibly with life, and where art and poetics become essentially integrated and useful to a society, be it as a wakeup call to our surroundings or a creative manual to show us how to improve it. We are proud to have selected applicants from a diverse variety of countries, and our selection was consciously gender-balanced, however, it's worthwhile to mention that merit in the end was the most important deciding factor based on all the above takeaways"

W/2015 

Projects' Synopsises



Mohammed El Makouti, *The Body and the Space-time*

Grantee: Mohammed El Makouti (Morocco)

Project title: The Body and Space-time

The project researches the relationship between time and place and aims to create a link between the real and the virtual world. It investigates how this impacts other society through the production of icons, sound, images and a three-dimensional video.

Grantee: Kinda Hassan (Lebanon)

Project title: The Tone So Prolonged - Interrupted

We are covered with impermeable skin and our eyes are turned outwards. How easy it is to forget what we are made of. Events of loss remind us that we are our body while our body isn't only our own. This work is an attempt to dialogue with the body intimately, unfolding ways in which it handles experiences of attachment and grief.



Kinda Hassan, *The Tone So Prolonged Interrupted*

Grantee: Lara Tabet (Lebanon)

Project title: Geography of Tears

The project explores the intersection between folk tales, superstition and a more scientific vision of the world. Loosely inspired by Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño's 2666, the artist ventures into a portrait of the outskirts of Beirut through photographing staged crime scenes of dead women, victims of a fictitious serial killer. The end result is a mixture of photography, video and chemigrams.

Grantee: Yazan Alkhalili (Palestine)

Project title: The Forgotten Ruins

This project hinges on a fictional scenario: a city that disappears in 2070 due to a collective decision by its inhabitants to leave and forget it. The idea is to investigate such political decision of forgetfulness by turning the present into an archival material for that imagined future. The installation tries to look at the current construction of Ramallah as a continuation of a previous destruction, as a city/project that symbolizes the neoliberal economy that is dominating Palestinian political statues.

Grantee: Dina Haddadin (Jordan)

Project title: Symphony of Absence 861

A public urban intervention, part of a larger on-going project titled "Island 861 How to disappear". A transient monument of nothingness, a spatial manifestation of urban political power, where the city betrayed its own inhabitants. The story is told in a Ammani neighborhood, representing the symbolic cleansing of a marginalized "informal" settlement.

Grantee: Ymane Fakhir (Morocco)

Project title: The Lion's Share

Dealing with the question of inheritance, one has to tackle issues of religion, power and territory. Another difficulty arises with Sharia Law. Undoubtedly, Muslim women are not treated as equals to men. The Lion's Share is a project that wants to question women's inheritance status according to Coranic Law in Morocco as a means to address broader gender issues within society.

Grantee: Fakhri Ghezal (Tunisia)

Project title: The After

This project is an immersion into the daily life of young people living on a construction site. It aims to produce a visual memory of those who remain hidden, who do not seek immortality. The project represents a search for an invisible intimacy and wants to portray a generation and its way of life, making them more visible day after day.

Grantee: Mohamed Abdelkarim (Egypt)

Project title: Dramatic Episodes about Locomotion

This project focuses on the terms "alienation" and "immigration" and investigates the historical connection between Mediterranean Europe and North Africa. The artist will be collecting stories about the corsairs and pirates that roamed the Mediterranean and Atlantic African coast and will investigate issues regarding political and cultural boundaries. The resulting body of research will be a performance that takes different narrative forms, literary, historical, storytelling.

Grantee: Iyad Issa (Palestine)

Project title: Palestine Tracks

This project aims at establishing new phase of the ongoing research, since 2011, regarding exploring the transformation of the Palestinian landscape [among Bilad al-sham]. Through tracing the Hedjaz Railways narratives, this phase will focus on producing a visual representation and investigating the Palestinian landscape's (natural, urban) transformation along the disused and vanished tracks. This research-based project is seen as a moment of reflection on the present geography of connection/disconnection in Palestine and the region.

Grantee: Dalia Yassin (Lebanon)

Project title: Dissect the Insects

By entering this Digital / Virtual Kingdom of thoughts and perceptions, sensations and states, we are confronted with the Surreal and multiple systems. This carousel of webbed devices and elements invade, creating spaces within spaces and, in consequence, multiple layers of experience, memory and encounters. The artist aims to re-conceptualize the relations between the natural and the social, between the biological and the cultural. Where does the body end and 'nonhuman nature' begin? What ethical or political positions emerge from the movement across human and more-than-human flesh? Insects are the main source of research, mainly small animals/organisms because of how they are 'programmed' and their 'more than human' characteristics.

Grantee: Mohamed Abdulla (Iraq)

Project title: Waiting for the Elephant to Alight on a Tree

This project addresses the pre-conceived notions of rural environment and habitat, generating a specific art/architectural installation using the rural landscape and its

different ecologic entanglements as a point of departure. It reflects on the potential of the rural environment to promote alternative perceptions and scenarios in the local rural landscape, using as a case study the model of an old coffee farm in southeastern Brazil.

Grantee: Inass Yassin (Palestine)

Project title: Sparkling City

This is an exhibition project that deals with the accelerating urban development in Beirut. It draws a black fantasy vision on the possible transformation of Daliet el Raouche as the last undeveloped shore in Ras Beirut. By re-affirming the need to keep the space free and open to the public, the project will contribute to the on-going debate about public spaces in the city.

Grantee: Khaled Malas (Syria)

Project title: Power to the People

This project is an act of creative resistance, one that takes power literally. In collaboration with a photographer and a blacksmith, the artist will be building a windmill in the besieged Damascus Ghouta to generate electricity. Representations of this windmill, its people and powers will be shown in an international gallery setting and a publication will be produced.



Grantee: Imane Ibrahim (Egypt)

Project title: Symmetric, Isometric and Equivalent

This project started as a question examining two notions: prison structures, infrastructures, construction, reconstruction and planning. The artist looks at how the human being relates to those two notions; the architect as creator, and the inmate as consumer, and the will of God among these.

Grantee: Medrar for Contemporary Art (Egypt)

Project title: Cairo Video Festival 7 and Cairo Video Festival Archive

Cairo Video Festival is an annual showcase of the latest most distinguished experimental films and video art from around the world, organized by Medrar for Contemporary Art. From 3 to 12 December 2015, the 7th edition of the festival will be held in different cultural venues around Cairo. Besides the screenings, the festival includes talks and workshops for local artists.¹⁷

Grantee: Eltiqa for Contemporary Art (Palestine)

Project title: Gaza for Contemporary Art Program

The first edition of this training program, consisting of seminars and workshops addressed to young Fine Artists in Gaza, was held in 2013. Over a period of 5 months, a selection and training process of beneficiaries culminated in a production of their art projects that were exhibited and their work and output was documented in a special book. The program aims to develop their artistic, individual and collective skills and plans to hold a number of meetings with regional and international artists through video conferences and break through the blockage imposed on Gaza.

Grantee: Sefsafa Culture and Publishing (Egypt)

Project title: Art exhibition during the Second Comics Week in Egypt

The project is a collective art exhibition for comic illustrations that aims to promote six comic book artists to the wider Egyptian public. Some of the artists that will be present at the Comics Week are: Mohammad Wehbeh Alshanawi, Amro Akasha, Isalm Shady, May Karim and Mohammad Toufic.

Grantee: Abderrahmane Doukkane (Morocco)

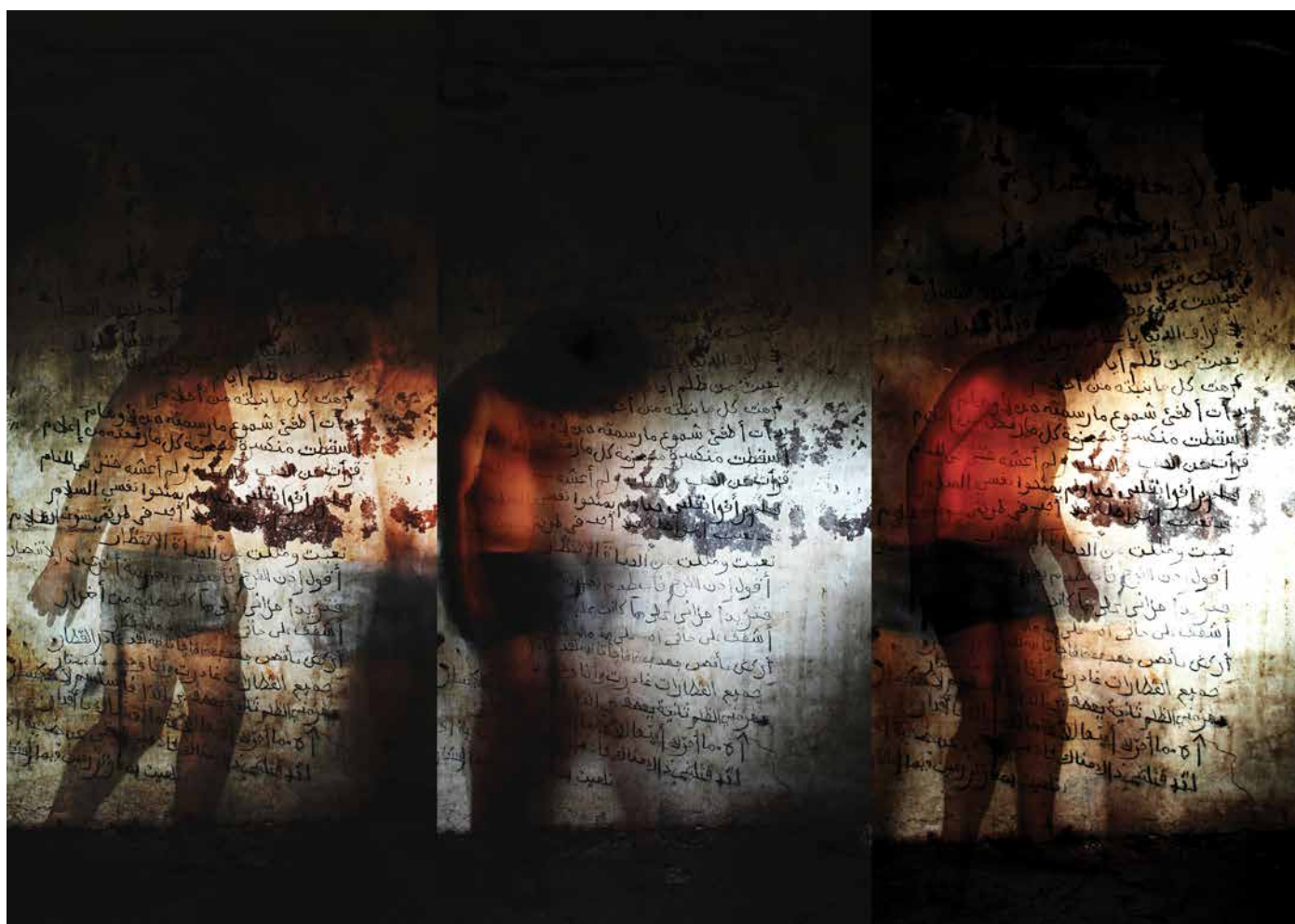
Project title: Breath of an Arabian body

In an Arab world caught in the turmoil of revolutions, a young generation is emerging with dreams of dignity and openness to the world. These revolutions pushed some communities towards democracy, the respect of the other and his freedom. This evolution will, no doubt, change our relation with power, religion and the components of our collective identity, including our relation with our body, which is a source of both pleasure and torture. The project consists of a collection of photographs that portrays the human condition in the Arab world; his soul, his body and his cry that should reverberate around the world.

Grantee: Mohamed Abusal (Palestine)

Project title: PainFortable

Through this research, the artist attempts to discover hope and virtual and physical comfort. He will be using solid remains from war torn houses and transforming them into usable, comfortable and lasting furniture; adding elements of comfort and luxury such as sponge, fancy leather, alloy wheels, crystal studding and other extracts.



Abderrahmane Doukkane, Breath Of An Arabian Body

Visual Arts Jurors



Kader Attia (Algeria)

Raised in two different cultures, Algeria and the suburbs of Paris, Attia uses this experience as a starting point to develop a dynamic practice that reflects on aesthetics and ethics of different cultures. For several years, his research focuses on the concept of Repair, as a constant in Human Nature, of which the modern Western Mind and the traditional extra-Occidental Recent exhibitions include "The Injuries are Here" a solo show at the Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts de Lausanne, 'Continuum of Repair: The Light of Jacob's Ladder', a solo show at Whitechapel Gallery, London, 'Construire, Déconstruire, Reconstruire: Le Corps Utopique', a solo show at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 'Performing Histories (1)' at MoMA, New York, and 'Contested Terrains', Tate Modern, London.

Marwan Rechmaoui (Lebanon)

Lives and works in Beirut. Deriving inspiration from the geography and rich cultural history of Beirut, Rechmaoui's work often reflects themes of urbanization and contemporary social and behavioral demographics. He uses industrial materials such as concrete, rubber, tar and glass to create tactile works on a large scale. Rechmaoui's tentatively titled Seven Pillars of Wisdom (2014-ongoing) keeps the theme of deconstruction/reconstruction with an installation of domestic objects – various materials collected from crumbled ruins of a residential building – embedded in a concrete pillar; a basic structural element in urban architecture. The project will have its first public display in the 2015 Istanbul Biennial.

Reem Fadda (Palestine)

A curator and art historian, Fadda joined the Guggenheim Foundation in 2010 as Associate Curator, Middle Eastern Art, Abu Dhabi Project. She was previously Director of the Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA) and Academic Director to the International Academy of Art – Palestine in Ramallah, which she helped found in 2006. She curated many international exhibitions and projects especially those pertaining to art, architecture and geopolitics in the Middle East, such as Tarjama/Translation (New York); 3rd Riwaq Biennale (Ramallah); Emirati Expressions (Abu Dhabi). She was appointed the Curator for the National Pavilion of the United Arab Emirates of the 55th Venice Biennale, 2013. She is currently the Curator of 6th edition of the Marrakech Biennale.

Grantee Zakharef in Motion, Dina Abu Hamdan from Jordan on the "Nomads' Dance Camp & Dewan Symposium":

“Young people with dreams need to be seen. Too often, they are in isolation.”



Performing Arts

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Ezzat Ezzat	Belbaladi	Egypt
Danya Hammoud	To Rest on a Slope	Lebanon
Farah Saleh	Gesture from the First Intifada	Palestine
Dina Mousawi	Terrestrial Journeys	Iraq
Taoufiq Izeddiou	En Alerte	Morocco
Samar King	Min Tala	Palestine
Mithkal Alzghair	Displacement	Syria
Khoulood Yassine	Heroes-Surface of Revolution	Lebanon
Hind Oudrhiri	Haouma_Urban stories from Casablanca	Morocco
Lina Abyad	Vertical or Horizontal?	Lebanon
Oussama Ghanam	Glass	Syria
Omar Abusaada	Coma	Syria
Espace Darja	Khatwa	Morocco
Zakharef in Motion	Nomads Dance Camp	Jordan
ASSABIL – Friends of Public Libraries Association	Horsh Beirut Festival performance	Lebanon
Zoukak Theatre Company	Death Comes Through the Eyes	Lebanon

The Performing Arts Jury Committee for 2015 included director and cultural manager Ahmed Al Attar (Egypt), artist Hussein Baydoun (Lebanon) and curator Nedjma Hadj Benchalabi (Algeria)

Jury Statement

“This year’s Performing Arts applications featured a predominance of contemporary dance projects, which in our opinion is a strong indicator to the development and growing interest in this field across the region. The topics addressed by the grantees ranged from the difficult conditions of refugees, to the situation of women in society and to political engagement and activism. This, in a nutshell, is a reflection of the main issues that concern the young generations of artists today and a representation of their legitimate struggle to find a place and support for their work with their audiences.”



Projects' Synopsis

Grantee: Ezzat Ezzat (Egypt)

Project title: Belbaladi

This project seeks to uncover and share the beauty of Cairo through the personal experience of an artist/architect living in Cairo. The artist aims to develop a particular and authentic Egyptian style of dance by using different gestures, Shaabi/baladi dance movements mixed with Maharganat Music, to highlight the modern Egyptian Culture.

Grantee: Danya Hammoud (Lebanon)

Project title: To Rest on a Slope

Making visible the tensions of the "becoming mad" in its physical state phases. Violence, one of the reasons of the "Madness" is not represented here on stage by acts or verbs, but through uncovering and revealing other forms of violence, hidden in the details of our gestures, of our gaze and in our various distances in relation to the "other".

Grantee: Farah Saleh (Palestine)

Project title: Gestures from the First Intifada

The project will investigate how dancers can contribute to change by exploring social and political memories. The artist will attempt to archive a whole array of gestures and movements of the First Intifada, which are often left out of mainstream Palestinian narratives, through reenacting, analyzing and commenting the movements of a specific latent story that took place in Birzeit University, through a dance video installation.

Grantee: Taoufiq Izaddiou (Morocco)

Project title: En alerte

This new solo is a choreographic testimony by Taoufiq Izaddiou, retelling his spiritual journey through today's realities and vulnerabilities. "En Alerte" is a dance solo on the human's natural attraction towards the divine, an attraction that can either result in the blossoming of the soul or the explosion of the self. The creation focuses on individual and collective memory, voices and religion, all of them resulting from Taoufiq's own questioning of spirituality's importance in today's society.

Grantee: Samar King (Palestine)

Project title: Min Tala

Min Tala is a pan-Arab dance company born from the dreams of Arab dance artists who yearn to work together in a collective free from the confinement of borders. Led by three artistic directors and with a core team of ten performers, min tala is determined to create new dance/theatre productions that will tour regionally and internationally.

Grantee: Mithkal Alzghair (Syria)

Project title: Displacement

In this project the artist examines the identity of the Syrian Body in the complicated context of revolution, migration and wars. Through poetry, the artist creates a distance with the aim of overlooking the grim reality and making the Human visible again. Through his own stories, the artist talks the people who are directly affected by war.

Grantee: Khoulood Yassine (Lebanon)

Project title: Heroes- Surface of Revolution

At the intersection of presence and absence the artist creates her trajectory; she questions her image, toys with her authority, creates her victory and witnesses her own fall in a world abundant with heroes. Watching fragile bodies and feeling their ineptness in a world filled with the strong, the artist emphasizes our weakness in a world so full of images that it gets drained from meaning, she challenges the image with presence and the presence with absence.

Grantee: Hind Oudrhiri (Morocco)

Project title: Houma_urban stories from Casablanca

A performance that combines contemporary dance, video, sound effects and narration, in an attempt to simulate life in Casablanca. The stories, collected from a resident of this city, come together to create a character embodied by an artist. This character illustrates the relations between individuals and the city they inhabit.

Grantee: Lina Abyad (Lebanon)

Project title: Vertical or Horizontal?

Two retired people spend most of their days in a coffee shop solving crossword puzzles and contemplating what is happening around them. One of the individuals likes to engage everybody with a joke while the second one has a more solemn demeanor. We discover little by little their slow retreat from life but without really surrendering to fate.

Grantee: Dina Mousawi (Iraq)

Project title: Terrestrial Journeys

Terrestrial Journeys is a six-week theatre project consisting of daily practical workshops culminating in a site-specific cross-platform performance. Drawing on their collective experiences of migration, a group of actors and creative people will work collaboratively to devise an interactive theatrical event through improvisation, text, movement, film and stage design.



Grantee: Oussama Ghanam (Syria)

Project title: Glass

Damascus in the final year, beautiful, fragile and transparent like glass. In a small house inhabited by a family of three, four destinies intertwine: the mother that refuses the present in the name of the past, the daughter refuses it in the name of all things fragile, the son refuses it in the name of contemporary cinema. In order to face this ambiguous present, to escape it, to indulge in it, the family invites a "realistic" young man for dinner.

Grantee: Omar Abusaada (Syria)

Project title: Coma

Based on recordings, obtained from several hospitals in Damascus, of several coma patients since the end of 2013, this multimedia theatrical show seeks to examine the nature of coma. It takes us in a virtual journey across the several worlds of a coma patient who hangs in the margin between life and death. Within those margins, this project seeks to enter and discover, looking for the right artistic expressions that can portray this exceptional situation.

Grantee: Espace Darja (Morocco)

Project title: Khatwa

A summer school of arts will offer four one-week modules to a group of young teenagers from the popular neighborhood of Hay Mohammadi in Casablanca. With choreography at the core of the project, each module will tackle this art in parallel with other disciplines such as dance and slam, video, graphics and sound; the program will also connect its participants with established artists from various fields.



Oussama Ghanam, *Glass*

Performing Arts Jurors



Ahmed Al Attar (Egypt)

An award-winning Egyptian independent theatre director, translator, playwright and cultural manager. He is founder and General Manager of Studio Emad Eddin Foundation a unique project, offering rehearsals and training spaces to independent artists in the field of performing arts in Egypt. El Attar is also the founder and the artistic director of Orient Productions, the Temple Independent Theatre Company and the D-CAF (Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival). He is also the artistic director of the Falaki theatre in Cairo. El Attar has a BA in Theatre from the American University in Cairo (1992) and an MA in Arts and Cultural Management from Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle (2001).

Hussein Baydoun (Lebanon)

A set designer and visual artist based in Beirut, Baydoun's work is characterized by an architectural approach and a number of collaborations with artists such as Issam Bou Khaled, Ahmed El Attar and Sawsan Bou Khaled. His work has been shown at numerous festivals most notably Berlin Festeshpile, Piccolo teatro di Milano, the Theatrical Days of Carthage, Europa festival in Lisbon and in Das der Welt in Berlin. His current projects are 3000 nights with Mai Masri and Une Histoire de Fou with Robert Guédiguian.

Nedjma Hadj Benchelabi (Algeria)

An Algerian curator, dramaturge and documentary filmmaker based in Brussels. Benchelabi has been a programmer at the European Cultural Centre, Les Halles since 2009 where she initiated a program on Contemporary Literature and Performing arts of the Arab world. In 2013, she was associate curator of Daba Maroc the artistic contemporary Moroccan season in Belgium. Recently, she was associate curator of On Marche 10 edition the International Contemporary Dance Festival of Marrakech. Currently, Benchelabi is developing a project of Mediterranean Cultural Network, focusing on a training program for the young generation with cultural operators from MENA region and Europe.

Grantee Samar Hazboun from Palestine on her “Beyond Checkpoints: Palestinian Women Giving Birth at Military Checkpoints” project:

“I want people to know, I want a change in policy, I want an end to checkpoints, I want an end to all these restrictions, be it on women, children or Palestinians in general.”



RTR (Research/Training/Regional Events)

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Amani Amin	Arabworldbooks.com upgrade Preserving our Past Modernizing for our Future	Egypt
Waguih El Laqany	Cima Masr	Egypt
Lynn Kodeih	Polycephaly #1	Lebanon
Khalil Almozian	Shofona	Palestine
Abdessamad EL Montassir	Geographic Distances	Morocco
Hala Bizri	Mersal	Lebanon
Rasha Salti	Past Disquiet: Narratives and Ghosts from the International Art Exhibition for Palestine, 1978	Lebanon
Eka3	Almoharek	Egypt
AIN	In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country	France
Sud Ecriture	SUD ECRITURE WORKSHOP N°31	Tunisia
Rawiya Collective	Workshop for photographers in Gaza	Lebanon
EAC L'BOULVART	L'boulevard Festival - 17th édition	Morocco
Animation 8	Ultrashort	Egypt
Mahatat for Contemporary Art	Tales of Community Art and Art in Public Space in the Arab World	Egypt
Birzeit University Museum	The Best of All Possible Gazas	Palestine
Festival On Marche	Al Mokhtabar III	Morocco
Ma3mal 612 Think Factory	Cinema Transport	Jordan
Orient Productions for Film and Theatre	The 2nd Arab Arts Focus, Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival 5th edition	Egypt
Alsharee for Media	Syrian Mobile Film Festival 3rd Edition	Turkey
Contemporary Image Collective	Visibility	Egypt



The RTR Jury Committee for 2015 included curator Alma Salem (Syria), curator Khadija El Bennaoui (Morocco) and architect and researcher Sandi Hilal (Palestine).

Jury Statement

"We are excited about the diversity of the projects' proposals reflecting innovative artistic practices, engaged with social and political issues, and pushing the boundaries of knowledge in the arts.

In a turbulent and vulnerable context, our choice was driven by an ambition to make a balance between projects reflecting the rich yet complex realities, while valuing contemporary esthetics and quality.

In a vibrant arts scene thriving to overcome its multiple challenges, the selected projects offer alternative narratives to the mainstream and stereotypes. We believe that AFAC will contribute in strengthening the position of leading cultural actors to have a bigger regional and international influence."

Projects' Synopsis

Grantee: Amani Amin (Egypt)

Project title: Preserving our past Modernizing for our Future
Founded in March 1998, Arab World Books is the first Arab cultural online club. We have accumulated a wealth of cultural products and information from different Arab countries and generations of writers. The website is visited by many readers and researchers around the globe but technology evolves and after seventeen years, there is a need to preserve this information as well as modernize the website for the future.

Grantee: Waguih El Laqany (Egypt)

Project title: Cima Masr

"Cima Masr" is a screening program and initiative from "Cinema everywhere", it aims to organize 20 screening nights, during which, 40 short films between fiction, documentary and experimental will be projected in 20 different alternative venues in Egypt.

Grantee: Lynn Kodeih (Lebanon)

Project title: Polycephaly#1

Polycephaly's inaugural forum is a joint research project concerned with questions surrounding making art in times of war and giving life in times of death. Beginning from questions around violence and its representation, our research explores the possibility and/or impossibility of creating artworks that fall neither into the categories of object-making for gallery spaces, nor activism in a semi-public realm.

Grantee: Khalil Almozian (Palestine)

Project title: Shofona

The project's main idea is based on making children, who aged 13-15 years, express their thoughts and develop their skills. In addition it focuses on highlighting their main problems and circumstances in different ways through producing a group of short documentary and feature films in which they will be filming and directing without any external interference on the children's thoughts or views. The children will benefit from guidance and supervision.

Grantee: Abdessamad El Montassir (Morocco)

Project title: Geographic Distances

Geographic Distances is an artist residency project located in Boujdour. The program invites artists and participants to investigate the relationship between public space and cultural practices within the concept of resistance, and to use it as the framing concept for the residency. Furthermore, the program is mainly a solicitation to think about, experience, and research the collective memory of the local Sahrawi community. It is also a platform where Boujdour writers and various artists of southern backgrounds are urged to think collectively about this resistance concept.



Abdessamad El Montassir, *Geographic Distances*



Grantee: Hala Bizri (Lebanon)

Project title: Mersal

Mersal is an electronic quarterly critical Arab magazine, specialized in children's books issued in Lebanon and other Arab countries, and in book activity dedicated to children. The magazine's critical reviews are written by librarians and activists in the field of children's literature, along with others individuals who have a critical look at the subject. Concerned people who directly contribute in the making of children's book include writers, painters, and publishers of essays or interviews.

Grantee: Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti (Lebanon)

Project title: Past Disquiet: Narratives and Ghosts from the International Art Exhibition for Palestine, 1978

Excavating the history of and around the International Art Exhibition for Palestine (Beirut, 1978), Past Disquiet is an archival and documentary exhibition that proposes a speculative history of politically engaged artistic and museographic practices associated with the international anti-imperialist solidarity movement of the 1970s. The grant will enable completion of the research and the showcase of the exhibition in Paris.

Grantee: Eka3 (Egypt)

Project title: Almoharek

Networking plan during 2016 to participate in 6 major festivals, showcases and trade fairs by the name of the newly launched agency (Almoharek) to enhance the role of promoting Arab talents and musicians.

Grantee: Ain (France)

Project title: In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country

The project is situated in between contemporary art and social /political debates, through a series of screenings and talks. Greek and Syrian artists, activists and researchers will share thoughts, methods, and skills to analyze, intervene and create new approaches within the current drastic transformations both countries are going through. Beirut and Athens would be the platforms to organize such encounters.

Grantee: Sud Ecriture (Tunisia)

Project title: Sud Ecriture Workshop n.31

Sud ecriture is a training workshop for authors of a first or second script from the Arab world (Maghreb and Middle East) and Africa. The aim is for them to sense the weaknesses and strengths of their scripts and work on them and to acquire skills for their entire career.

Grantee: Rawiya Collective (Lebanon) **Project title:** Workshop for photographers in Gaza

In one of the most hyper narrated places on earth, narrated mostly by others, Rawiya collective in collaboration with World Press Photo Academy will offer a workshop to photographers in Gaza to strengthen their ability to push their own visual narrative depicting life in Gaza, and to empower them as young professionals striving to succeed in a complete job market.

Grantee: EAC L'Boulevard (Morocco)

Project title: L'boulevard Festival-17th edition

L'boulevard is a 10 days yearly festival of alternative and urban music. It is set around a spring board for young local bands and talents, musical projects and residencies, street art murals and international bands programming 92000 people assist to 40 gigs with more than 50 national and international bands from around 10 invited countries. In parallel, several trainings are planned, a magazine called Kounache is edited and a web-radio broadcasts programs during the festival.

Grantee: Animation 8 (Egypt)

Project title: Ultrashort

A professional and advanced workshop training for the manufacturing of very short movies that do not exceed 180 seconds (3 minutes) without the opening credits. It allows an intensive and advanced acquaintance of the principles of the fields related to the short movie industry. Many short movies will be created by the trainees who will invest all the work in the process. Therefore they will film the movies and prepare them to be screened in the relevant international and local festivals.

Grantee: Mahatat for Contemporary Art (Egypt)

Project title: Tales of Community Art and Art in Public space in the Arab World

"Tales of Community Art and Art in Public Space in the Arab World" is a three-day conference that strives to bring together Artistic Knowledge and Expertise from all over the Arab region, and harvest the creative experience in order to create a concrete and comprehensive guide for information about public art and community art movements in the Arab World.

Grantee: The Best of All Possible Gazas (Palestine)

Project title: Birzeit University Museum

A joint collaborative student research project aimed at unpacking the politics of destruction and reconstruction vis-à-vis the re-invention of a new Gaza. Partners are the International Academy of Art Palestine, Al-Quds Bard College, Campus in Camps, Birzeit University- Department of Architecture and finally Windows Studio and Eltiqa Group from Gaza.

Grantee: Festival On Marche (Morocco)

Project title: Al Mokhtabar III

Al Mokhtabar is a contemporary dance training program for young artists from Morocco and open to the MENA region. Al Mokhtabar is a platform that allow young artist to become the prime player of their own artistic practice and contributes in connecting various disciplines such as circus, physical theatre and urban dances.

Grantee: Ma3mal 612-Think Factory (Jordan)

Project title: Cinema Transport

The project is a series of film screenings that discuss the theme of Syrian and Palestinian refugees (Human Rights films), presented over the course of 2 days: 1st day in Amman, 2nd day in Beirut. The program includes screenings of short, medium-length, documentary and feature films, as well as discussions following the screening sessions.

Grantee: Orient Productions for film and theatre (Egypt)

Project title: The 2nd Arab Arts Focus, Downtown

Contemporary Arts Festival 5th edition
D-CAF offers a diverse program of independent cultural productions, workshops and discussions each year. In 2014, D-CAF ran the first Arab Arts Focus, hosting 30 international programmers from prestigious cultural institutions. In 2016, D-CAF would like to run a 2nd focus, including a stronger program of established and emerging Arab artists from across disciplines and hosting over 50 international programmers.

Grantee: Alsharee for Media (Turkey)

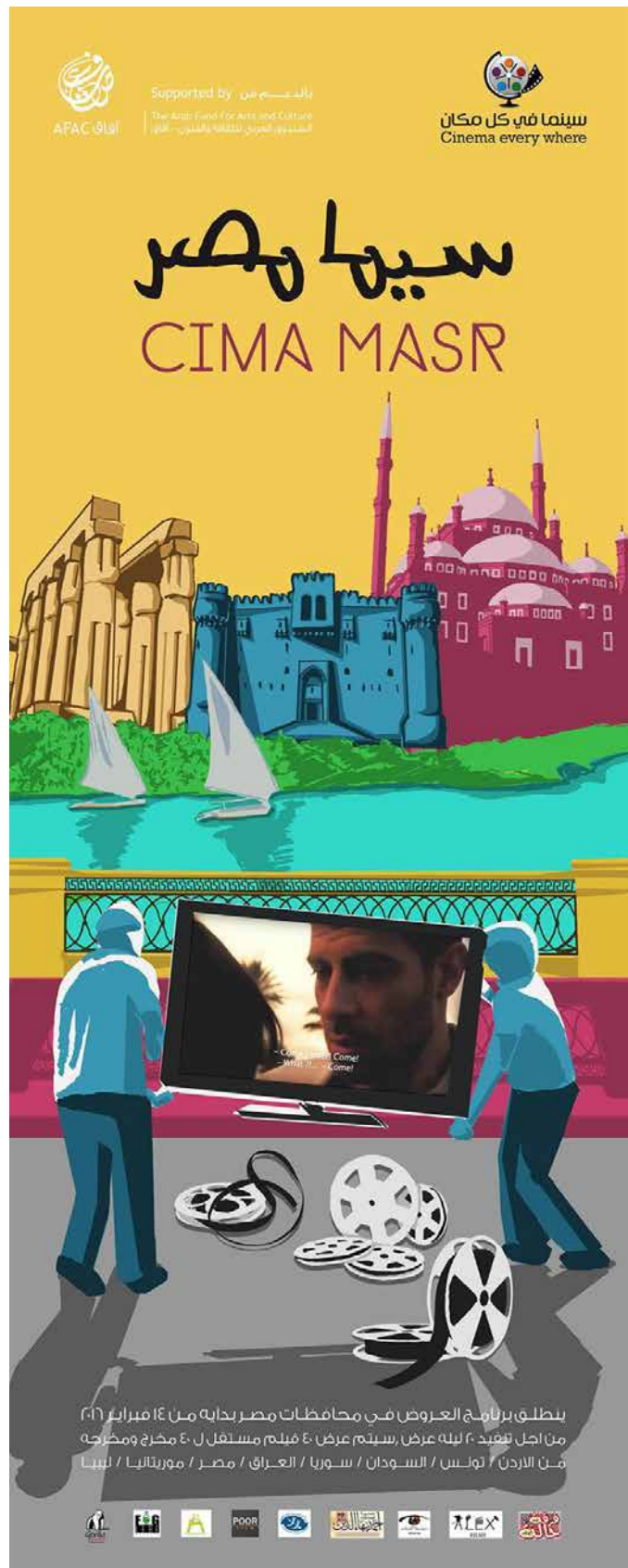
Project title: Syrian Mobile Film Festival 3rd Edition

The Syrian Mobile Film Festival in its 3rd edition seeks to expand its platform by enhancing its online presences to reach all activists, including those in the most difficult of areas. This year the Syrian Mobile Film Festival will produce an online resource guide and training videos in Arabic, as well as hold limited time viewings of these filmmakers' productions.

Grantee: Contemporary Image Collective (Egypt)

Project title: Visibility

Throughout the year leading up to the next issue of the PhotoCairo Festival in depth research and a series of workshops will explore the theme of the festival and develop diverse contributions to it. This preliminary phase aims to provide a more sustainable circulation of relevant content in preparation and during the festival and opens it up to a wider circle of artists and related practitioners.



RTR

Jurors



Alma Salem (Syria)


Alma is an independent curator and cultural advisor with 20 years of knowledge and expertise in producing hundreds of cultural projects across all Arts forms. Her expertise range between International Cultural Relations, Heritage protection, Visual and Performing Arts; Cultural leadership and Entrepreneurship, and a recent focus on Arts in development and in Conflict... She sits on the advisory boards of many cultural and social development institutions and initiatives in the region and beyond. She is recognized among the MENA artistic community as a cultural activist, lobbying and campaigning for the peaceful artistic movement, calling for artistic freedom of expression, advocating for artists rights, for the role of Arts in development and communities positive change, in conflict resolution and peace building, and for the growth and expansion of the global creative economies. Among others; she contributed to the making of the first Aerial Atlas of Levant, the installation of the Syrian European Archaeology Exhibition at the IMA (Institut du Monde Arabe). She also curated the touring exhibition entitled ' Syria Third Space' showcasing the new works of Syrian artists in times of conflict, launched in London in January 2015, at The European parliament building in Brussels in June 2015 ' and will be in Geneva in March 2016.

Khadija El Bannaoui (Morocco)

Researcher, producer and curator with focus on the global south. She has worked in the last 15 years on programs related to providing funding, improving work conditions of independent contemporary artists and building capacities of cultural practitioners in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, for a variety of international organizations such as Young Arab Theatre Fund, Art Moves Africa, Arterial Network, Mimeta ...etc. She has been appointed in February 2015 as the artistic leader of Vooruit arts center in Ghent (Belgium). Khadija studied Arabic literature, cultural management and policies and has an artist background in theatre. She was born and raised in Agadir (Morocco). She currently works and lives in Ghent.

Sandi Hilal (Palestine)

She is an architect and researcher. She headed the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Camp Improvement Program in the West Bank (2008-2014). She is founding member and co-director of DAAR, an architectural office and an artistic residency program that combines conceptual speculations and architectural interventions. DAAR was awarded the Price Claus Prize for Architecture, the Foundation for Arts initiative Grant, shortlisted for the Iakov Chernikhov Prize and showed in various biennales and museums around the world (www.decolonizing.ps). Alongside research and practice, Hilal is engaged in critical pedagogy, she is the founding member of Campus in Camps an experimental educational program in Dheisheh refugee camp Bethlehem (www.campusincamps.ps). Hilal is co-authored the book *Architecture after Revolution* (Sternberg, Berlin 2014) an invitation to rethink today's struggles for justice and equality not only from the historical perspective of revolution, but also from that of a continued struggle for decolonization. She co-curated different research projects on the contemporary urban condition such as *Border devices* (2002-2007) with *Multiplicity*, and *Stateless Nation* with *Alessandro Petti* (2002-2007). Her projects have been published in national and international newspapers and magazines: the New York Times, Il Manifesto, Al Ayyam, Al- Quds, Art Forum and Archis. She has been invited to lectures in several institutions and universities among others: Tate modern London, Columbia University, University of Exeter, American University of Beirut, University of London, Global Art Forum Dubai, Bard College University New York.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark blue short-sleeved top and dark pants, is sitting on a dark, round object. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Behind her are several tall, green cacti with yellowish tips. The background is a bright, slightly blurred outdoor setting with some green foliage.

Grantee Sara Ouhammadou from Morocco on her “Entre 2” project:

“After facing initial resistance, you somehow end up reaching your goal and in the process, the artisans’ minds change, the way they look at their craft and at their technique changes – everything changes.”

Music

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Maias Alyamani	10 years journey	Syria
Abdullah Al Miniawy	Trumpoet	Egypt
Emad Mabrouk	Nowhere online Music Festival	Egypt
Samer Eldahr	Toyour	Syria
Yazan Alhajari	Prophet of Glass	Syria
Khaled Soubeih	Al Rahel Al Kabir Band	Lebanon
Donna Khalife	Heavy Dance	Lebanon
Ary Sarhan	Life	Syria
Mehdi Nassouli	Hommage a Troudant	Morocco
Wael Kodeih	Gharam wa Intiqam	Lebanon
Hela Belhadj Ali	Tasswera	Tunisia
Ahmad Nazmi	Shams	Egypt
Hannibal Saad	Global Week for Syria	Syria
Anyar	Visa For Music	Morocco
European Egyptian Contemporary Music Society	At present	Germany
Haifa Media & Art	Uttar From Ghaza	Palestine
Goethe Institute Sudan	SAMA Music Festival	Sudan
Choir Of London	Palestine Choral Festival	United Kingdom
Irab	The Lebanese Divas of the Forties	Lebanon
Radio Beirut	The Shoreline Sessions Music Festival 2016	Lebanon



The Music Jury Committee for 2015 included artist Ghalia Ben Ali (Tunisia), artist Tamer Abu Ghazaleh (Palestine) and music composer Lubnan Baalbaki (Lebanon).

Jury Statement

“With much concern, the examining committee studied and evaluated the submitted projects for the year 2015. The committee noted that, this year, the applications coming from Syria and Lebanon were the most dominant in terms of quantity and artistic value. Part of them tried to express musically the social and psychological situation of the individual living in these 2 areas, while other musical projects coming from Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Egypt and other countries reflected the diversity and variety in musical styles and themes, some of them are documental and aspire for heritage conservation. Others wanted to rearrange what is old in a modern style, and finally, the experimental and innovative musical projects... all this indicates that the Arab music scene is vibrant and rich. After a long and in-depth discussion, the committee selected 21 projects. We were keen to support those projects capable of continuity, whether they are individual or institutional. From albums with different musical styles, to musical festivals in various Arab countries, being encouraged to interact among many music groups, as well as to meet and exchange experiences.”

Projects' Synopsis



Grantee: Maias Alyamani (Syria)

Project title: 10 Years Journey

2016 marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of "Makam", a musical group formed by 5 musicians (from Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Hungary). The project will record and produce the works presented by "Makam" since its foundation until now.

Grantee: Abdullah Al Miniawy (Egypt)

Project title: Trumpoet

Trumpoet is an attempt to represent the Egyptian countryside in a modern music way. The project starts from the fields of the city of Fayoum in Kiman Fares till Bani Soueif, passing by Al-Minia and Al Mansoura. It is also an attempt to take out the countryside music from its conventional shape, and use electronic devices and the trumpet to represent the farmers' labor and effort.

Grantee: Emad Mabrouk

Project title: Nowhere Online Music Festival

"Nowhere online Music Festival" aims to overcome the usual obstacles in organizing art festivals, obstacles that are always determined by limited spatial, temporal and material dimensions. The project is working to organize a cultural and artistic event through various online platforms, and invites musicians from Egypt and the Arab world, along with a number of countries participating in the festival, present their art works, and organize lectures online, allowing us to archive them on the Internet.

Grantee: Samer Eldahr (Syria)

Project title: Toyour

Toyour, a conceptual album, the tracks will be creative interpretations inspired by the themes and concerns of birds. Hello Psychaleppo, a music project started in Aleppo in 2012, gained momentum and attention when Samer released his next album in Beirut. These albums founded the new music genre, ElectroTarab, which combines electronic music and innovation with Arabic heritage music. Hello Psychaleppo's music has been described as "alternately danceable and cathartic, melancholic and apocalyptic". Hello Psychaleppo's envisioned album, Toyour, seeks to create an experience restricted to tracks related to the bird theme. The artist was inspired by the book Conference of the Birds, by Fareed Al Deen Al Attar that pushed him to research and experiment with bird related songs.

Grantee: Yazan Al-Hajri (Syria)

Project title: A Prophet of Glass

The project is a collection of songs varying in themes and musical styles that deal with experiences I have lived before and others I am living now in foreign land. The project is a musical biography.

Grantee: Khaled Soubeih (Lebanon)

Project title: Al Rahel Al Kabir Band

A musical and lyrical compilation that will be recorded by singers and musicians who participated in the group's concerts presented over the past two years, along with 4 or 5 additional musicians to empower the musical arrangement in some of the songs and pieces, most of which are new musical and lyrical pieces in terms of lyrics and musical composing. In addition to some recovered pieces from the heritage, but with a radical modification on the melody structure.

Grantee: Donna Khalife (Lebanon)

Project title: Heavy Dance

Heavy dance is about this density in everyday life today, in our city loaded by events, actions, emotions... Making it sometimes fluid and sometimes heavy, hard to carry... It's a debut album and a continuous personal research in music, taking risks in a world that tends to lightness, to easiness...

Grantee: Ary Serhane (Syria)

Project title: Life

The project consists of three musical compositions designed to show the diverse possibilities of the "Bouzouk" through a contemporary form and far from ready-made models, an experimental style where the instrument will be merged with other instruments whether occidental or oriental, so as to show its potential and high sensitivity. In addition to three lyrical elegies inspired from the Syrian Kurdish folklore, and working on their re- arrangement and singing.

Grantee: Mehdi Nassouli (Morocco)

Project title: Hommage à Troudant

The Project "Hommage à Taroudant" is a CD album of Gnawa Music from the Souss region and Taroudant in Morocco. It aims to preserve the traditional culture of these places and contribute to the diffusion of the cultural diversity of the Arabic countries. Arabic countries are not only made of Arabic culture but are also composed of a strong Berber culture.

Grantee: Wael Kodeih (Lebanon)

Project title: Gharam wa Intiqam

«Love and Revenge» aims to give a second life to old Arabic popular songs by adapting them to the patterns and aesthetics of today's music. Picture what would become of the Arabic variety if we decide to bring new influences to that culture?

Grantee: Hela Belhadj Ali (Tunisia)

Project title: Tasswera

"Tasswera" is a music album presenting six songs : "Tasswera", "Ma Yhemmekch", "Keef Keef", "Nsafer Lebiid", "Mohal nefham", "Je me lève/Ana Nkoum". With a Tunisian accent and a particular melody varying from pop to flamenco to oriental music, these songs brings together nostalgia for yesterday, rebellion on today's reality, and hope for a better tomorrow.

Grantee: Ahmad Nazmi (Egypt)

Project title: Shams

The production of a musical album that expresses the artists' musical vision and the impact of the situation experienced by the Arab region on my composing tendencies and my desire to modernization and openness to other cultures. A group of musicians will collaborate in this work; some of them are international such as Hazem Chahine from Egypt, and Jonas Kamien from Belgium.

Grantee: Hannibal Saad (Syria)

Project title: Global Week for Syria

Together with 200 Syrian and international artists, 30 locations around the world Music and Beyond is planning the Global Week For Syria coming April 2016. The program includes: Music Festival, Talks and Panel Discussions with scholars and cultural activists, Musical and Cultural Workshops in Beirut; Live Concerts, Fundraising Events and Conferences around the world; Over 100 Online Performances (#4Syria action).



Khaled Soubeih, Al Rahel Al Kabir Band

Grantee: Anya (Morocco)

Project title: Visa for Music

VFM is an Africa and Middle East music meeting, a platform which enables the structuration of the music sector in the MENA region. It offers new opportunities for professionals, artists and cultural operators by implementing an annual occasion to promote emergent artists from the region, gather professionals and strengthen North South and South South exchanges.

Grantee: European Egyptian Contemporary Music Society (Germany)

Project title: At Present

"At Present" is an initiative by the Egyptian Contemporary Music Ensemble (ECME) planning to premiere over ten new compositions by Arab and European composers. It aims to preserve different aspects of Arab cultural heritage by reinterpreting them in a contemporary and relevant form empowering recent repertoire and bring the new compositions to regional and international festivals and venues.

Grantee: Haifa Institution for Arts and Communication (Palestine)

Project title: Uttar from Gaza

The project aims to establish art workshops with a group of musically talented children in Gaza. The organization has prepared the workshops for the development of children's performances in music and in the production of a collection of musical pieces through Psychological discharge, especially after the last war on Gaza, and to unleash the energy through music. As well as introducing melodies and musical instruments, organizing panel discussions, performances, and musical words with children and talented individuals in several areas across Gaza, so as to have a collection of pieces by the children in the workshop.

Grantee: Goethe Institute Sudan (Sudan)

Project title: SAMA Music Festival

A project that aims to promote traditional Sudanese rhythm and melodies locally and outside Sudan.

Grantee: Choir Of London (United Kingdom)

Project title: Palestine Choral Festival

The Palestine Choral Festival is a high profile international event bringing together musicians from all over the world to perform throughout Palestine for 10 days in August. It will be a major contributor to musical life in Palestine, involving over 400 Palestinian musicians, and a significant event on the international choral calendar.

Grantee: IRAB (Lebanon)

Project title: The Lebanese Divas of the Forties

In the forties of the last century, many Lebanese singing voices emerged, most notably those that shined in Egypt. Cinema preserved some of these great artistic products it, but the bulk of it came into oblivion and today is unknown. Who are those forgotten artists? What remained of their output? These questions remain open pending the study that explores and documents this era.

Grantee: Radio Beirut (Lebanon)

Project title: The Shoreline Sessions Music Festival 2016

Music festival series for the summer of 2016 that will bring local, regional and international artists to Beirut for performances to a live and online audience via our radio stream. Following the success of the last two editions of The Shoreline Sessions in June and July 2015, artists will come together once again, creating another vibrant series of music festivals.



Music Jurors



Ghalia Ben Ali (Tunisia)

She is a singer and artist of Tunisian origin, living in Belgium. Different cultures, East and West come together in her art work, as well as in her biography. She began to sing and perform professionally by the late 1990s. The idea to re-visit the songs of the Arab Diva with a small band, trying to get not exactly to the sound, but to the spirit of the great performer brought on a breakthrough project, the album "Ghalia Benali Sings Om Kalthoum" released in 2010. In 2008 she won the World of Music Award for the best world music song, presented by an independent British organization "We Are Listening". In the second decade of XXI century Ghalia has found her spiritual home in Egypt, which rich musical culture inspired her for new projects: the series of ambient sounding and looking clips for YouTube and Soundcloud with her singing the poetry of contemporary Arab authors, mainly Egyptian. Two more big projects were unveiled this year: a special re-introduction of "Al Palna" for the Egyptian audience and an exquisite revision of traditional Arab takht ensemble changing strings for brass, presented at Makan in May.

Tamer Abu Ghazaleh (Palestine)

The Palestinian singer, multi-instrumentalist, composer and producer has over the past few years collaborated in many music projects, released a debut album and founded eka3 (2007), a regional platform dedicated to promoting, producing, distributing, and touring independent Arabic music (www.eka3.org). Tamer Abu Ghazaleh's debut album Mir'ah (Mirror) was released in 2008. Recorded with a group of Palestinian and Egyptian performers, the record's seven turbulent. Composed during curfews, the album expresses everyday human emotions – love, hate, comfort, boredom, excitement – that were informed by the unreal experience of living in Palestine during that period. Tamer Abu Ghazaleh has been an active musical collaborator for many years. Projects include: starting the cross-genre group Kazamada (2010); working with Palestinian & Egyptian artists on Jehar (with Huda Asfour), Duo Buzuq (with Rabea Jubran) and Kalam Mazzika (with Salam Yousry); and performing on Khaled Jubran's Psalms (2005). In 2008, Tamer released Thawret Ala (Revolution of Worry), a collaborative piece of musical theatre that was performed by the Al-Tamye Theatre Group. He is also one of the key members of the new pan-Arabic Alif Ensemble.

Lubnan Baalbaki (Lebanon)

Born in Beirut in 1981 in a family of artists. With great musical talent and special interest in the art of music he studied violin at the National Conservatory of Music in Beirut. He was licensed in Orchestral Conducting in 2009 at the National Academy of Music „Gheorghe Dima" in Cluj-Napoca, under the musical guidance of Maestro Petre Sbârcea, former student of Sergiu Celibidache and Franco Ferrara. He obtained his Master of Arts degree at the National University of Music in Bucharest, in the class of Maestro Horia Andreescu.

Grantee Sharif Serhan from Palestine on "The Game of War":

“I believe that art helps and supports changing the shape of the world for the better.”



Cinema

PROJECT	DIRECTOR	COUNTRY	STATUS
Yumna	Rania Rafei	Lebanon	Fiction/Development
Desert Dogs	Ihab Jadallah	Palestine	Fiction/Development
The Maiden's Pond	Bassem Breish	Lebanon	Fiction/Development
The Bridge	Hala Lotfy	Egypt	Fiction/Development
Operation Rudolph	Fadi Syriani	Lebanon	Short/Development
Separate Architectures	Rania Al Bayoumi	Egypt	Short/Development
The Trial Garden	Dania Reymond	Algeria	Short/post-Production
The Occupants	Youssef Chebbi	Tunisia	Short/Production
The Waiting Bench	Suhaib Gasmelbari Mustafa	Sudan	Documentary/Production
The Taste of Apples is Red	Ehab Tarabieh	Syria	Fiction/Production
The Day I Ate the Fish	Aida Al Kashef	Egypt	Documentary/Production
Ouroboros	Basma Al Sharif	Palestine	Experimental/Production
Miguel's War	Eliane Raheb	Lebanon	Documentary/Production
Joint Possession	Laila Kilani	Morocco	Fiction/Production
Till the Swallows Return	Karim Moussaoui	Algeria	Fiction/Production
South of Nowhere	Lamine Ammar Khodja	Algeria	Fiction/Production
Me, Myself & Murdoch	Yahya Al Abdallah	Jordan	Fiction/Production
The Journey	Mohamed Al Daradji	Iraq	Fiction/Production
The Poster	Suha Arraf	Palestine	Fiction/Production
Panoptic	Rana Eid	Lebanon	Documentary/Post-Production
Deek Beirut	Ziad Kalthoum	Syria	Documentary/Post-Production
Suspension	Ala Slim	Tunisia	Fiction/Post-Production



The Cinema Jury Committee for 2015 included academic and critic Ikbal Zalila (Tunisia), filmmaker Danielle Arbid (Lebanon) and producer and actor Khalid Abdalla (Egypt)

Jury Statement

“The region is in turmoil and its filmmakers are in the throes of a powerful response. Taken together, the shortlist of 88 applications we received was an immensely moving and dramatic statement on the situation of the region, politically and in cinema. The sheer volume of applications and breadth of styles – radical and accessible in different ways – allowed us to keep diversity in our selection while maintaining geographical distribution and not compromising our beliefs in the importance of quality and taking risks. We prioritized films going in to production because we recognize a severe lack of opportunities for production grants for Arab films, particularly in fiction. Urgency of funding was also a consideration. First and second films were predominant, though set alongside more established voices. Taking decisions was not easy and we did our utmost to be thorough in discussing each project. There were many films that we urge to reapply. Even so, we believe more funding for Arab cinema needs to be made available, to be able to increase the amounts granted substantially. The quality of work deserves it, and this was also evident in the volume of previous films we had the privilege to see, unfortunately a rare experience amidst the current state of distribution. But despite every difficulty they are confronted with, we saw in the many films and filmmakers who applied a formidable ability to face adversity with depth and creative force – and from them all we humbly draw some hope.”

Projects' Synopsis



Ihab Jadallah, Desert Dogs

Project: Yumna

Director: Rania Rafei (Lebanon)

Yumna is from a conservative family in Tripoli. She leads a liberal life in Beirut. After a night out, a complete stranger rapes her. Shocked, she returns to her family home. Despite the atrocity of the accident her mother insists they celebrate her 24th birthday. Quickly, the accident reveals the skewed family dynamics governed by denial and rigid social codes.

Project: Desert Dogs

Director: Ihab Jadallah (Palestine)

A dog, an ex-prisoner and his son, each wonders alone in the openness of a dystopian desert. Ibrahim is set out to kill; his son wants to stop him, the dog looking for a companion to guard. The journey and landscape transforms them, while the father becomes forgiving, the son develops anger, and the dog finds a cause.

Project: The Maiden's Pond

Director: Bassem Breish (Lebanon)

The Maiden's Pond tells the story of two women trying to maintain and negotiate their lives with and against each other. Salma survived by letting go of any attachments, including her daughter Thuraya. But the past did not let go of her, and brought her back her daughter, defeated, divorced and pregnant.

Project: The Bridge

Director: Hala Lotfy (Egypt)

A mother wakes up at 3 am to her feverish baby girl and decides to head to the hospital accompanied by her eight-year old son. The taxi stops in front of a Bridge and the driver tells

the mother to cross it where the hospital is in the other end. As the family crosses nearly half the bridge, suddenly the mother can't find her son. What happens next is the story of five hours of searching for hope, encountering obstacles, realizing loss and dealing with it.

Project: Operation Rudolph

Director: Fadi Syriani (Lebanon)

The US Administration accuses Santa of conducting illicit military actions in the North Pole, building training camps, and raising an army. Abu Noël Al Shamali, as they call him, is hunted down, killed and buried in a secret location in the Arctic.

Project: Separate Architectures

Director: Rania Al Bayoumi (Egypt)

The work combines the social and the political with the poetic. Women's lives are complicated. By interpreting both their social realities and inner spaces, we are into the zone in which polar entities coexist in a way that seems to cancel their disparity.

Project: The Trial Garden

Director: Dania Reymond (Algeria)

Producer: Sandra Da Fonesca

In a tropical-like park in Algiers, Lyes, a young director, helps his actors rehearse. His next movie tells the story of young Algerians who dream to leave their country to go to Europe without succeeding. While they are rehearsing, the film crew ends up facing disillusionment too.

Project: The Occupants

Director: Youssef Chebbi (Tunisia)

Producer: Mohamed Kochbati

We are in 1869. For ten years now, Joseph and his wife Rosa have been the lighthouse keepers on Cani Island in the seas of Bizerte. Apart from the rare visits from the supplier and their friend Hmida the fisherman, they have lived absolutely alone. One night, a big black dog appears stranded on the island, and will change their destiny.

Project: The Waiting Bench

Director: Suhaib Gasmelbari Mustafa (Sudan)

Producer: Marie Balduchhi

Ibrahim, Manar, Soliman and Eltayeb, 4 filmmakers and close friends since more than 45 years, furrow Sudanese roads with their traveling cinema. "The Waiting Bench" is the story of their journey to look for a new movie screen and their cinema attempt in a wounded country.

Project: The Taste of Apples is Red

Director: Ehab Tarabieh (Syria)

Kamel is a respected leader in the occupied Golan Heights. 45 years after his brother Mustafa vanished, he shows up wounded from the war in Syria. He brings with him a great shame that is two-generations old and the betrayal of his community. Kamel is at odds. Should he turn his brother in? Will loyalty to country outgrow the love for his brother?

Project: The Day I Ate the Fish

Director: Aida Al Kashef (Egypt)

A fictional research team, presented as narrators, reopens four cases of women convicted of murdering their husbands. The argument expands to question the discourse of violence and counter-violence in our contemporary society, basic crime punishment notions and the development of state disciplinary strategies. This essay film moves freely in place and time shifting between prison interviews, archival, and original footage.

Project: Ouroboros

Director: Basma Al Sharif (Palestine)

Producer: Mohanad Yaqubi

Diego Marcon is a man with a broken heart who journeys into the heart of the human condition on a single day that stretches between Native American territories, to the ancient city of Matera, a castle in Brittany, and the ruins of the Gaza Strip. Ouroboros, an experimental feature film, is an homage to Gaza and to hoping beyond hopelessness.

Project: Miguel's War

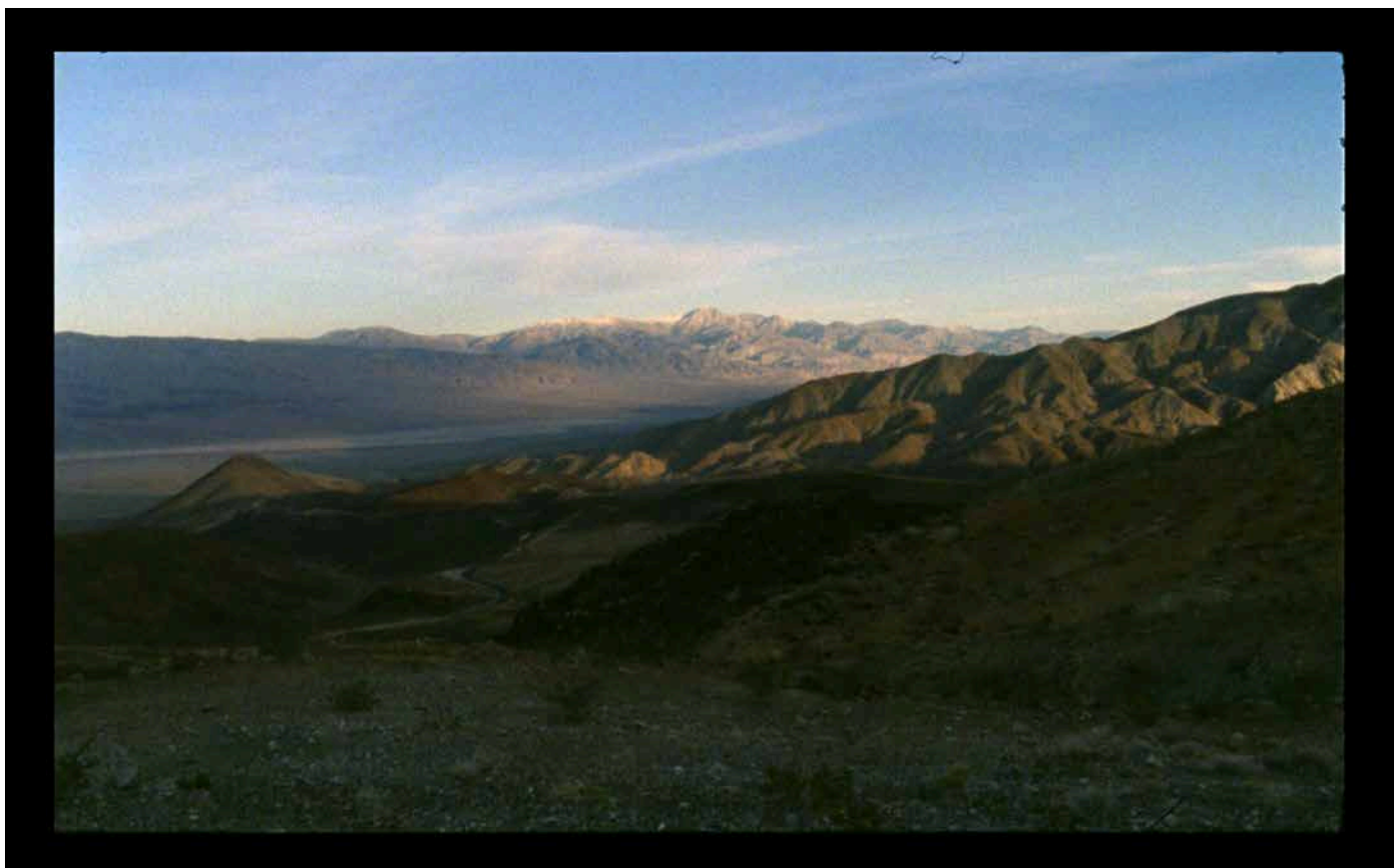
Director: Eliane Raheb (Lebanon)

In 1983, Miguel left Lebanon to Spain, hoping to escape the traumatic consequences of the war, a humiliating childhood and an adolescence in which he was sexually oppressed. Today, although he lives his homosexuality freely, he still suffers from his own self-destructive mechanism. The film will accompany him on a trip of self-confrontation and in his quest to find love.

Project: Joint Possession

Director: Laila Kilani (Morocco)

Tangier's topography is in turmoil. Pharaonic real estate projects surround the Mansouria, a landlocked family estate up for sale and coveted by Amina and her heirs. Suddenly fires lit up across the hills.



Basma Alsharif, *Ouroboros*



Ziad Kalthoum, Deek Beirut

Project: Till the Swallows Return

Director: Karim Moussaoui (Algeria)

Producer: Jaber Debzi

Mourad is a businessman who rose to success in Algeria in the 2000s. Now he's a new man who wants to stay away from trouble. Aisha is done with the past. She's about to start a new life as a married woman. Dahman is a doctor; he wants to marry his cousin. Each one of those characters will all have to accept the consequences of his/her choice.

Project: South of Nowhere

Director: Lamine Ammar Khodja (Algeria)

Producer: Mina Driouch

A filmmaker living North goes South during the glimpse of a dream. A series of events will mix and weave a complex web of North-South relations. His journey, punctuated by his encounter with real, mythical and fantastic characters, will weave the narrative of the film with great political fantasy.

Project: Me, Myself and Murdoch

Director: Yahya Al Abdallah (Jordan)

Producer: Rula Nasser

After a car accident, a young Palestinian wakes up totally amnesiac. He can only speak Hebrew.

Project: The Journey

Director: Mohamed Al Daradji (Iraq)

Sara, a mysterious young woman, runs into Baghdad's central station, driven by an unknown intention and harboring a sinister secret. As she is about to commit an unthinkable act, time stands still and Sara is given the opportunity to learn the consequences of her destructive actions.

Project: The Poster

Director: Suha Arraf (Palestine)

On an otherwise uneventful morning, the inhabitants of a Palestinian wake up to find posters plastered all across the village, on all the walls and even on all the poles that connected the village to the electrical grid. The poster listed five otherwise respectable women from the village, all of them married. "Sluts!" the posters screamed. "They are all whores! They are all having extramarital affairs".

Project: Panoptic

Director: Rana Eid (Lebanon)

On the surface, Lebanon is a vibrant city driven by consumerism and an eagerness for modern life. Beneath this façade however is a subterranean landscape of remains from the county's macabre history, hidden from the population above. "Panoptic" explores this underground level to reveal how, although invisible, it is nonetheless present within the soul of the Lebanese people.

Project: Deek Beirut

Director: Ziad Kalthoum (Syria)

In Beirut, Syrian workers live like ants in underground pits. Each morning at sunrise, they climb the construction sites and wake up the country with the first hammer stroke. A country they only know from distance, being banned from moving freely around in it or swimming in its sea. While the 'Beirut Roosters' rebuild the Lebanese houses, their own homes are being destroyed in the war ravaging Syria.

Project: Suspension

Director: Ala Slim (Tunisia)

N crosses the desert to reach the North of Africa and to achieve an illegal migration to Europe. After a robbery, he finds himself alone in Tunisia. From that moment, N will live a special and unique crossing, he will go over different and infinite spaces, do intense and ephemeral meetings, and will come across another altered image of him.

Cinema Jurors




Khalid Abdalla works as an actor, producer and filmmaker, but also in cultural production and alternative media. He is a founding member of Cinematheque, Zero Production and Mosireen. Past films as an actor include *United 93*, *Green Zone*, *The Kite Runner*, *The Narrow Frame of Midnight*, and *Tigers*. Upcoming films include: *In the Last Days of the City*, *Our Kind of Traitor*, *Assassin's Creed* and *Birds Like Us*, in which he plays a bat. In documentary film he has producing credits on *In the Shadow of a Man* and the upcoming film, *The Vote*. He also appears as himself in *The Square*. Born in Glasgow and brought up in London, he lives in Cairo.



Danielle Arbid was born in Beirut. Her credits include the shorts *Raddem* (1998) and *Le Passeur* (1999), the documentaries *Alone with War* (2000) and *Aux Frontiers* (2002), and the fiction features *Étrangère* (2002), which earned the Golden Leopard at Locarno, *In the Battlefields* (2004), *A Lost Man* (2007), *Beirut Hotel* (2011), and *Parisienne* (2015).



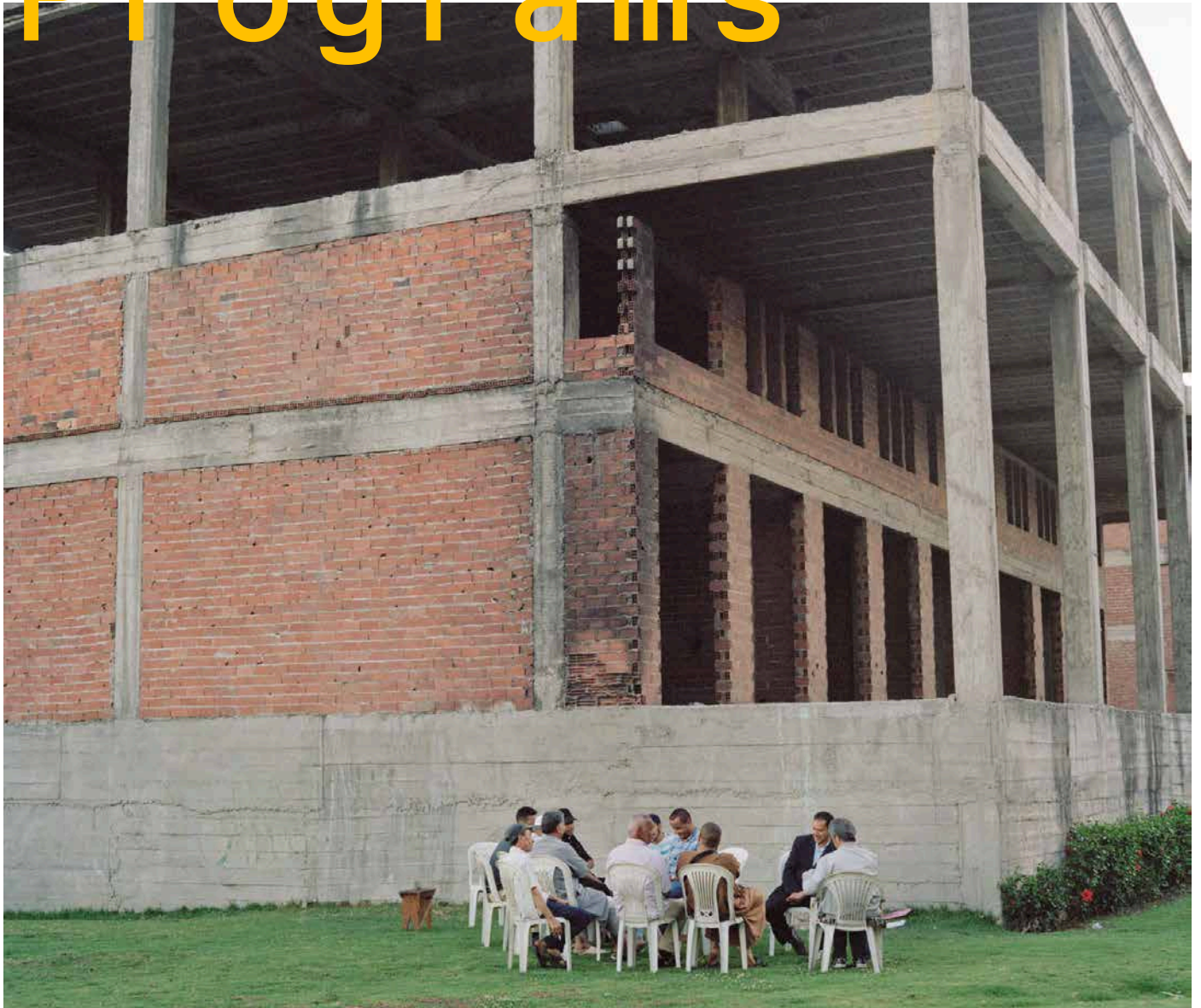
Ikbal Zalila was born in Tunis. A film critic and academic, he lives and works in Tunis. Zalila has a PhD in film studies from the Sorbonne University and is currently an associate professor at the University of Manouba. He teaches film aesthetics documentary and film analysis and is the former Artistic Director of the Carthage Film Festival and head programmer between 2008 and 2010. Film critic, he is the former president of the Tunisian association of film critics and a member in several FIPRESCI juries.



Grantee Kaouther Ben Hania from Tunisia on her film “Zineb Hates the Snow”:

“I am fond of small stories, those concerning ordinary people. Touching stories with a hint of poetry, which, through the special fate of a person, can teach us about our own familial relationships and ourselves.”

Special Programs



Hicham Gardaf, *The Backstage of Reality*

Alongside our general grant program, we offer special programs that address particular trends and needs. Applications in 2015 were received as follows: mid-January through mid-March for Arab Novel Writing Program; February through March for Arab Documentary Photography Program; February through April for AFAC Documentary Program.

The AFAC Novel Writing Program supports aspiring fiction writers and is an intensive year-long training program offered by AFAC in lieu of the annual grant for Literature as a response for the need to offer professional support to emerging authors in the Arab region.

The AFAC Documentary Photography Program supports compelling non-stereotypical and unconventional visual documentation of important social issues and narratives relevant to the Arab region, in recognition of the image's power to document, educate and advocate.

The AFAC Documentary Program supports feature-length, medium-length and short documentary projects, in production and post-production, addressing the social realities in the Arab world in creative and compelling ways.



Grantee Malouma Mint Moktar Ould Meïddah from Mauritania on her “Popular Hassani Tarab” project:

“We have to allow other people to discover the uniqueness of our music and allow it to survive, to reinvent itself and to thrive in novel ways.”

AFAC Novel Writing Program (ANWP)



The first round of the AFAC Novel Writing Program, run in partnership with Muhtaraf Najwa Barakat, culminated in the completion of eight novels by the participating writers.

Three novels were published and launched during Beirut 59th International Arab Book Fair 2015 with the well-known Lebanese publishing house Al Saqi. Three novels will be published in March 2016 with the Egyptian publishing House Al Ain. The seventh novel will be published with Egyptian publishing house Al Kotob Khan.

Following the selection of the first batch of eight young talented writers from different Arab countries, AFAC opened the call for the second round of the program. The second edition of AFAC Novel Writing Program is under the supervision of well-known Lebanese writer Jabbour Douaihy, and will continue over 18 months. Nine writers were chosen to participate in the program that will include three workshops and result in fully written novels by the participant writers. AFAC will support the publication of the novels.

Process

The workshops were held in Beirut and Beirut; the participants had the chance to discuss in depth the characters, plots, writing techniques and other topics related to their novels, with the other participants in group discussions, and with the mentor, Mr. Dweih, in one-on-one meetings.

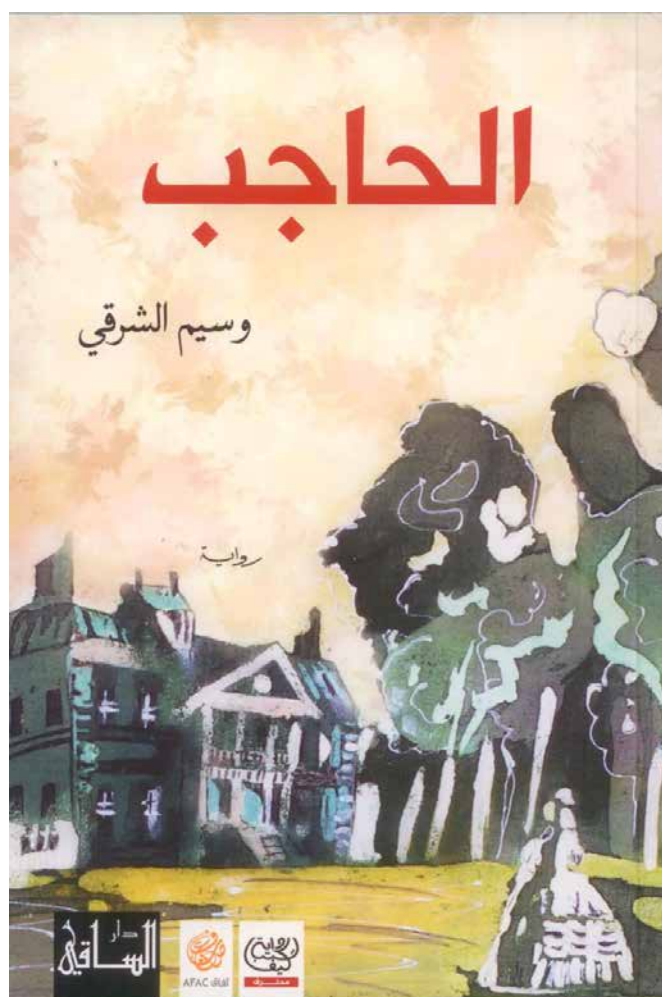
For the third workshop, the grantees will come with at least 75% of their novels written and approved by the mentor. So far, one grantee has finished a very promising novel with the remaining grantees working hard towards their objects; we expect at least 7 of the 9 novels to be published by the end of 2016.

Publishing

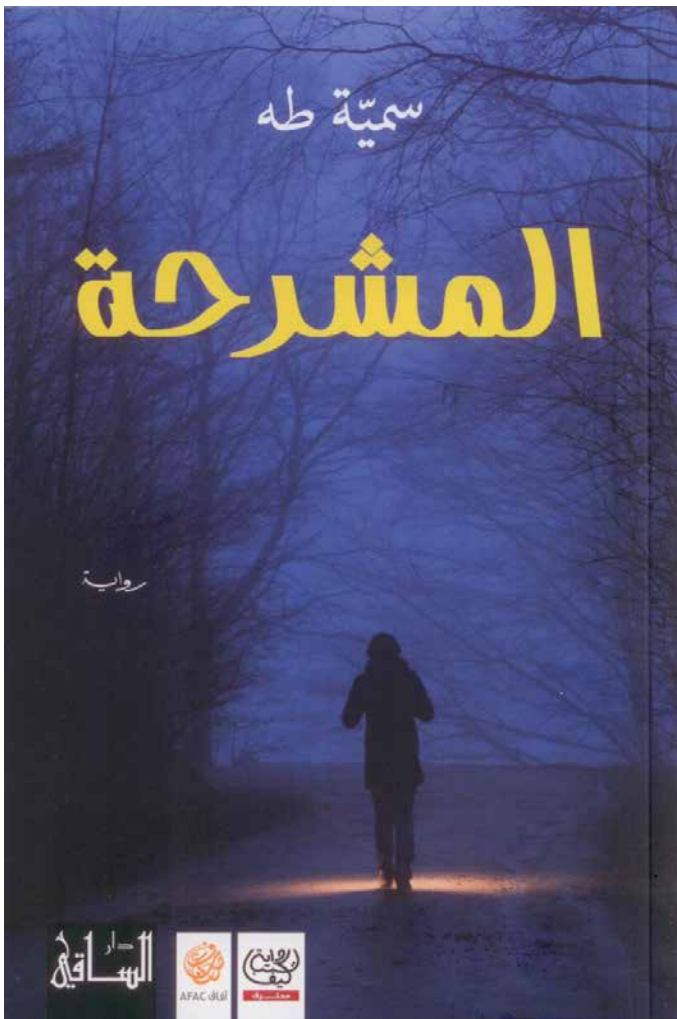
AFAC signed a publishing contract with the Lebanese publishing house, Al Saqi. The contract was signed for the total program; covering books to be completed in the three cycles of the program. By December 2015, 3 books from the first cycle were published and launched in Beirut Arab Book Fair. Additionally, AFAC signed a publishing contract with the Egyptian publishing house Al Ain, for 3 novels from the first cycle.

ANWP Grantees

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Rania Mamoun	Azib	Sudan
Jago John Awang Tut	Digging Up the memory of the Dead	Sudan
Mohammed Benmiloud	The Dangerous Neighborhood	Morocco
Mohsine Loukili	The Plague Enclosure	Morocco
Bassam Shams Aldin	A Family Outing	Yemen
Salim Albeik	In the Waiting Room to Ben Gurion	Palestine
Ahmad Magdy Hammam	The Arabist and the Egyptian	Egypt
Arig Mohamed Aly	More than just a biography of the aboe player	Egypt
Samir Youssef	Spider's Lair	Lebanon



Projects' Synopsis



Grantee: Rania Mamoun (Sudan)

Novel Title: Azib

This is a meta-fictional novel that tells the story of a poet called Mona. Mona is haunted by creative anxiety and constantly moves from one artistic domain to another, hoping she can dwell in one of them. However, she feels that nothing can fulfill the artistic spirit inside of her, so she starts writing a novel about a mentally challenged girl who imagines that she has died and is living in the otherworld, treats herself and others according to her illusion, and describes details about the otherworld, as seen by her imagination. She suddenly stops writing when she meets in reality a character that exactly resembles one of the characters in her novel. She falls in love with "Azib," an Eritrean girl, discovers her homosexual desire towards her and finds a hard time getting rid of her feelings. She experiences a violent inner conflict before settling on a final decision.

Grantee: Jago John Awang Tut (Sudan)

Novel Title: Digging Up the memory of the Dead

This novel tells the story of the Sudanese civil war between 1958 and 1965, through the character of Archangel Elias, a successful physician who is popular among his professional and social surrounding, and known among his extended family for having no faith in any religious doctrine, as well as

for his detachment to traditions and customs. He begins to see his long-time deceased father -- whom he only knows very little about -- in his dreams, and this is when his balanced life and its solid harmony will suddenly shake, his thoughts will become unsettled and he will enter in a spiral of anxiety and hallucinations that will start destroying his successful life. Archangel decides to travel to the city where his father died forty years ago to discover his political and militant history.

Grantee: Mohammed Benmiloud (Morocco)

Novel Title: The Dangerous Neighborhood

The novel is set in the dangerous neighborhood of Abi Roqraq, located on the outskirts of the city of Rabat. On one rainy day, a baby boy is born. He is meant to live an action-packed life in a neighborhood full of shanty houses. The only wide road in the neighborhood is a soil road that gets muddy in wintertime, and becomes slipper and sinuous leading toward the Abi Roqraq River. On the muddy riverbank, the novel's hero Rachid spends his childhood playing with his peers from the dangerous shanty neighborhood. He lives completely isolated from the bigger world outside his neighborhood. A single son, Rachid grows up in this neighborhood, where he lives a life packed with problems and adventures.

Grantee: Mohsine Loukili (Morocco)

Novel Title: The Plague Enclosure

The events in this story take place in the beginning of the seventeenth century at a victims' shelter located on the outskirts of the Moroccan city of Fes. A Moroccan man finds himself stuck between plague-inflicted people in a shelter, forced yet another time to witness human misery, after having lived through his family's bitter experiences during the journey of mass expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula to the shores of the southern enemy country, Morocco.

Grantee: Bassam Shams Aldin (Yemen)

Novel Title: A Family Outing

The novel is set in the tribal region named "The Directorate of Isolation." The story is a semi-fictional simulation of tribal customs, where tension prevails over the ties of two neighboring tribes, linked together by marriage and kinship, as well as by a sort of rivalry and enmity as is usually the case between neighbors. Despite the recurrent violent confrontations between the two tribes, they always abide by certain rules and restrictions that govern their wars. The rules are not to engage in fights near the market or near the houses, and not to fire at women, children, the elderly and the unarmed, or behind someone's back. However, one of the strongmen of one of the tribes, an aspirant young man hoping for a new era, commits the first violation of the customs ever inside the market, upsetting everyone, including the members of his own tribe.

Grantee: Salim Albeik (Palestine)

Novel Title: In the Waiting Room to Ben Gurion

There are two narrators in this story, the first being the author and the second being the main character around whom the story revolves. The first narrator is more attached to what

the author has lived, and the second narrator is building his reality based on the former's life and on a certain imagination required by the novel. The main protagonist in the story- the second narrator- is living an identity crisis on two levels: The first is in relation to the definition of being a Palestinian. He does not belong to the Palestinians of the West Bank, neither to the Palestinians of Gaza, nor to the Palestinians displaced in 1948, as his grandfather had taken refuge in Syria in that year. He didn't live in the refugee camps and cities of Syria, because his time was divided between one of the camps and the United Arab Emirates, where he didn't have any ties to the Palestinian community. He later goes moves on to a different life as a refugee in France. However, he does not belong to Palestinians in Europe or in France. He does not belong to any community, city or country. His troubles go beyond a sense of belonging to Palestine, or the Palestinian people but also to a sense of belonging to other communities.

Grantee: Ahmad Magdy Hammam (Egypt)

Novel title: The Arabistani and The Egyptian

The novel tells the love story of an Arab man from the region of Ahwaz, Arabistan in Iran and an Egyptian young woman. The story echoes the difficult situation endured by the residents of Arabistan, as well as the tension prevailing over the ties between Tehran and Cairo. Shortly after they meet one day, they fall in love. Their relationship is challenged not only by the long distance and the politics of their respective countries, Iran and Egypt, but also by their personal circumstances. Their love story is hanging by a thread as the bitter reality of their circumstances sets in.

Grantee: Arig Mohamed Aly (Egypt)

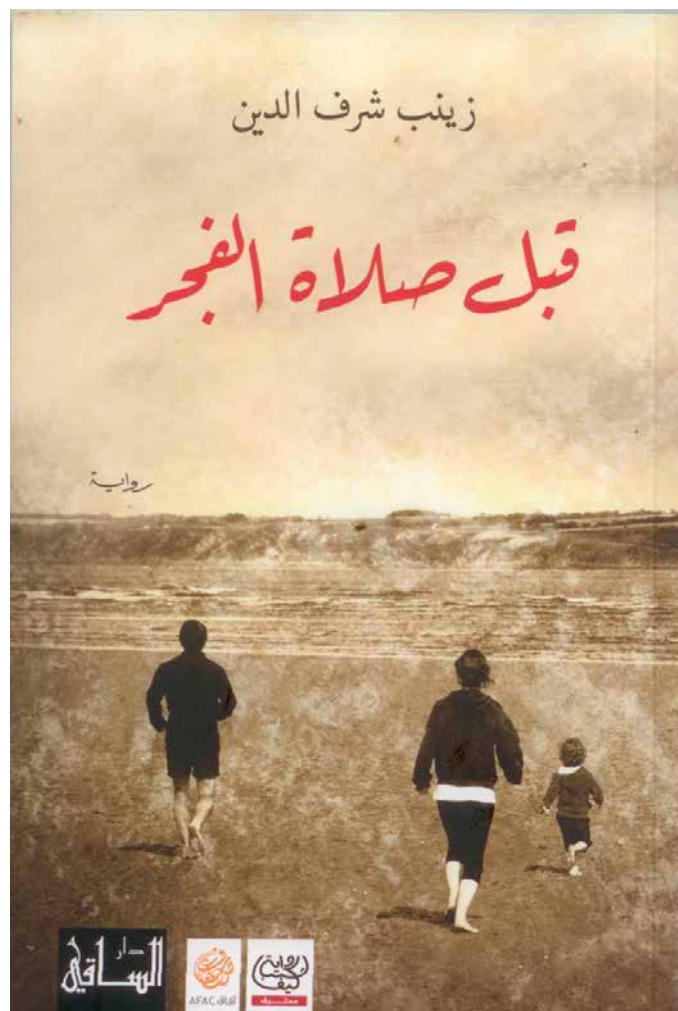
Novel title: More than just a biography of the oboe player

A young oboe player in her twenties lives in Egypt and witnesses the "Arab Spring" events. She lives through a moment widely labeled as decisive and historical, a moment, which in fact led to nothing. The external events are the margin inside which the story happens, the story of the oboe player, the unfulfilled young girl who loved the sound of the oboe in her childhood but contracted pneumonia, which prevented her from playing the instrument. Arwa, a fulfilled Iraqi plastic artist in her forties who lives in Austria appears in the Egyptian oboe player's life. They meet in Cairo, and a strong passionate bond happens between them. Together, they walk fine lines over the fire, as their relationship develops and becomes physical. They develop a new meaning of fulfillment in an area they have never known before, so they decide to run away together to Austria and never return.

Grantee: Samir Youssef (Lebanon)

Novel title: Spider's Lair

Joseph is a 19-year-old man who joins the Internal Security Forces apparatus. As soon as he finishes his training session, he is sent to a remote military camp near his village in North Lebanon. Two of his colleagues introduce him to pornography, which he begins to watch abundantly until he virtually meets Tara, an undistinguished pornography actress who says she lives in the French city of Montpellier, and likes chatting with her followers on her website. Joseph begins talking to Tara regularly and a virtual relationship blooms. Joseph convinces himself that she loves him, and decides to desert his fiancée, family and job to follow her.



Grantee Yante Youth, Art & Levante – Nadia Aroui from Palestine on her “I Can Move” project:

“I believe that dance as a communal therapeutic activity enhances peace.”



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Hicham Gardai, *The Backstage of Reality*

While documentary photography sheds light on important neglected and unknown narratives, it remains an under-developed genre in the Arab world. This program, co-launched with the Prince Claus Fund in collaboration with the Magnum Foundation as an annual mentorship program over three years, aims to support compelling non-stereotypical and unconventional visual documentation of important social issues and narratives relevant to the Arab region. ADPP will also explore ways by which such a body of work will reach out to wider audiences and engage with them in compelling and impactful ways.

The second round of the program was launched this year, 10 new grantees were selected to benefit from the mentorship program.

The first workshop was held in Beirut in August, and since then the photographers are working on their projects, with the follow up of the mentors.



Supported by





Progress

The First ADPP Workshop was held at the Dar Al-Mussawir in Beirut, between August 23rd and 27th. The ten emerging Arab documentary photographers benefitting from this program were gathered together from across the Arab region - Zied Romdhan (Tunisia), Tasneem AlSutan (KSA), Arwa Anneami (KSA), Mohamed ElFatih Hamadain (Sudan), Heba Khalifa (Egypt), Hicham Gardaf (Morocco), Elsie Haddad (Lebanon), Ahmad Mousa Qasem (Iraq) and Sima Diab (Syria). – to participate in this intensive mentorship, headed by workshop coordinator Jessica Murray.

Mentoring photographers guiding the grantees through their projects - Eric Gottesman from New Hampshire, Peter Van Agtmael from New York, Randa Shaath from Cairo and Tanya Habjouqa from Jerusalem – were also in attendance

for the duration of the workshop. Long-distance mentorship is currently underway as the different grantees develop their projects in their own unique ways and in response to their particular contexts and concerns.

The second ADPP workshop is scheduled for the third week of February 2016 and the completion of the projects is scheduled for March 2016.

ADPP Website

A website for the program was launched in September 2015, grouping the work of the grantees of the first cycle, and will host the work of the second cycle grantees when their projects are finished. <http://arabdocphotography.org/>



ADPP Grantees

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Zied Ben Romdhane	Phosphate Road	Tunisia
Tasneem Alsultan	Separated in Saudi	Saudi Arabia
Mustafa Saeed	Invisible Differences	Somalia
Heba Khalifa	Homemade	Egypt
Hicham Gardaf	The backstage of reality	Morocco
Arwa Alneami	Never Never Land	Saudi Arabia
Eyad Abou Kasem	Inertia	Syria
Elsie El Haddad	Silent crisis (On life after imprisonment)	Lebanon
Ahmad Qasem	Awaiting Their Dead	Iraq
Sima Diab	She as He	Syria

The ADPP Jury Committee for 2015 included Magnum Foundation president Susan Meiselas (New York), Sursock Museum director Zeina Arida (Lebanon) and photographer Laura Boushnak (Palestine)

Jury Statement

"We are pleased to see the pool growing of talented candidates and regional participation expanding to more countries of the Arab region. The chosen work by the jury reflects a wide variety of themes focusing on social impact and cultural concerns ranging from the status of divorced women in Saudi Arabia to the conditions of gold miners in Sudan. The selected photographers range in age, experience and exposure, with contrasting intentions using humor such as in "Never Never Land", where the photographer documents women entertaining themselves in a theme park, to more classic reportage style in "Awaiting Their Dead", where Iraqi families wait for confirmation of their missing sons' fate. Some proposed projects will be more experimental, mixing documentary and artistic approaches with diverse media like "Home Made" from Egypt, which portrays women reflecting on marginalization and societal pressures through their bodies."

Projects' Synopsises



Grantee: Zied Ben Romdhane (Tunisia)

Title: Phosphate Road

Phosphate Road details the path of phosphate from the mines of southwest Tunisia to the chemical factories in the gulf of Gabes, where phosphate is being refined and treated. Villagers used to live on fishing and agriculture but those activities vanished. The polluted sea and air causes many diseases and serious social problems. Beyond the social and environmental issues, the project highlights phosphate mining as both a blessing and a curse.





Grantee: Tasneem AlSultan (KSA)

Title: Separated in Saudi

This is a photographic ethnography on Saudi women who've had to face the society in order to receive a divorce. Women in Saudi have no authority when it comes to asking for a divorce. Also, cultural stigma doesn't help empower them to pursuing what they need to be as an independent individual.





Grantee: Mustafa Saeed (Somalia)

Title: Invisible Differences

Invisible Differences is a documentary photo series about discrimination in Somalia, specifically in Somaliland and in its capital city Hargeisa. Somalis are organized into clan groupings, as clan membership plays a central part in Somali culture and politics. The project will explore and show the daily life of those discriminated groups and showcase their pride and involvement in their city.





Grantee: Heba Khalifa (Egypt)

Title: Homemade

This project will examine and document with audio-visuals the thorny relationship between women and their bodies, the fears women have, and the wounds accumulated due to societal pressure. Living with a negative relationship with your body reflects on your identity and hinders public participation and interaction in society. Many women are pressured into covering their bodies or do so to be able to simply walk in the street. Harassment and even rape has become a growing phenomenon in a society that has the audacity to blame the victims.





Grantee: Hicham Gardaf (Morocco)

Title: The Backstage of Reality

In the last ten years, Morocco went through one of the most extensive urban and sociocultural transformations. Unprecedented development projects around city's suburbs were initiated with remarkable speed. This project explores city fringes and borders, where the coexistence of contemporary society with nature is best characterized by the constant push of urban space into the land. It is there that essential social and cultural changes are taking place.



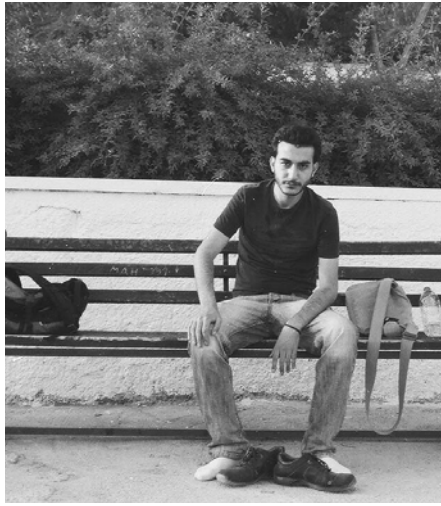


Grantee: Arwa Alneami (Saudi Arabia)

Title: Never Never Land

Where censorship is widespread, satire, parody and political humor are often the best or only means available to air opinions, voice dissent or challenge government institutions. Mockery can destroy mystique, break tensions and disarm seemingly omnipotent, oppressive powers. This project uses humor to test the potential of art as a critical instrument for social, political and cultural analysis. By documenting a “women only” theme park, one presents a new way of thinking and an insightful commentary on the absurdities of human relationships.





Grantee: Eyad Abou Kasem (Syria)

Title: Inertia

Stalemate is felt in the lives of those who are affected by war but not directly e.g. Damascus city. Waiting is as dominant as impatience is to get out.





Grantee: Elsie El Haddad (Lebanon)

Title: Silent Crisis (On life after imprisonment)

The trauma of detention is often overlooked. In most societies, the effect such trauma has on people is hard to conceive of. In a country like Lebanon, where human rights are still violated and conventions remain in a gray zone, society is unable to confront its own problems. This project aims to focus on this topic, on the challenges that prisoners face after they are released from detention and the opportunities available to them when they resume their lives as efficient members of society.





Grantee: Ahmad Qasem (Iraq)

Title: Awaiting Their Dead

On June 12, 2014, an estimated 1,700 Iraqi Air Force cadets were slaughtered by ISIS in Tikrit. In early April, 2015, almost a year later, forensic teams exhumed dozens of corpses believed to be some of the cadets. As the on-going investigations try to determine the identities of the bodies and the fate of others, this project will document the suffering and continuous waiting of the families in their quest to know the fate of their loved ones and the circumstances behind their executions.





Grantee: Sima Diab (Syria)

Title: She as He

This documentary will examine the lives of women from low-income areas in Egypt who choose to dress as men in order to gain protection and livelihood in a male-dominated society. The project will also follow those women that transition back to their normal lives upon marriage or finding an alternative to their lifestyle, examining the long term impact this phenomena had on their identities and relationships within their communities and networks of families and friends.



ADPP Jurors

Laura Boushnak (Palestine)

Is a Kuwaiti-born Palestinian photographer, whose work focuses on women, literacy and education reform in the Arab world. For her ongoing series 'I Read, I Write', she photographed girls and women changing their lives through education in Egypt, Yemen, Kuwait, Jordan and Tunisia. Boushnak is a TED Fellow, and the co-founder of the RAWIYA collective, a photography cooperative of female photographers from the Middle East.

Susan Meiselas (USA)

Is an award-winning American documentary photographer born in 1948 in Baltimore, Maryland. She has been associated with Magnum Photos since 1976 and a full member since 1980. Her works have been published in newspapers and magazines including The New York Times, The Times, Time, GEO and Paris Match. She received the Robert Capa Gold Medal in 1979 and was named a MacArthur Fellow in 1992. She earned her BA at Sarah Lawrence College and an MA in visual education at Harvard University. She received an Honorary Doctorates in Fine Arts from the Parsons School in 1986 and from The Art Institute of Boston in 1996. In 2006, she was awarded The Royal Photographic Society's Centenary Medal and Honorary Fellowship (HonFRPS) in recognition of a sustained, significant contribution to the art of photography.

Zeina Arida (Lebanon)

A founding AFAC Board Member until 2012. She was born in Beirut in 1970 and educated between Beirut and Paris; Arida studied Literature and Theatre at the Sorbonne in Paris and graduated in 1993. Returning to Beirut, she was involved in several cultural projects and has been the Director of the Arab Image Foundation – a non-profit organization that seeks to preserve and study photographs from the Middle East, North Africa and the Arab diaspora - since its inception in 1997 until 2013. In 2014, she became the Director of the Nicolas Sursock Museum.



BEIRUT AND BEYOND
INTERNATIONAL
MUSIC FESTIVAL
04 -07 DECEMBER 2014



Grantee Beirut & Beyond Music Festival, Amani Semaan & Khaled Yassine from Lebanon, on "Beirut & Beyond"

“When we organize a high quality music festival, it creates a different image of the Arab region and sends a message of hope.”

AFAC Documentary Program



Raed El Refei, *Eccomi Eccoti*

This is the third edition of AFAC Documentary Program (ADP), launched in partnership with the Ford Foundation's JustFilms. It aims to build on AFAC's dedication to documentary film by supporting established and emerging Arab documentary filmmakers addressing the social realities of a changing Arab world in creative and compelling ways.

In partnership with

JustFilms
FORDFOUNDATION

ADP Grantees

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	STAGE	COUNTRY
Talal Derki	Fathers and Sons	Production	Syria
Raed Andoni	Ghost Hunting	Production	Palestine
Malek Bensmail	Checks and Balances	Postproduction	Algeria
Ekrem Heydo	My paradise	Postproduction	Syria
Raed El Rafei	Eccomi Eccoti	Postproduction	Lebanon
Mohamad Kassab	Brother	Postproduction	Syria
Selim Mourad	This Little Father Obsession	Postproduction	Lebanon
Ghada Terawi	The Forgotten	Production	Palestine
Amer Almatar	Project Prison Doc	Postproduction	Syria
Mouhamed Abugeth	Merdaef Jemba	Production	Palestine
Tamara Stepanyan	Those from the Shore (previously Limbo)	Production	Lebanon
Djamel Kerkar	Spectres	Production	Algeria
Walid Tayaa	Tangled in Imbroglio	Production	Tunisia
Lina Al Abed	Ibrahim	Production	Jordan
Afraa Batous	Skin	Postproduction	Syria

The ADP Jury Committee for 2015 included film theorist and festival director Jean-Pierre Rehm (France), director and cinematographer Hicham Falah (Morocco) and writer Ghalya Saadawi (Lebanon)

Jury Statement

“There was a poignant and vibrant energy in the 38 film proposals presented to the AFAC Documentary jury, there was an emphasis on supporting filmmakers making their first or second feature-length film, and an attempt to balance the funds allocated fairly between production and post-production. The discussion and selection process also focused considerably on the form and the content of the films, their quality, insight and potential. Formally, this ranged from the essayistic film to a breed of travel or road-based movie, from research-based and ‘activist’ documentaries, to films featuring elements of reenactment and fiction. Finally, it seemed to us that all the selected films manifested a cinematic power that was able to represent tangled, gloomy communities and realities, while transforming them through their filmic imaginary and forms.”

Projects' Synopsises

Talal Derki, *Fathers and Sons*



Project: Fathers and Sons

Director: Talal Derki (Syria/Germany)

Producer: Tobias Siebret

Fathers and Sons is a film about the fate of Syrian children and adolescents growing up during the brutal civil war. Filmmaker Talal Derki follows the question of a country's future whose youth know little else than violence, destruction and religious indoctrination.

Project: Ghost Hunting

Director: Raed Andoni (Palestine)

The filmmaker assembles an eclectic group of Palestinian ex-prisoners in order to rebuild the Israeli investigation center in which they all were detained. However, as they were always blindfolded, none of them knows what the place actually looked like. During the process, they recall their memories in the hopes of gaining a deeper understanding of being under someone else's absolute control.

Project: Checks and Balances

Director: Malek Bensmail (Algeria)

From the heart of an independent newspaper in Algiers, the legendary daily El Watan, this documentary film raises the issues of freedom of the press, editorial decisions; past and current events in Algeria, state authoritarianism, terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, the issue of language, and the drive and bravery of some to confront and reveal what many would rather keep hidden.

Project: My Paradise

Director: Ekrem Heydo (Syria)

Ever since the Arab Spring has reached Syria, a relentless civil war has shattered the city of Serêkanî on the Syrian-Turkish border. Based on the story of a few former classmates pictured in a photograph taken 25 years ago, the emergence and ramifications of the Syrian Revolution are recounted.

Project: Eccomi Eccoti

Director: Raed Rafei (Lebanon)

Two men, two worlds and a quest for a common future in a world beset with real and imaginary boundaries. The film unfolds as a travel-log navigating between Europe, a barricaded land of promise for homosexuals, and an Arab reality where gay characters hang in limbo between seeking acceptance and a desire for exile.

Project: Brother

Director: Mohamad Kassab (Syria)

In a remote place surrounded by forests in Turkey, the filmmaker is trying to repair his broken heart after receiving the news of the passing of his little brother in Aleppo. Instead, he starts digging up tough questions about the relationship with his family and the current events in Syria.

Project: This Little Father Obsession

Director: Selim Mourad (Lebanon)

Producer: Jana Wehbe

The filmmaker is the last son of his family. His attraction to men, his loss of fertility and the family house that is about to be demolished, make him reconsider the choice of not having children and confront his father about his different obsessions. Truth unveils as they go on a quest together to find a forgotten relative. Only a lover figure might replace his father's. During this journey, the house seems to persist.

Project: The Forgotten

Director: Ghada Terawi (Palestine)

Producer: May Odeh

The film is a journey in the life of Kozo Okamoto, a Japanese freedom fighter and member of the Japanese Red Army, who gave up his life in Japan to join the Palestinian liberation movement. The film knits an epic map of his journey through stories of Palestinians and Japanese who crossed Kozo's life and affected it.

Project: Project Prison Doc

Director: Amer Almatar and Razan (Syria)

Producer: Diana Al Jeiroudi

The two filmmakers gain access to a prison run by the Free Syrian Army and used to hold captured soldiers of Assad's regime. Once inside, they find the usual arsenal of weapons, and objectivity and distance is rendered useless. The pair is tormented: their desire to do the right thing clashes with the insistent voice of their trauma crying out for revenge.

Project: Merdaef Jemba

Director: Mohamed Abu Geth (Palestine)

Chased by the Israeli army, Hamouda and Ismael smuggle workers from Palestine to Israel through the desert region of Jemba. The film sheds light on the smuggler's network, which operates between charity and business, organized crime and the struggle for freedom.

Project: Those from the Shore (previously Limbo)

Director: Tamara Stepanyan (Lebanon)

Producer: Nathalie Combe

Marseille, 2014; Dozens of Armenian asylum seekers try to survive while waiting for their applications to be considered. Forced into stillness and impotence, they live in an in-between space: between two countries, between two lives. In a time and abstract space, made of nothing, their lives escape them completely. They float in Limbo.

Project: Spectres

Director: Djamel Kerkar (Algeria)

Producer: Jaber Debzi

Ouled Allal is an area ravaged by war during the 90s. A constellation of beings, voices, bodies, and buildings face the test of time and live the scars of a slow war without fronts. Among the ruins, memory travels; images and sounds draw a poetic map and a psycho-geographical exploration of the place.

Project: Tangled in Imbroglio

Director: Walid Tayaa (Tunisia)

A filmmaker is searching for a lost place: a legendary homosexual whorehouse in the heart of Tunis. He wanders the streets of the brothel district, discovering colorful characters, witnesses of a bygone era. Through their recollections, the setting appears in our imagination. Gradually, tongues are loosened, the prostitutes come to life, and secrets emerge, some funny, some heavy-hearted, others astonishing.



Project: Ibrahim (Jordan)

Director: Lina Al Abed

Producer: Rami Nihawi

Ibrahim, the director's father, was a secret member of the Palestinian Militant Organization "Revolutionary Council" (Abu-Nidal), which was known for its notorious and suspicious intelligence activities. In 1987, Ibrahim left his home in Syria for few days on a regular mission, but never came back. The film is a quest to collect the Father's traces.

Project: Skin (Syria)

Director: Afraa Batous

Skin follows the director's personal journey through vivid memories of two of her closest friends, Hussein and Soubhi, living in politically and socially tiring times. She documents their gradual collapse, which, as she realizes later, reflects her own inner collapse.



Afraa Batous, *Skin*

Workshops

For the second year in a row, selected ADP grantees are benefitting from Editing Consultancy Workshop in the framework of Talents Beirut (September 16-21, 2015) and networking opportunity in the frame of the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (IDFA, November 18th-28th). Moreover, the second year of partnership with IDFA has resulted in the festival inviting a project team from ADP to pitch their project in the IDFA Forum. This year, Palestinian filmmaker Raed Andoni pitched his documentary project *Ghosts Hunting*.

AFAC Editing Workshop

In the framework of Beirut Talents (BT), launched by Metropolis Association in partnership with the Berlin Film Festival's Berlinale Talents and FIDMarseille,

AFAC held its second Editing Workshop to a select number of documentary projects.

The second AFAC Editing Workshop (AEW) was tailored for participants to benefit from BT's program (master classes and screenings) while still enabling grantees to seek professional advice for their specific projects with three mentors:

- French editor Veronique Lange
- Lebanese/French editor Tina Baz
- FIDMarseille's Programmer Nicolas Feodoroff

Between September 17 and 21, the three experts worked with three documentary film teams, each comprising of director and editor: "Fragments of Dreams" by Bahia BenCheikh El Fegoun; "Eccomi Eccoti" by Raed Rafei; "Ibrahim" by Lina Al Abed. These three projects were selected based on their particular needs for an editing workshop while also taking into consideration the stage their projects are currently at (early or mid-editing). One of the main criteria was also the editor's profile (a young emerging one from the Arab region) as this workshop also aims to enable a generation of young Arab editors on the long run, that are able to develop local expertise that has a contextual and artistic sensitivity thus minimizing the need for foreign editors.



Mohamad Kassab, Brother

ADP Jurors

Jean-Pierre Rehm (France)

A French film theorist, critic and, since 2002, director of FIDMarseille – International Documentary Film Festival. He graduated of École Normale Supérieure, modern literature and philosophy, and was a lecturer of history and theory of film and art; he also worked at the French Ministry of Culture. Rehm is an editor of Cahiers du Cinéma and a regular author of film and art reviews, exhibition catalogues, artist and filmmaker monographs. He has curated a number of exhibitions of contemporary art, both in France and abroad, e.g., in Egypt (Cairo Museum of Modern Art), the Netherlands (Witte de With, Rotterdam) or Japan (Yokohama Art Center).

Hicham Falah (Morocco)

A director and cinematographer who graduated from the Louis Lumière School in Paris. Author of two short fiction films (L'Attention, Balcon Atlantico) and thirty documentaries mostly for french TV channels (from 7' to 52'). Artistic director of the International Women Film festival of Salé (FIFFS, Morocco, September) and Managing director of the International Documentary Film Festival in Agadir (FIDADOC, Morocco).

Ghalya Saadawi (Lebanon)

A writer and academic currently based in Beirut. She is lecturer at the American University of Beirut and the University of St. Joseph where she teaches courses in art theory, and the aesthetics and politics of Lebanese postwar art. Her essays and reviews have appeared in Bidoun, Frieze, Third Text, Jadaliyya, Bidayat, among other publications, artist monographs and edited books. She is co-editor of Untitled Tracks: On Alternative Music in Beirut (2010) and in 2011 she was editor of the Sharjah Biennial volume Plot for a Biennial. In 2013 she wrote and performed After the Future Heritage Redux (2080) as part of Ashkal Alwan's Homeworks Forum 6 in Beirut. Saadawi holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a PhD in Sociology from Goldsmiths, University of London titled Rethinking the Witness: Art After the Lebanese Wars (2015).

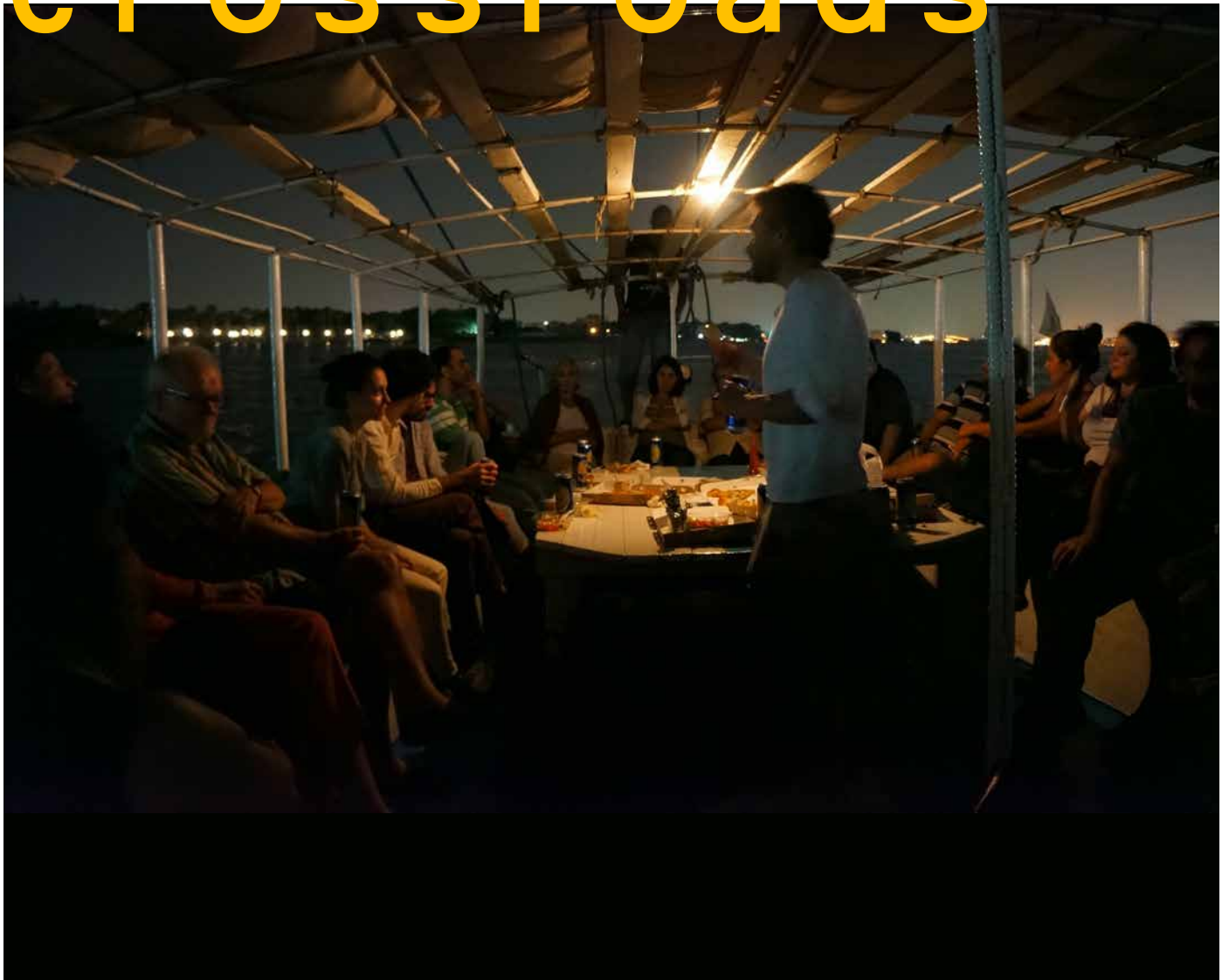




Grantee Cinema House, Abderrahmane Lahy from Mauritania, on the “Cinema House” project:

“When these films begin raising discussion about issues that were previously hidden, this can be considered direct evidence of social and political change.”

Crossroads



Crossroads in Cairo

Since the beginning of 2011, the Arab world has witnessed cataclysmic events unprecedented in over half a century. Against this backdrop, AFAC launched Crossroads in the fall of 2011 as a film program aimed at supporting emerging Arab filmmakers who are exploring the nuances and frontiers of these new possibilities. Crossroads is concerned with projects that are inspired by this period of transformation, and that deal with critical topics dear to filmmakers, who are discovering fertile grounds for innovation, creativity and experimentation, amidst the upheaval engulfing the region. The aim of this program is to help the selected 12 filmmakers develop and complete their projects. This is done through workshops, one-on-one meetings, networking opportunities at film markets and festivals, and post-production support as needed.

Crossroads Grantees

NAME	PROJECT TITLE	COUNTRY
Ahmad Ghossein	Upside Down	Lebanon
Mohammad Rashad	The Little Eagles	Egypt
Bahia BenCheikh El Fegoun	Fragments of Dreams (previously-Algerians: State of Mind, State of Affairs)	Algeria
Fadi Yeni Turk	Monumentum	Lebanon
Mohammad Hassan Shawky	And on a Different Note	Egypt
Karima Zoubir	Behind the Wall	Morocco
Rifqi Assaf	The Curve	Jordan
Sara Ishaq	Fatherland	Yemen
Philip Rizk & Jasmina Metwaly	Out on the Street	Egypt
Hazem Al Hamwi	Caravan in a Room	Syria
Djema Fawzy	Abruption	Tunisia
Mazen Khaled	A Very Dangerous Man	Lebanon

Progress

Out of the 12 projects, seven have been completed and screened at various festivals and venues: Mohamed Shawky's 'And On a Different Note', Mazen Khaled's 'A Very Dangerous Man', Sara Ishaq's 'Fatherland', Hazem Al-Hamwi's 'Caravan in a Room', Fadi Yeni Turk's 'Monumentum', Rifqi Assaf's 'The Curve', and Philip Rizk and Jasmina Metwaly's 'Out On The Street'. Four films are now ready to start their festival screenings after being recently

completed and/or working on finalizing final post-production stages: Karima Zoubir's 'Behind the Wall', Bahia BenCheikh El Fegoun's 'Fragments of Dreams' (previously entitled 'Algerians: State of Mind, State of Affairs'), Djema Fawzy's 'Abruption', and Mohammad Rashad's 'The Little Eagles'. Ahmad Ghossein's 'Upside Down' went through script changes and is being supported by three co-producers with shooting to start in 2016.



Karima Zoubir, Behind the Wall

Projects' Synopsis

Yasmina Metwali and Philip Rizk, *Out on the Street*



Project: Upside Down

Director: Ahmad Ghossein (Lebanon)

Five people try to escape the bombing in a southern Lebanese village during the last days of the July War. They decide to hide in the basement of an undamaged house. Soon, seven Israeli soldiers enter the first floor. Trapped by their own fears, they experience an out-of-control situation during the next three days.

Project: The Little Eagles

Director: Mohamed Rashad (Egypt)

Between two generations, the left-wing activists of the sixties and seventies, and children of the nineties, many things remain to be said. The film revolves around a confrontation between the dreams, aspirations, political action, failure, frustration, alienation, and finally the revolution on both sides.

Project: Fragments of Dreams

Director: Bahïa Bencheik El Fegoun (Algeria)

It all began with a question: Why did the revolution skip my country, Algeria? I look in the dictionary, around me, in the reality. I realize how much the meaning of Revolution has changed. Over the years, through the regimes, the politics and events, the terminology and its symbolism have taken on a negative connotation, a painful one. We are experiencing a sliding of meanings. Are we experiencing a sliding of revolution in Algeria?

Project: Monumentum

Director: Fadi Yeni Turk (Lebanon)

What if the Monument, a landmark designed to reinforce a message of power through time, was deemed to oblivion, re-adaptation or even destruction? What if it becomes a nightmare that will haunt forever the mind of its creator?

Such are the changes currently unfolding in the Arab world and seen in a diversity of stories reflecting on the destiny of monuments, shifting between memory and dementia, between re-appropriation, rejection or even annihilation.

Festivals and Screenings: The film premiered at Visions Du Reel in July 2015, followed by screenings at festivals in Portugal, Italy, and Lebanon. Its subject is opening opportunities for screenings at galleries and museums. Recently, it was invited by Beirut's Sursock Museum for a special screening and later this year it will be hosted by Marseille's MuCEM. Additionally, the film was picked by UK-based distribution company Journeyman Pictures for television distribution.

Project: And on a Different Note

Director: Mohammad Hassan Shawky (Egypt)

And on a Different Note is a reflection on the ambivalent relationship of an Egyptian living in New York City with the ongoing political developments in Egypt and the media rhetoric associated with them. This audiovisual experience is created through the juxtaposition of images of the author's various habitats within the city, and sound fragments from Egyptian prime time talk shows, echoing a growing sense of alienation and a state of physical detachment, and capturing the stillness of New York's urban life compared to the pace of events and their surrounding debates in Egypt.

Festivals and Screenings: The film premiered at 2015 Berlinale's Forum Expanded, screened in Cairo as part of the AFAC Film Week 2015 and exhibited at the MoMA as part of AFAC Cultural Week in New York in September 2015.

Project: Behind the Wall

Director: Karima Zoubir (Morocco)

Nadia, a 15 year-old girl, lives in the slums of Casablanca, surrounded by a wall that separates it from the rest of the city. One day, Nadia notices an unusual activity around the wall. Municipality workers deploy their tools and start painting the wall. Why is this sudden interest in the wall?

Project: The Curve

Director: Rifqi Assaf (Jordan)

One night, "Radi", a Jordanian of Palestinian origins suffering from social phobia, hears a shrilling scream in the distance. Despite his phobia, he challenges himself by switching on the lights of his home – a VW microbus. With the seemingly trivial switching on of a light, he soon finds himself on a road trip that alters his clockwork and very private lifestyle. A series of unanticipated events occur along the way - past and present memories and surprising illusions reveal themselves in collective confrontations.

Festivals and Screenings: The film had its world premiere at the Dubai International Film Festival in December 2015.

Project: Fatherland

Director: Sara Ishaq (Yemen)

The film follows the filmmaker's personal documentation of a casual reunion between estranged family members, which escalates into an all-engulfing popular uprising. The film also focuses on the shifting dynamics between women and men within the context of a modern Yemeni family, testing all preconceived ideas about identity, social customs, familial and social bonds at a time when women's roles and input have become integral to the Yemeni revolution.

Festivals and Screenings: The film was completed late 2013

and is still enjoying a good festival life. It received most recently the Jury Award at the International Human Rights Film Festival in Vienna and was bought by Al-Jazeera English. Winner of the Jury Award at the International Human Rights Film Festival in Vienna, Austria, it was featured at the IDFA Docs for Sale, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, at Carthage Cinema Days, Tunisia and bought by Al-Jazeera in Doha.

Project: Out on the Street

Director: Jasmina Metwaly & Phillippe Rizk (Egypt)

This is a film about workers. Throughout the ongoing Egyptian Revolution some workers have lost a relative or friend; most continue to be exploited by factory owners and many are fighting back and resisting. This film mixes the forms of documentary and fiction in order to see the Egyptian revolution from the workers' perspective beyond the factory's heavy gates, beyond the frozen assembly lines and rusty machinery. The film challenges both the visual discourse of the role of labor workers in film, as well as the workers' political narrative in the context of the revolution in Egypt.

Festivals and Screenings: The film premiered at 2015 Berlinale's Forum Expanded and screened at MoMA as part of AFAC Cultural Week in New York in September 2015. A version of the film along with an installation has been selected to screen at La Biennale de Venezia 2015 (German Pavilion). Also, the film recently had a limited release in Cairo at Zawya.

Project: Caravan in a Room

Director: Hazem al Hamwi (Syria)

The year 2011 witnessed the beginning of unprecedented social movement in Syria after 40 years of political stagnation. From the beginning, death was the risk at stake for venturing out to the streets and expressing one's rage. In the early



Karima Zoubir, Behind the Wall

months of the uprisings, I was overtaken by a deep feeling of the certainty of death looming near me, around me. How can it not be when it was claiming lives in the streets next to mine? I decided to face this feeling with a kind of courage and optimism, by finding enjoyment in the things I do. This film shares narratives from Syria. Some are personal stories others are social commentaries, some arise from the present, others look at the past, all seek to explain the reasons for the outbreak of this revolution and how one's soul can transform from seeking death to finding new desire for life.

Festivals and Screenings: The film was completed in early 2014 and screened at Leipzig, DIFF, IDFA and on ARTE and was bought by Al-Jazeera. It is distributed by Deckert Distribution (Germany).

Project: Abruption

Director: Fawzy Djemal (Tunisia)

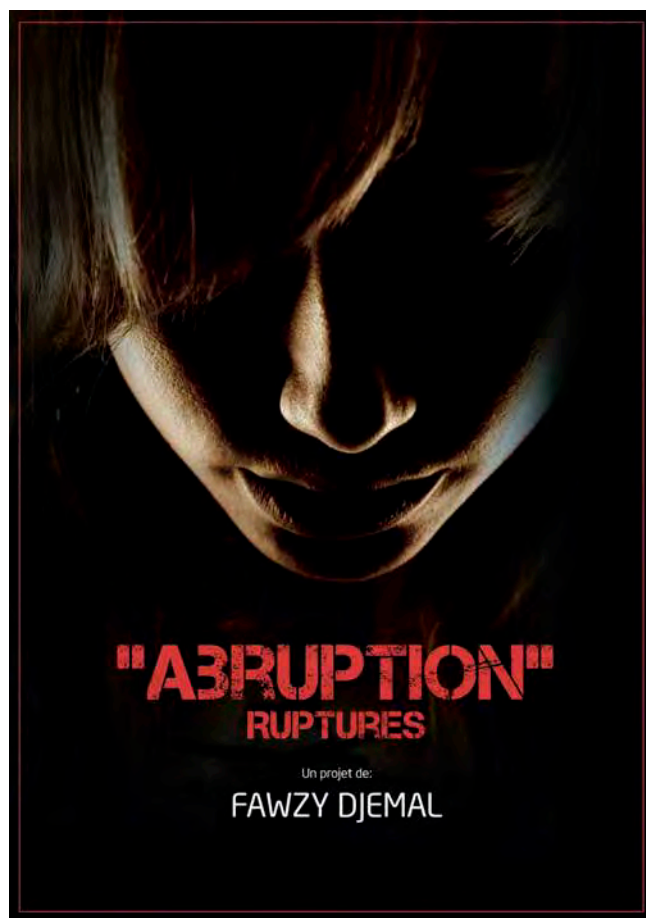
Tunisia lives in a climate of terror and violence two days after January 14th; an atmosphere of insecurity prevails in the country and in the heart of the people. Ramla, a 26-year-old movies props woman, has been busy for weeks in a shooting of a thriller. Forced to finish the missing few days of shooting, the team resumes work in a very tense atmosphere. Forty-five minutes before curfew, Ramla leaves the movie set to go straight home. Thwarted by the tense and stressful day, she forgets one crucial detail and finds herself in a complicated situation...

Project: A Very Dangerous Man

Director: Mazen Khaled (Lebanon)

Beirut, Lebanon; April 2012. Life seems as normal as can be in this city, yet something is bubbling underneath. As people go about their normal lives, a political activist gets chased around the streets of Hamra. Meanwhile, a suspicious looking bag easily changes hands, gets transported, and awaits an unknown destination in a busy Hamra café.

Festivals and Screenings: The film premiered at the Dubai International Film Festival in December 2012 and was also featured in the Ayam Beirut Al Cinema'eya in March 2013.



Fawzy Djemal, *Abruption*

Field Visits and Outreach



Amal Bachir



Presentation by Tebeba Press in Khartoum

AFAC's visit to Sudan took place between May 11th and May 17th 2015. For five days, AFAC's Executive Director Oussama Rifahi visited Khartoum, Omdurman and Khartoum North -Bahri, where he met many Sudanese artists, got introduced to the local cultural and artistic scene, and presented AFAC's grants programs to potential beneficiaries. Rifahi held around thirty cultural, artistic and social meetings, visited more than twenty sites, and met dozens of people who work in the cultural field.

We began our first day with a morning visit to the Taibah Press center, which specializes in organizing seminars, workshops and press conferences. During the meeting, critic and playwright Al-Serr al -Sayyed gave a general overview of the cultural and artistic scene in Sudan, focusing on three main topics.

First, the absence of an opportune atmosphere that supports art and culture, and consequently the absence of cultural accumulation and expertise, which makes cultural production solely based on individual initiatives. "Every artist works by himself and does not interact or engage with other artists; this is the case not only in Sudan, but in many other Arab countries."

Secondly, as in all countries that suffer from lack of freedom, art is not independent from politics in Sudan. Art's association with politics and the strong impact of the state's censorship renders artistic production truly difficult. Last, the lack of openness to regional Arab or African scenes and the scarcity of participation in regional festivals, limits the communication and networking with new ideas and projects that happen beyond the country's borders.

In the afternoon, we visited the Dabanga and Mojo galleries, specialized in exhibiting and selling Sudanese art works and sculptures as well as products from Sudanese folklore.

We began the second day at the French Institute in Khartoum and met one of its directors as well as a group of young artists. The discussion revolved around the different issues they face in their work, especially the need for training and workshops, the lack of financing, and the absence of any form of communication between young and old generations of artists.

The meeting at the French Institute was followed with a visit to the Goethe Institute. The third meeting of the second day was with critic Musaab al-Sawi, who talked with Rifahi about AFAC's role in supporting culture and arts in the Arab region. Rifahi said that governments in Arab countries neglect arts and culture in general, adding that many governmental bodies are mostly concerned with giving prizes. The conversation with Sawi was followed by a meeting with the newspaper's editor in chief, Mohammad Abdel Qader, at his office overseeing the coast of the Blue Nile. During the meeting, he raised the issues faced by cultural actors and intellectuals in Sudan. "The unstable political situation in the country had exhausted culture and despite the great potential of youth and the strong desire for creative and cultural work, intellectuals in Sudan are isolated, with a big gap between the young and old generation. Sudan needs to come closer to the Arab culture elsewhere in the region."

The fourth meeting was at the University of Khartoum's Abdallah El-Tayeb Institute, which was founded in 1999 to



strengthen Arabic language and emphasize it in the country's education curriculum. The institute holds various literary seminars, where Sudanese writers elaborate on various research topics.

We spent the third day in the city of Omdurman, and started it with a visit to the Theatre of Popular and Performing Arts. We moved then to the National Theatre, located in large urban zone next to the Theatre of Popular and Performing Arts, the radio and television buildings and the Blue Nile TV channel. The zone is bordered to the north by a women's prison and to the east by the Nile River. A meeting between AFAC, a group of playwrights and the managerial staff was held inside the National Theatre's hall.

The third stop was at the non-profit Abdel Karim Merghani Cultural center, the association that created the famous Al-Tayeb Salih prize for creative writing in 2002, considered the most important prize in Sudan for novel writing. We headed next to the Sudanese Film Group's office.

SFG was founded in April 1989, and is formed of a group of people specialized in movie-making, technical production, and distribution. Filmmaker Ibrahim Shaddad spoke of the cultural situation in Sudan back in the fifties, sixties and seventies. "There used to be 16 cinemas in Khartoum alone

and between three to four cinemas in every Sudanese city. Today, there are only two cinemas in Khartoum showing low-budget Indian movies. A previous statistical study has shown that the number of cinema fans in Sudan is multiple times bigger than football fans. In the past, the state was in charge of supporting cinema, but the sector was privatized and companies refused to venture in cinematic production".

In the evening, we met the Work Cultural Group at the Athenian square on Jamhuriya Street, a prestigious square that occupies an important place in the Sudanese collective memory, and a spot considered a get-together for friends, intellectuals and artists, before it was closed by the authorities along with other public spaces. The Work Cultural Group organizes cultural events, such as the street book fair, held on the first Tuesday of every month, where books are exhibited on the floor, sold or exchanged for other new or used books. The book fair is usually accompanied by musical concerts, fine arts exhibitions and poetry seminars.

The fourth day, we met with Sudanese artist Tareq Amin from the Hela Hop band, a former AFAC grantee. Amin is also the person behind the "Adil al-Madaris" initiative that attracted the attention of several international organizations for its diligent and innovative work rehabilitating and rebuilding schools all over Sudan. The fifth day was dedicated to



Meeting with Khartoum's visual artists



visiting libraries and publishing houses. At first, we visited the Medarek Publishing House, one of the largest Sudanese private publishing houses and met the owner, Mr. Elias Fath al-Rahman. Elias bitterly described how the state was not only failing to support culture, but also hampering its outreach. He noted that the cultural initiatives in Sudan were solely based on the effort of individuals from the Sudanese civil society. We met then with photographers Alaa Kheireddine and Mohammad Salah over coffee, who are members of the Sudanese Photography Club, formed of 30 young members all in their twenties. The young photographers displayed great enthusiasm and seemed to have a clear vision for photography in Sudan.

The next stop was at the Sudan Film Factory where we reviewed the visual arts library of filmmaker Hussein Sharif (1934-2005). Sudan Film Factory aims at producing an alternative independent cinema and training Sudanese youths to master filmmaking skills. Since its creation in 2010, it has produced 33 films. The organization's director Talal Afifi said that two workshops were held every year. "Every January, we organize the Sudan Independent Cinema Festival, during which we show movies of good quality at public squares." Afifi also noted that the project needed funding in order to rehabilitate the team, especially because those working in the project were volunteers. "We suffer from the geographical restrictions imposed on applicants for external grants from abroad. Such grants are usually given according to geography and we often miss out: Sudan is not an Eastern African country, not a Middle Eastern country and not an Arab Spring country!" he said.

The six and the last day in Khartoum began with a visit to Sudan Café, a popular café in the rural suburb of Shambat. Every Friday, the café organizes a musical concert for young bands seeking an opportunity to perform in public. The café owner told us of the difficulties he faces to obtain licenses and the inhibiting security permissions needed to hold these concerts.

We moved to the Al-Faisal Cultural Center, built by the "Al-Faisal Islamic Bank." The center offers comprehensive IT, knowledge and educational services to all, through a

traditional library, an electronic library, a children's library, an exhibition hall, a conference hall, an images gallery and training programs. AFAC ended its trip to Sudan with a visit to a fine arts exhibition entitled "Al-Ajmal Baynana" (The most Beautiful Among Us) by a group of Sudanese fine artists.

This field trip to Sudan showed us foremost the large gap that exists between the old and new generations. Artists and intellectuals from the old generation seemed discouraged, tired and disappointed. The prevailing feeling is that their experiences and efforts were not fruitful and have not yielded much over the last thirty years.

As for young artists, they are more pragmatic and open to the cultural movement outside their own country. They believe that change is possible. Social media has made it easier for them to communicate with the outside world and learn about new and varied experiences. Through social media, they are able to network with people from different countries without having to travel or undergo censorship. But their desire for change is often faced with the bleak reality and the many obstacles, such as censorship and government's control of the cultural and artistic sector, as well as the lack of support and financing. This has created a feeling of despair that they are trying hard to overcome. This situation is not too unfamiliar unfortunately and can be seen in many other countries living on the peripheries of the Arab region. Sudan enjoys a very rich cultural heritage, but facing the dire risk of extinction. Despite the unstable political situation, the state's neglect of cultural centers and the strict censorship on arts and cultures though, there are numerous courageous individual initiatives, a very positive energy and great determination on the part of young Sudanese artists to resist their despair through creative work, launching small projects, organizing workshops to develop their skills, even with a scarcity of funds.

At AFAC, we hope to be able to support more Sudanese artists and help them in their efforts to complete their projects, injecting resources and energy in a country that has unfortunately been unkind to its intellectuals and artists.

Covered Social Justice Themes



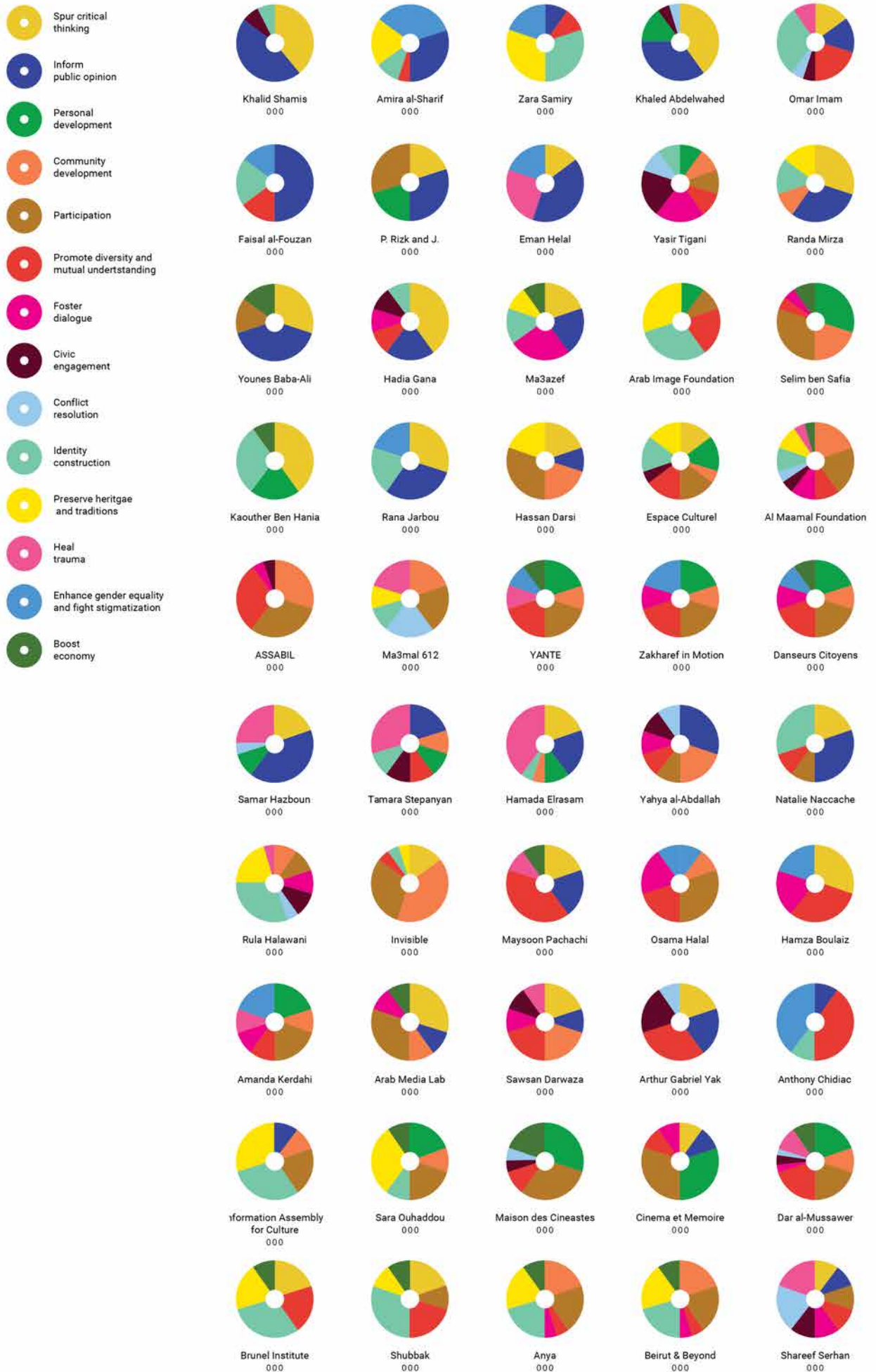
Eman Hlail, *Just Stop*

Following its mission to promote individual self-expression to engender critical thought and inclusive social engagement, AFAC continues to bring forth a number of diversified social justice themes to promote a deeper understanding of the region's complex realities and to rise above the reductionist portrayals found in mainstream media. The selected 139 projects for 2015 tackled many social issues using innovative artistic means and in many cases addressing age old themes from new and interesting perspectives. We identified the following themes to illustrate social justice issues covered in the work being produced by our grantees in 2015.

- Assessing Marginalized Voices
- Challenging Taboos
- Emerging peripheries
- Interrogating the uprisings
- Inventing Identity
- Oppression and injustice
- War and exile
- Tyranny and repression in communities
- Corruption
- Detention and torture
- Displacement and migration and exile
- Religion and its effects
- Daily life in popular neighborhoods
- Women's rights
- Homosexuality and phobia
- Desire for change and rebellion on reality
- The obstacles of youth in achieving their ambitions

Furthermore and while producing the ACEF book, we have defined 14 parameters to quantify social return on investment. Measuring social impact is a highly debated and in many ways subjective issue, so what we presented in the ACEF book is an intuitive approach for measuring social change. It is a conceptual, not a scientific approach, which is based on the research that has been produced on this topic in recent years. Initially we set out to categorize the 50 projects in three different sections, with each section corresponding to one integral component of social change—be it raising awareness, shifting perspectives, or inspiring action. We then weighed each project against a set of 14 different dimensions of social change. By doing so, we have critically examined the social impact of each of the 50 ACEF-supported projects, and uncovered how these projects are leading to social change in the Arab region. Those 14 dimensions are shown below.

- **Spur Critical Thinking**—by offering alternative points of view and improving the intellectual and cognitive skills of people and communities.
- **Inform Public Opinion**—by documenting what is happening and what has happened, and shedding light on justice, abuse, corruption and inequality
- **Personal Development**—by providing tools for young people, especially in volatile and vulnerable environments, to grow and succeed
- **Community Development**—by improving safety, stability, independence, and quality of life for various local communities
- **Participation**—by providing spaces for different groups of people to come together and work towards a more sustainable future
- **Promote Diversity and Mutual Understanding**—by encouraging debate and promoting reconciliation, tolerance and mutual understanding
- **Foster Dialogue**—by enabling freedom of assembly and pushing freedom of expression
- **Civic Engagement**—by promoting cultural democracy, stemming from the belief that culture is a basic human right
- **Conflict Resolution**—by promoting empathy, tolerance and respect for diversity, and building peace
- **Identity Construction**—by improving creative, emotional and intellectual capacities and helping advance personal and collective identity formation and values
- **Preserve Heritage and Traditions**—by providing support for the preservation of cultural traditions, heritage, production, and languages
- **Heal Trauma**—by supporting the health of communities and improving tolerance, healing, diversity and citizenry
- **Enhance Gender Equality and Fight Stigmatization**—by supporting communication and raising awareness on causes like sexuality, abuse, poverty, war, refugees, and marginalized groups
- **Boost Economy**—by creating jobs and generating resources for local communities



International Recognition and Awards



Ely Dagher wins the Palme d'Or in Cannes

Three AFAC Grantees Nominated for the Worldpress Joop Swart Masterclass

Amsterdam, Netherlands, April 17

Three Arab Documentary Photography Program (ADPP) grantees Samar Hazboun (Palestine), Reem Falaknaz (UAE) and Faisal Al Fouzan (Kuwait) have been shortlisted for the Worldpress Joop Swart Masterclass. The trio, working on women forced to give birth at Israeli checkpoints, observing village life in Ras el Khaimah and migrant workers' lives in Kuwait respectively, were selected by a committee of 136 professionals that selected 163 young photographers from around the world.

Seven AFAC grantees at the 65th Berlinale

Berlin, Germany, February 5-15

Five of AFAC's present and two former grantees presented their films at the 65th Berlinale.

Two AFAC grantees, Akram Zaatar (Lebanon) and Marouan Omara (Egypt), received a special mention and a development grant respectively at the 2015 Berlinale.

Six AFAC Grantees at the Venice Biennale

Venice, Italy, May 4

AFAC is proud to announce that 6 of our grantees will be a part of the 56th Venice Biennale (May 9- Nov 22, 2015). La Biennale di Venezia is one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world and takes place every two years. Countries are invited to exhibit an artist or group of artists

in their national pavilions. The participating AFAC grantees are Mounira Al Solh (Lebanon), Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige (Lebanon), Ala Younis, and Philip Rizk & Jasmina Metwaly (Egypt).

AFAC Grantee Ely Dagher Wins the Palme d'Or in Cannes

Cannes, France, May 25

Ely Dagher's *Waves '98* was awarded the Palme d'Or for Best Short Film at the closing ceremony of the 68th Cannes Film Festival. The AFAC-supported 15-minute animated short was 1 of 9 films selected by the 2015 Short Films Competition out of 4550 short films submitted.

Waves '98 is the first Lebanese film to win the Palme d'Or at the Festival (Maroun Baghdadi was awarded the Jury Prize for *Out of Life* in 1991) and the second Arab film in the Festival's history beside Mohammad Lakhdar Hamina's *The Chronicles of the Years of Fire* which won the Palme d'Or in 1975.

Cities of Salt

London, United Kingdom, 22 July

On Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 the Linbury Studio Theater in London (Royal Opera House) hosted the world premiere of Syrian composer Ziad Jabri's, *'Cities of Salt'*. Based on four scenes from Abdel Rahman Munif's novel and supported by AFAC's 2014 Music grant, *'Cities of Salt'* is the first opera to perform at the Royal Opera House by an Arab composer. This international co-production, as part of the Shubbak Festival (also recipient of an AFAC grant) was shown in fragmentary fashion to give the audience a taste of the to-be finished three-act opera.



Cities of Salt

Breakdown by Program

Cinema

- Akram Zaatar Awarded at DMZ Docs 2015
- Ossama Mohammed Receives the Prince Claus Award
- The Valley receives FIPRESCI Award
- AFAC Grantee Ely Dagher Wins the Palme d'Or
- AFAC grantees, Nancy Naous, Mohamed Chrif Tribak and Salim Abou Jabal, win at Festival International du Cinéma Méditerranéen de Tétouan
- AFAC-supported project "Love Stories from Palestine" wins MBC Hope Prize
- Two AFAC Grantees, Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk, chosen for German Pavilion at Venice Biennale
- AFAC supported films, As I Open my Eyes, 3000 Nights, and Waves '98, premiering at the Toronto Film Festival
- The 2015 Venice Film Festival featured AFAC-supported film As I open my eyes in the Orizzonti section in addition to two projects, "Ali, the Goat and Ibrahim" and "Zineb hates the snow", in Final Cut in Venice.
- AFAC supported film "Out on the Street" Screened at FidMarseille
- 14 AFAC-Funded Films at the 8th Beirut Cinema Days
- 7 AFAC grantees at the 65th Berlinale
- "Waves '98" Lebanese Premiere at Metropolis!
- Two AFAC supported films at IDFA
- AFAC grantee Leyla Bouzid awarded in Carthage
- 7 AFAC supported films at DIFF
- "As I Open my Eyes" awarded at DIFF; 3 other AFAC supported projects received awards from the Dubai Film Connection: The Maiden's Pond by Bassem Breish, The Bridge by Hala Lotfy and Me and Murdoch by Yehya Abdallah.
- Waves '98 in Sundance Film Festival

ADPP

- Four photographers of the ADPP program, Natalie Naccache (Lebanon), Omar Imam (Syria), Reem Falaknaz (UAE), Samar Hazboun, in Athr Gallery
- AFAC grantee Eman Helal participated in the Joop Swart Masterclass
- 3 AFAC grantees nominated for the Worldpress Joop Swart Masterclass; Samar Hazboun, Reem Falaknaz and Faisal Al-Fouzan.

RTR

- Cities of Salt Opera Premieres at Shubbak 2015

Visual Art

- Two AFAC Grantees, Ali Cherri and Roy Dib, at the 19th Contemporary Art Festival Sesc_Videobrasil: Southern Panoramas

Other

- Six AFAC Grantees at the Venice Biennale; Mounira Al Solh (VA Grantee), Joanna Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige (ADFP grantee), Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk (Crossroads grantees)
- Former AFAC grantees Jananne Al-Ani, Doa Aly, Ali Cherri, Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige and Saba Innab at "Lest The Two Seas Meet" at MOMA Warsaw. Four AFAC grantees exhibiting in Warsaw. The show offered art works by 23 artists from around the world including AFAC grantees Vartan Avakian, Vikram Divecha, Monira Al Qadiri and Ali Cherri.
- The Arab Thought Foundation's Arts Creativity Award went to the AFAC-supported book "Rebel melody, the biography of the brothers Fulayfel" by the researcher Mohammad Karim and general brigadier Dr. George Herro. It is worth mentioning that the Arts Creativity Award for 2014 was awarded to another AFAC music grantee; artist Rima Khcheich for her music album "Hawa".

Timeline



JANUARY

Jan. 23 – Feb. 5

Chobi Mela International Festival of Photography – VIII, Bangladesh

FEBRUARY

1

Open Call Visual Arts and Performing Arts

Open Call ADP

Open Call ADPP

2 – 4

Informal Donors Meeting for Arts and Culture in the Arab Region, Amman

5 – 15

Berlinale

14 – 17

Second ADPP workshop 2014 cycle, Beirut

15

Open Call ANWP

24 – 25

Arab Foundations Forum Meeting, Amman



MARCH

6 – 11

Qumra Film Festival, Doha

12 – 21

The 8th Beirut Cinema Days

18 – 21

InVisible at Art, Dubai

27

The Creative Economy, Abu Dhabi

28

Close Call ANWP



APRIL

15

Publication of the ACEF book

15 – 22

Second AFAC Film Week, Cairo

6 – 13

European Network of National Institutes of Culture Conference, Beirut



MAY

1

Open Call Cinema

Close Call Visual Arts and Performing Arts

Close Call ADP

7

Announcement of ANWP Grantees

10

Close Call ADPP

11 – 17

AFAC field trip to Sudan



JUNE

1

Open Call Music and RTR



JULY

7

Announcement of ADPP Grantees

7 – 13

First Workshop ANWP

17

Announcement of Performing Arts Grantees

20

Announcement of Visual Arts Grantees

22

Announcement of ADP Grantees

Reception at the Shubbak Festival, London

Premiere of Cities of Salt at the Royal Opera House in London

AUGUST

7

Close Call Cinema

23 – 27

Workshop ADPP 2015 cycle



SEPTEMBER

1

Close Call RTR and Music

16 – 21

AFAC Editing Workshop

17 – 20

Beirut Art Fair

20 – 26

AFAC Cultural Week, New York

OCTOBER

Oct. 27 – Nov. 1

Second Workshop ANWP

19

Publishing infographic on Measuring impact of arts and culture



NOVEMBER

1 – 4

Masterclass Philanthropy in Arts and Culture Lausanne

17

Fundraising dinner, Beirut

18

End of year gala dinner, Beirut

18 – 29

IDFA Amsterdam

24

Announcement of RTR and Music Grantees

Announcement of Cinema Grantees

DECEMBER

2 – 4

ELIA, Symposium Cape Town

9-16

DIFF, Dubai

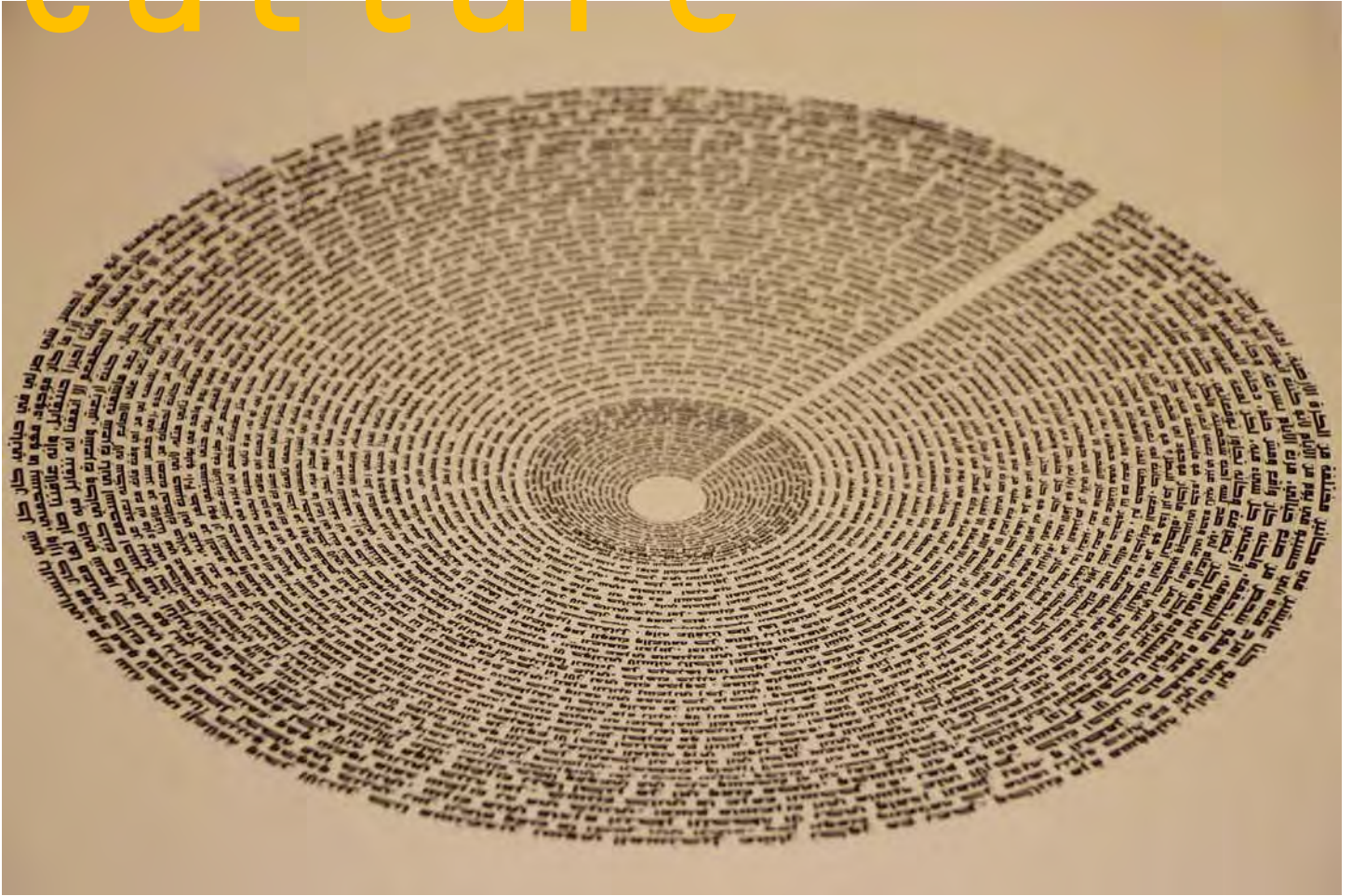
16

Fundraising dinner, Jeddah



Advocacy for Arts and Culture

From the exhibition 'Young Saudi Artist' at Athar Gallery in Jeddah



AFAC maintains communication and accessibility to all its stakeholders – artists and cultural practitioners, patrons and donor foundations, media, critics and cultural journalists. AFAC also conducts roundtable discussions, field trips and event participations throughout the region, allowing for direct communication and visibility with a broader spectrum of people involved in the cultural field.

AFAC benefited from a substantial amount of coverage in the press and was featured in a number of television interviews on local and

regional outlets prior to the end of year gala event in Beirut. Many of AFAC's video material are available on AFAC's YouTube channel.

Newsletters and web-news have been published throughout the year, relaying latest AFAC events and latest cultural opportunities for Arab practitioners and cultural networks across the region and internationally. In addition 14 interviews have been conducted with a diverse selection of our grantees and published on our website in print format (grantee stories) and multimedia format (grantee voices).

New Communication and Fundraising Material

This year, AFAC produced the first Arab Creativity and Entrepreneurship Fund book (ACEF). Published on April 15th 2015; the book includes the list of beneficiaries, grantees stories and an assessment of the overall performance of the Fund.

Two trailers were commissioned in 2015 as part of our strategy in bringing forth compelling and touching narratives around the work of our grantees.

The first trailer that relates the story of ADPP grantee Syrian photographer Omar Imam was shared extensively, creating positive feedback and going beyond raising awareness to achieving impact on donor's policy. The second trailer, *Dancing on the Edge*, takes an intimate look at the rise of contemporary dance in the Arab world. The contemporary dance scene in the Middle East and North Africa has taken great strides forward. There is more public recognition of contemporary dance as an art form and as a vehicle of creative and social expression. A generation of promising and ambitious contemporary dancers is taking up dance as a means of social, political and artistic liberation; and an ever growing and diverse audience is breaking the stereotype of the traditionally elite, intellectual dance and theatre audience.

AFAC featured in Canvas Magazine



In the July/August issue, *Turbulent Waters* the 56th Venice Biennale, Canvas magazine published a 16-page exposé highlighting the work of AFAC. The special article featured a number of AFAC grantees, taking an in depth look at a number of projects. AFAC investors shared their experiences

and explained in their interviews why it is important to support arts and culture. Canvas, is the premier international bi-monthly magazine dedicated to art and culture from the Middle East and Arab world.

AFAC Film Week



Film distribution in the region remains an ongoing challenge that demands serious attention. AFAC Film Week is but a small attempt to showcase and support independent Arab filmmakers that have been awarded AFAC grants.

The AFAC Film Week showcases a selection of films that were made possible with the assistance of AFAC's funding and professional support. In this year's film week, 16 films were shown in Cairo, Tanta and Minya, most of which for the first time. They hail from 7 different countries: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. They range from feature-length documentaries and fiction to short and experimental films. The 16 films are live depictions reflecting on contemporary Arab societies, with all its complex challenges of identity and cultural heritage, disintegration, revolution and inner turmoil, expressing with honesty and depth the chaos of the present scene and the foggy future. The directors were flown to Cairo from all parts of the region and introduced to the audiences prior to the screenings. Q&A sessions were held at the end of each screening moderated by AFAC's Film Programs Manager Rima Mismar. Three directors from Syria and Palestine were denied entry visa to Egypt. The Q&A sessions for their films were compensated with Skype encounters between the filmmakers and the audiences.

In addition to the screenings, two panel discussions were held on April 21st and 22nd entitled *Documentary Films for Social Justice* and *Arab Film Distribution: Initiatives and Attempts*. Those two panel discussions raised issues of local distribution, digital alternatives, social justice, and how these kinds of films can create change.

Outcome

Zawya Cinema in Downtown Cairo was vibrant the whole week of AFW with audience and press.

Attendees included general public, journalists, film students



and friends of AFAC. Many attendees were professionals in the independent filmmaking scene who had technical questions about production and about funding. A notable feature was the cosmopolitanism of the audience, locals and foreigners, multi-generational and many nationalities were present.

The ongoing context of transformation, instability and change was an apparent theme in each of the projects and an eye-opener for audiences. Talal Derki's "Return to Homs" and Oussama Mohammad's "Silvered Water" were deeply informing the situation in Syria to a wide public, while Rania and Raed Rafei's "74: The Reconstitution of a Struggle" echoed strongly with the January 25th Revolution and left the youth in the theater in tears.

The Program

1. The Wanted 18; Documentary
2. The Sea is Behind; Fiction
3. The Council; Documentary
4. Harag W Marag (Chaos, Disorder); Fiction
5. 74 (The Reconstruction of a Struggle); Docu-fiction
6. Roshmia; Documentary
7. Return to Homs Documentary
8. Underground/On the Surface; Documentary
9. Free Range; Fiction
10. And Romeo Married Juliette; Fiction
11. Morning Fears, Night chants; Documentary
12. And on a Different Note; Experimental
13. Silvered Water; Documentary
14. 28 Nights and a Poem; Documentary
15. The Valley; Fiction
16. Living Skin; Documentary

Documentary Films for Social Justice /Goethe Institute

Documentaries are often considered as the ideal platform to discuss social issues; so much that some have come to believe it is the ultimate 'tool' to generate awareness about social justice. What are good examples of films that have helped push social justice forward? How do filmmakers view this dimension of their work? Are they conscious of the impact these films can have and their potential to create change, or are they mostly concerned with expression and storytelling? Does awareness of the audience lead to the necessity to compromise? Those questions and others were addressed by a group of film professionals including Cara Mertes, director

of the Ford Foundation's JustFilms initiative, producer Orwa Nyrabia, and filmmaker Nadine Salib as part of the AFAC Film Week program.

Arab Film Distribution initiatives and Attempts / Cimatheque

Distributing Arab films within the region is the biggest challenge facing filmmakers, producers, and distributors today. The question of 'audience vs. content' is more of a 'chicken and egg' riddle: Until we are able to provide the right diversity of Arab films, one is unable to anticipate the kind of relationship between this audience and those films. Many believe that the way to go is building the audience first and restoring its ability to enjoy films outside of commercial formats. This panel will bring together key players and initiatives on the ground, trying to tackle this important issue through alternative approaches as well as classical means, sharing with the public their findings and challenges. Panelists are Khalid Abdalla from CineCima, Mohammad Shawky Hassan from NAAS, Youssef Shazli from Zawya and Diana El Jeiroudi from DOX BOX.

AFAC concludes a successful Cultural Week in New York

AFAC took its support of artists a step further by showcasing their works to a wider audience. The most recent activity in that vein was an AFAC Cultural Week in New York. A full program of photography exhibitions, visual arts presentations and 8 film screenings were presented at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in the presence of the artists. Hundreds of people joined AFAC in celebrating the creative and courageous work coming out of the region. The AFAC Cultural Week was crowned by a gala dinner hosted by the Ford Foundation on September 23rd. The prestigious evening which was attended by diplomats, heads of cultural institutions and leading businessmen and art philanthropists featured screenings of films and works illustrating the breadth and scope of AFAC activities. The president of the Ford Foundation Mr. Darren Walker delivered a speech emphasizing AFAC's contribution to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Beirut Gala Dinner Media Coverage

For the 2015 gala dinner, AFAC endeavored to upgrade its communication efforts by making sure to have continuous media coverage through TV, press and online interviews in the buildup, during and after the event. AFAC held many press and television interviews to introduce the mission and work of AFAC to a wider local and regional audience while the AFAC gala dinner received additional coverage through a number of press and online releases and was featured in special reports on several television channels.



Measuring the Impact of Arts and Culture

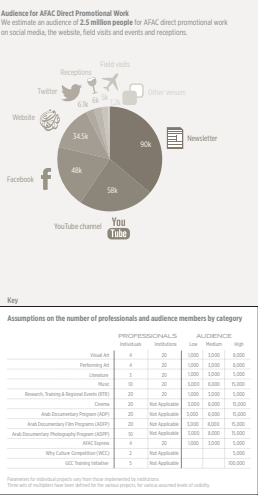
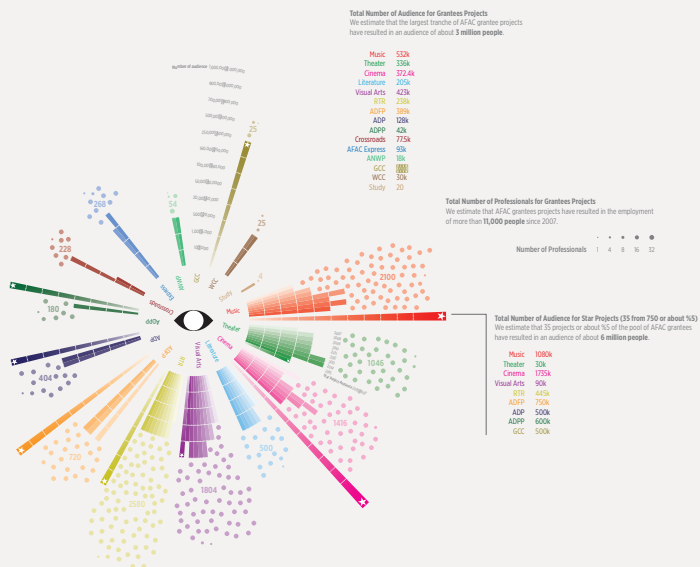
We have kept busy over the years trying to make the case for the impact of Arts and Culture on our communities and societies. We have struggled, as many of our peer institutions with the difficulties of quantifying the intangible social impact of our interventions, a requirement that many have repeatedly asked for, be it governments, donors, individual patrons, etc.

Beyond storytelling and testimonials, we have decided to look at two main dimensions of impact: audience numbers and professionals involved: who and how many people are actually being exposed to those projects, involved with their development and implementation, and watching them in festivals, theaters, cultural centers, in private or public; also, the number of professionals involved in the genesis and delivery of such project, resulting no doubt in the obvious economic benefits.

We defined a set of parameters for the various genres and categories of the projects we supported over the last 9 years and ran them one project at a time. We identified a small subset of star projects that have gained much higher visibility through winning a prize, or screening in an international festival, etc., and estimated throughout the number of professionals that have been involved.

This by far doesn't claim to be scientifically accurate and needs to be refined, nor are we losing focus of the important but more difficult impact to measure: changing minds, imagining a better future, fighting extremism, facilitating communication across cultures. We mapped the results of our analysis in the below infographic, which you can also find on our website, under Mapping AFAC"

Professionals Involved and Audience Outreach – AFAC Funded Cultural Projects, 2007 to July 2015 (without 2015 grantees)



We estimate the **total audience** for AFAC work to be in the region of **9 million** over years 2007-2014 (mid-year 2015 without 2015 grantees).

We estimate that AFAC grantees projects have resulted in the involvement of more than **11,000 professionals** over years 2007-2014 (mid-year 2015 without 2015 grantees).

Grantees **2.8 million**
AFAC Network **249 K**
Star Projects **5.8 million**

Meetings and Participation to Events

Chobi Mela International Festival of Photography - VIII



Dhaka, Bangladesh January 23 – February 5

AFAC attended the eighth edition of the Chobi Mela International Festival of Photography, held every two years in Dhaka, with the intention of inviting its director to join photography workshops held with Athr Gallery in Jeddah. Chobi Mela, the first festival of photography in Asia, is an exciting venture that Drik Picture Library Ltd. and Pathshala have initiated. Since its inception in 2000, it has been the single biggest photography event in Asia and the first of a regular biannual, one that has become one of the highlights of the Asian calendar.

Informal Donors Meeting for Arts and Culture in the Arab Region

Amman, Jordan, February 2-4

AFAC participated in the Informal Donors Meeting for Arts and Culture in the Arab Region; an annual meeting bringing together institutions, cultural centers and embassies working to support contemporary arts and culture across the Arab region.

The 2015 edition of the meeting took place at the Al Balad Theatre and was co-hosted by the Open Society Foundations, the Aga Khan Music Initiative, a programme of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, and Tamasi Performing Arts Collective. AFAC executive director Oussama Rifahi attended the Meeting and chaired a session on philanthropy in the Arab world.

Arab Foundations Forum Meeting

Amman, Jordan, February 24-25

AFAC participated at the annual meeting of the Arab Foundations Forum that was held in Amman, Jordan for two days.

InVisible at Art Dubai

March 18-21

After its unveiling on November, 29th 2014, the 5 artworks part of AFAC's public art commission will remain in situ for Art Dubai before being uninstalled on March, 31st 2015. Inspired by the fleeting nature of culture materiality, which fades, disappears, loses its original meaning, or gets replaced by something new, we had to ask, how can public art offer a space for what is lost and what will remain? And how do these questions pertain to a city as vibrant as Dubai?

The 8th Beirut Cinema Days

Beirut, Lebanon, March 12-21

14 AFAC-supported films screened during the eighth edition of Beirut Cinema Days/Ayam Beirut Al Cinema'iya. Among the selection of titles were award-winning feature, documentary and short films.

The Creative Economy – Abu Dhabi Festival

Abu Dhabi, UAE, March 27

AFAC executive director Oussama Rifahi was one of the panelists of a conference on the creative economy held at NYUAD Saadiyat Campus. The event, which was part of the Abu Dhabi Festival's Riwaq Al Fikr Series, touched on one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the world economy. This program also celebrated the launch of the Arabic edition of the UN Creative Economy Report 2013, co-published by UNESCO and UNDP, with support from ADMAF.

EUNIC (European Network of National Institutes of Culture)

Beirut, Lebanon, April 6-13

AFAC grants manager Racha Salah was invited to give a 30-min presentation followed by a Q&A on Fundraising in the Cultural Sector. The presentation was chosen as a successful case study to feature in the second part of the MENA/ European training in culture and creative sector management cycle. Attendants from across the region were invited to the training.

The first master class in "Philanthropy in Arts and Culture"

Lausanne, Switzerland, 1– 4 November

AFAC in partnership with HSBC Private Bank offered a first master class in "Philanthropy in Arts and Culture" at the IMD business school in Lausanne, Switzerland between 1 and 4 November. The curriculum was specially designed for "future philanthropists" aspiring to get engaged and brought together 15 individuals from 6 Arab countries. The sessions explored the development of philanthropy through history and provided an overview of the range of models now practiced around the world in seeking to create societal change. Participants articulated the vision for their philanthropy in arts and culture with specialists and explored how it can deliver social impact, dwelling on the importance of good governance and management in philanthropy and exploring the concepts of responsibility, accountability, and transparency.

AFAC celebrates a successful end of year gala dinner

Beirut, Lebanon, 18 November

AFAC held its yearly fundraising gala dinner on the 18th of November 2015, with the support of HSBC private bank. In the presence of around 400 guests- philanthropists, patrons of the arts, gallerists, leading businessmen, diplomats, artist and media- this unique gala dinner served as a high end platform for all guests to meet and interact. To that effect, the event was held under the theme of "Make Art Possible" in order to channel support for arts and culture by raising awareness on the importance of Cultural philanthropy within the Arab region.



AFAC participates in ELIA Symposium



Cape Town, South Africa, December 2 – 4

The African Arts Institute organized a leadership symposium for the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) from 2-4 December in Cape Town, South Africa. This is the network's biannual event aimed at leaders of tertiary institutions that teach the arts, with 300 leading institutions from 50 countries as members. Every second year, ELIA hosts this event outside of Europe, and this was the first time it was done in Africa with approximately 120 participants, directors and deans, representatives from various leading arts schools. AFAC was invited to present a keynote paper on the last day and session of the conference. The proposed theme is Dominance. Diversity. Disruption, underpinned by questions such as "What is hegemonic in terms of 'the canon', aesthetics, worldviews, standards of excellence? How does this play out in a culturally diverse world, with different worldviews, value systems, religious beliefs, and aesthetic traditions? How do the arts, and the institutions teaching these, disrupt, reinforce or nuance these dialectic tensions between the economic, the political and the cultural?" Oussama Rifahi, executive director of AFAC, discussed the current situation in the Arab region, including the status of arts and culture, artists, both in the region as well as in exile and challenged the representatives to join forces in formulating an initiative that could support exiled artists living in Europe, not having access to education opportunities in their host countries.

Webpage Statistics



Online Presence

The most visited page has been AFAC's Calendar Page; the numbers were boosted thanks to our communication campaign around the events happening during our Cultural Week in New York.

Maximum Unique Visitors per Month

15561 / 15057 / 12331 / 4810 / 1940

2015

2014

2013

2012

2011

Maximum Number of Page Views per Month

200939 / 201243 / 183006 / 68669 / 10000

2015

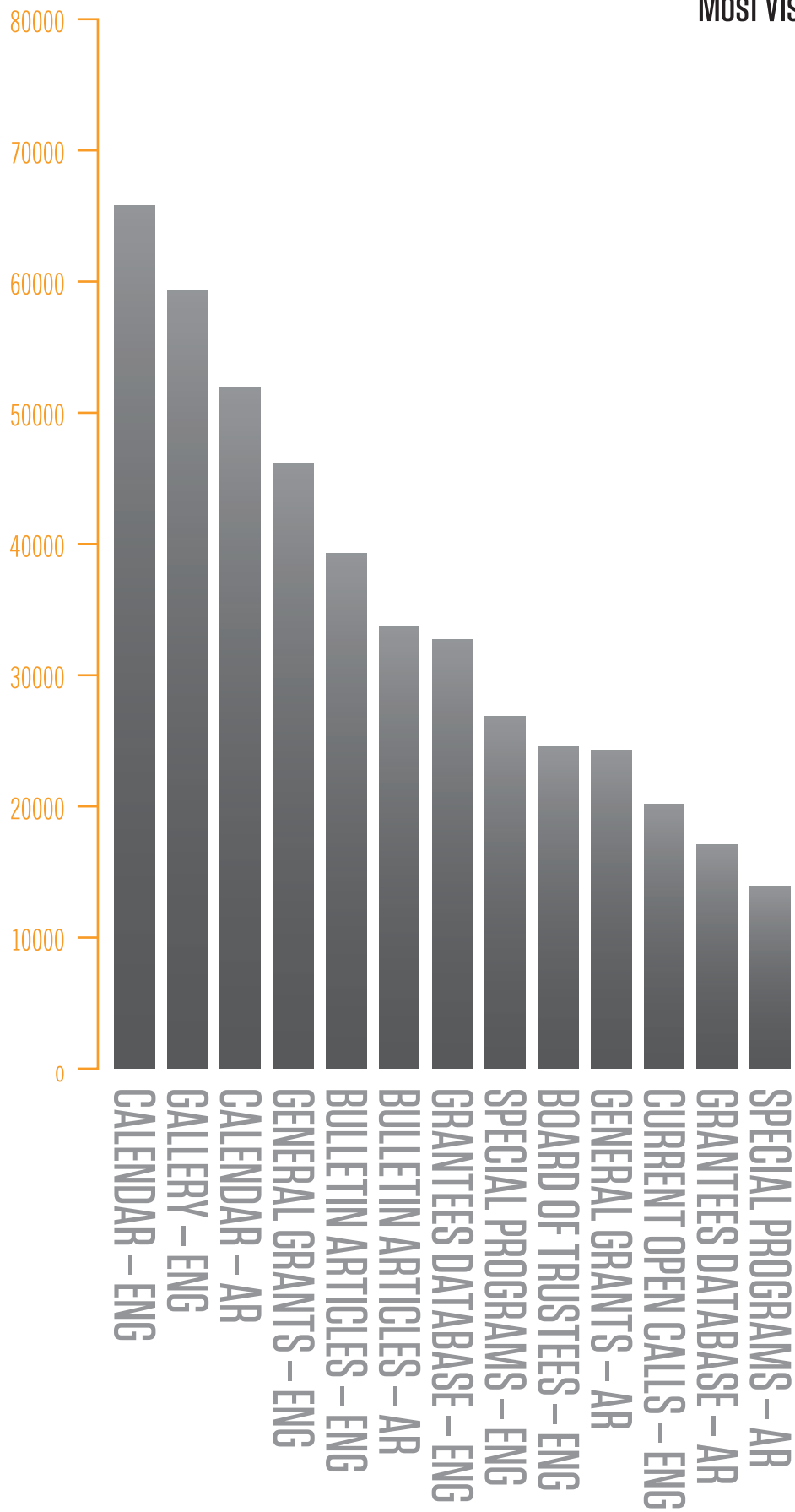
2014

2013

2012

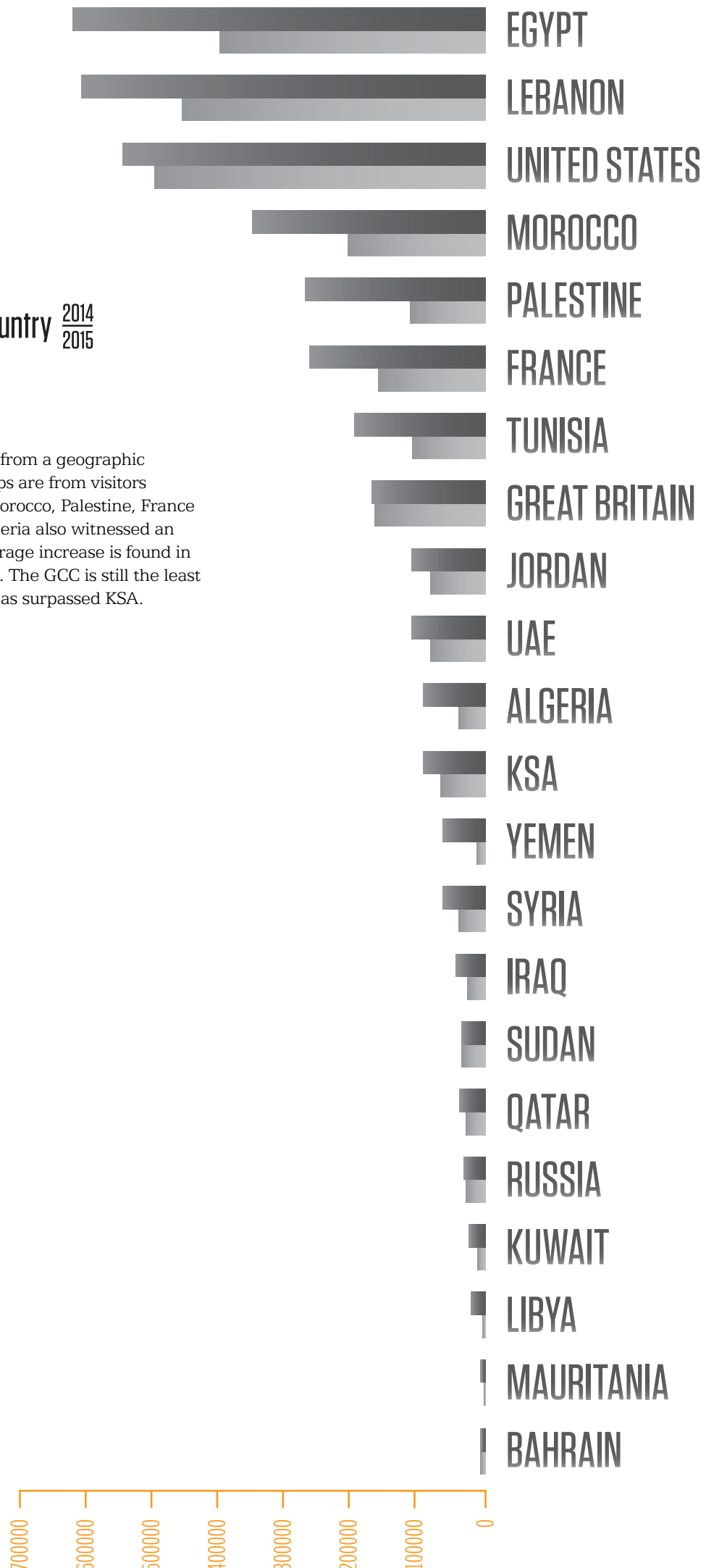
2011

Most Visited Pages



Number of Hits per Country ²⁰¹⁴/₂₀₁₅

Looking at the hits increase from a geographic perspective, the biggest leaps are from visitors based in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, France and Tunisia. Yemen and Algeria also witnessed an important increase. An average increase is found in North Africa and the Levant. The GCC is still the least engaged, though the UAE has surpassed KSA.





Grantees Stories and Voices

During this year AFAC published the following interviews with 14 of her grantees.

Grantees Stories

Retracing Palestinian Militant Cinema

Mohanad Al-Ya'coubi

Documenting Armenian Asylum Seekers in Limbo

Tamara Stepanian

Reviving and Innovating Traditional Moroccan Crafts

Sara Ouhaddou

Cities of Salt

Brunel Institute for Contemporary Middle Eastern Music

Beyond Checkpoints

Samar Hazboun

Plan for Greater Baghdad

Ala Younis

Saving Mauritania's Musical Heritage

Malouma Mint Moktar Ould Meïdah

Zaineb Hates the Snow

Kaouther Ben Hania

Grantee Voices

Eman Helal

Photographer

Hamada Rassam

Photographer

Palestinian Circus School

Dancer

Zara Samiry

Photographer

Sadek Bouzinou of Democratoz

Musician

Natalie Naccache

Photographer

Philanthropy for the Arts

Omar Imam, Live Love Refugees



Four years after the start of the Syrian crisis,

Over the years, AFAC had managed to build a relation of trust with its donors based on its credibility, transparency and professionalism, but also through our strategy and choice to involve our donors with our work through frequent updates on projects' progress and grantees' accomplishments. This had resulted in a sustainability of funding from our main donors and in many cases in an increase of funding as we managed to secure a number of important multiyear contributions from individual philanthropists as well as foundations, which strengthen the organizations' position over the long term.

This year heralds new donors from the Arab region, the US and Europe into AFAC's Circle of Friends. HSBC Private Bank continues to sponsor our events and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also joined AFAC's circle of supporters. In terms of individual donations, we are happy that ACEF 2015 has reached \$900,000 of contributions and we have exceeded the \$3million mark in contributions this year. This was achieved in part thanks to a number of fundraising events such as the gala dinner in New York, a private reception in London private dinners held in Jeddah and Beirut. Three board members, pledged \$100,000 a year for three years each, with other board members pledging smaller amounts over three years as well.



The prestigious gala dinner in New York was attended by diplomats, heads of cultural institutions and leading businessmen and art philanthropists, featured screenings of films and works illustrating the breadth and scope of AFAC activities. The president of the Ford Foundation Mr. Darren Walker delivered a speech emphasizing AFAC's contribution to innovation and entrepreneurship. Our yearly fundraising gala dinner gathered around 400 guests- philanthropists, patrons of the arts, gallerists, leading businessmen, diplomats, artist and media- this unique gala dinner served as a high-end platform for all guests to meet and interact. To that effect, the event was held under the theme of "Make Art Possible" in order to channel support for arts and culture by raising awareness on the importance of Cultural philanthropy within the Arab region.



Our advocacy for cultural philanthropy within the Arab region has been challenging for many reasons, particularly as the political unrest and violence has not abated in the region and many Arab philanthropists, new and established, are engaged in refugee aid, medical care and scholarship support, rendering arts and culture below priority.

To that effect, AFAC in partnership with HSBC Private Bank offered a first master class in "Philanthropy in Arts and Culture" at the IMD business school in Lausanne, Switzerland between 1 and 4th November. The curriculum was specially designed for "future philanthropists" aspiring to get engaged and brought together 15 individuals from 6 Arab countries. The sessions explored the development of philanthropy through history and provided an overview of the range of models now practiced around the world in seeking to create societal change. Participants articulated the vision for their philanthropy in arts and culture with specialists and explored how it can deliver social impact, dwelling on the importance of good governance and management in philanthropy and exploring the concepts of responsibility, accountability, and transparency.



AFAC Governance Model

Oussama Hlal, Above Zero



AFAC has a board of directors that oversees the direct implementation of AFAC's vision and objectives and has financial and administrative responsibility for the institution, supported by three specialized committees, a strategy workgroup and board members that deal with compliance issues as they arise. An honorary council will also be formed over the next years, and will meet once per year alongside one of the two annual board meetings. This council will contribute to building AFAC's public image and support the work of its committees as needed.

Committees

The AFAC board committees allow sharing of the responsibilities of the board among its members in an efficient and strategic way, matching its members' skills and capabilities to the various functions and responsibilities of the overall board.

AFAC's board has three committees:

1. The Finance and Auditing Committee oversees directly the financial planning and implementation of the organization as well as the auditing activities. Namely, the committee ensures that all financial matters of the organization are conducted legally, ethically, and in accordance with proper accounting rules.
2. The Fundraising Committee plays a fundamental role in supporting the fundraising efforts undertaken by the Executive director, Development and Communications Manager and the rest of the team. It supports the design and implementation of AFAC's yearly events and formulates ideas that enhance AFAC's fundraising ability in general, while regularly scouting and suggesting new sources of funding.
3. The Nomination Committee is responsible for nominating Board members and Honorary Council candidates, ensuring that the skills, leadership characteristics and diversity mix are appropriate. The Nomination Committee reviews the composition of the board as a whole periodically, including the balance of independence, business specialization, technical skills, diversity, fundraising ability, geographic representation and other desired qualities that board members bring to the board (such as integrity and sound judgment).

Board of Trustees



AFAC's board members represent a geographical diversity and hail from a multitude of backgrounds, contributing a breadth of expertise to the initiative. Convening twice a year, the board has supported AFAC's reach in their own countries, cities and cultural communities.

Dr. Ghassan Salamé Chairman

Dr. Ghassan Salamé was Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs/PSIA and professor of International Relations at Sciences-Po (Paris) and Columbia University (New York). Born in 1951 in Lebanon, he studied Law (Saint-Joseph University and Paris University); Literature (PhD, Paris University); and Political science (PhD, Paris University). He taught international relations at the American and Saint-Joseph universities in Beirut and, later, at Paris University.

Dr. Salamé was Senior Advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General (2003-2006) and Political Advisor to the UN Mission in Iraq (2003). In 2000-2003, he was Lebanon's Minister of Culture, in charge of national heritage and the arts; Chairman and Spokesman of the Organization Committee for the Arab Summit (March 2002) and of the Francophone Summit (October 2002) in Beirut. He presently sits on the board and executive committee of the International Crisis Group (Brussels) and the boards of the Open Society Institute (New York), The Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Alexandria), the Center for International Conflict Resolution (New York), the Center for Humanitarian Action (Geneva) and a few other not-for-profit organizations. He is the founding chairman of the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (Beirut).

Dr. Salamé is the author of (inter alia) *Quand l'Amérique refait le monde*; *Appels d'empire: ingérences et résistances à l'âge de la mondialisation*; *State and Society in the Arab Levant* and editor (inter alia) of *Democracy Without Democrats: Politics of Liberalization in the Arab and Muslim World*; *The Politics of Arab Integration* and *The Foundations of the Arab State*. His essays have been published in *Foreign Policy*, *Revue Française de Science Politique*, *European Journal of International Affairs*, *The Middle East Journal* and other scholarly journals.

Dr. Nabil Qaddumi Vice Chair and Treasurer

Dr. Nabil Qaddumi combines private and public sector roles. He is Chairman of Projacs International, the region's leading Arab project management firm. Dr. Qaddumi was the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Welfare Association, is Palestine's Governor at the Board of Governors of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, a co-founder of the Hani Qaddumi Scholarship Foundation, and a board member of the Institute for Palestine Studies.

Dr. Suzanne Wettenschwiler Statutory Secretary

A member of the Swiss Bar Association, Dr. Wettenschwiler is a commercial and not-for-profit attorney based in Zug, Switzerland. Having earned a PhD from the University of Zurich Law School, she is a member of the HDV Canton of Zug (Trade and Services Association), the SRO VQF (Association of Quality Assurance in Financial Services) and the International Bar Association (IBA). Dr. Wettenschwiler is also a member of the board of the Open Society Institute Zug and various other Swiss charitable foundations.

Hani Kalouti Member

Hani Kalouti is the President and Founder of HBK Investments Advisory S.A. based in Geneva, Switzerland. HBK is a multi-family asset management firm providing independent expert advice to high net worth individuals, their families and foundations. Mr. Kalouti started his career with Citibank, New York in 1981 and was chief investment officer of their Swiss Private Bank in Geneva when he left in 1996 to establish HBK. He holds a B. S. degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and an MBA from Syracuse University, New York. He is a member of the Board of Trustees and Management Committee of the Welfare Association.

Sawsan Al-Fahoum Jafar Member

Sawsan Al-Fahoum Jafar was born in Lebanon into a Palestinian family and holds a B.S in Economics from the American University of Beirut. She is a founding member of the board of The Friends of Cancer Patients Society in the United Arab Emirates and acted as its chairman from 2000 to 2008. She is a member of the Baden-Powell organization, as well as a board member for the Welfare Association, the Institute for Palestine Studies and the Chairman of the Board for MIFTAH – The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy. Jafar also won a prize for voluntary work in the Emirate of Sharjah, UAE.

Abla Lahoud Member

Abla Lahoud, an engaged philanthropist in the Arab Region, joined AFAC's board of trustees in 2012. She is an active member in several associations' boards including the President's Club Board and The Administrative board of the office of development at the American University of Beirut in addition to the Lebanese Association of SOS Children's Villages.

Amr Ben Halim Member

Amr Ben Halim has served and partnered with multinational engineering and project management firms in developing, building and operating industrial projects. He is a founder, board member and shareholder of AYTb and Maritime Industrial Services Arabia (MISA), companies that are leading providers of hydrocarbon processing, energy, and industrial services in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. He founded one of the first women-led micro-lending programs in the refugee camps of south Lebanon. He is also a founder board member of the Forum for Democratic Libya, an NGO working to promote transparency, civic engagement, and a culture of democracy in Libya. He continues to be an active member and supporter of various philanthropic and civil society projects in the Arab world.

Olfat Al-Mutlaq Juffali Member

Olfat Al-Mutlaq was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Economics and a Master's degree in International Development from the American University of Washington. Fluent in Arabic, English, German, French and Italian, she is dedicated to supporting philanthropic initiatives that benefit the Arab region and support the well-being, health, education and creativity of the next generation. She is married to Saudi businessman Khaled Juffali, with whom she has four children. Among her philanthropic engagements, Olfat is a member of the Board of Trustees for the Arab Thought Foundation and the Al-Elm Foundation of the Dar Al-Hekma College, as well as a Co-Founder and member of the Advisor Council of the Shefa Philanthropy Fund in collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. She joined the Board of Trustees for the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture in 2013.

Elias Khoury Member

The Lebanese writer Elias Khoury was born in Beirut and studied Sociology and History at Lebanese University in Beirut and the University of Paris. He served on the editorial board of Mawakif Quarterly, and as the managing editor of Shu'un Falastinia (Palestine Affairs) and of Al Karmel Quarterly; he also served as Director and Editor-In-Chief of Mulhak, the weekly literary supplement of the An-Nahar Daily in Beirut. Khoury has published 12 novels which have been translated into numerous languages, four books of literary criticism, and many articles and reviews. He is also a known play writer and participated in writing two films.

Team



Oussama Rifahi Executive Director

Oussama Rifahi joined AFAC in July 2010. Previously, Rifahi was Managing Director for Museum Development in New York with Global Cultural Asset Management GCAM, and provided cultural consultancy services to governments, cities, foundations and private collectors in Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. As director of special projects for the Guggenheim Foundation, Rifahi led feasibility studies of modern and contemporary museums in Lithuania and France in 2007. From 2003 to 2006, he was project manager at Mubadala in Abu Dhabi and an advisor to the chairman of the Tourism Development and Investment Company TDIC. Rifahi directed the market analysis, strategy definition and development of the business model for tourism and culture in Abu Dhabi and supported the first architectural developments on the cultural district of Saadiyat Island, as well as the initial negotiations between the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the Louvre and Guggenheim museums.

Rima Mismar Deputy Director and Film Programs Manager

Rima Mismar completed her studies in Communication Arts (Radio/TV/Film emphasis) at the Lebanese American University (LAU) in Beirut in 1998. Prior graduation, she began writing for local newspapers and cultural supplements, focusing on cinema and pursuing her professional career as a film critic as of 1999. She had participated in several festivals as jury member or as a member of the selection committee, contributed to serious critical writings on Arab cinema, moderated panels and wrote for several regional media. She worked briefly in television, writing and producing several episodes of "The Arabic Lens" (Al Adasa Al Arabiya), a series on Arab cinema produced and broadcasted by Al-Jazeera channel between 2005 and 2008. She also wrote and researched a number of feature documentaries. Rima has joined the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) in June 2011 as the Film Programs Manager and oversees films' general call and special film programs. In addition to serving as Deputy

Rachad Chamoun Content Manager

Rachad Chamoun joined AFAC in March 2011 to develop and manage the content of the initiatives' website. He has worked as a freelance facilitator and trainer for civil society organizations including The Youth Advocacy Process and The Social Movement. He also worked as a compliance officer/internal auditor for the Belgium NGO ACTED. A graduate of the Lebanese American University (LAU) in Beirut with a BA in Economics/ Political Science, Rachad worked at UNESCO as a project assistant for the "Youth empowerment and participation project" in Lebanon where he drafted the youth policy briefs and project reports, translated related policy papers, documented roundtables and workshops, and managed the website for the project. Most recently, Rachad was a research assistant at UNDP where he helped building and managing the Program of Governance in the Arab Region's online library database..

Cathy Khattar Grants Manager

Cathy Khattar completed her studies in Economics at the University Saint Joseph in Beirut in 2001. She worked as the financial coordinator in ASSABIL, Friends of Public Libraries and now she is a member of the administrative committee and treasurer of the association. Since 2006 she started writing books for children and has now 8 books, and one under print. She also animates creative writing workshops in Arabic for children. Cathy joined AFAC in July 2012.

Rayan Majed Grants Manager

Rayan holds a Master Degree in Law and Political Sciences from the Lebanese University and Saint Joseph University. She worked for several non-governmental organisations on projects related to development, women rights and youth participation in politics. She has been a reporter for three years at Now Lebanon, an online news service where she wrote about women, children, workers and refugees' rights. Rayan covered a variety of socio-political topics related to Lebanese politics, civil society causes and initiatives, and student/youth movements. She also wrote on cultural and artistic events taking place in Beirut and the Arab region.

Salim Tannous Communications and Development Manager

Salim comes to AFAC with more than 10 years in a number of sectors from broadcast television and film production to media consulting, technology entrepreneurship and cluster development. He has expertise in marketing, branding, content management and creative services, fundraising and events management. Recent accomplishments include the acknowledgment of the British Embassy in Beirut in March 2015 when he received a British Business Award from Ambassador Tom Fletcher. Salim received a bachelor's degree in Communication Arts from Saint Joseph University and a master's degree in Media Management from the University of Westminster in London as well as an executive degree in Public Private Partnerships from the Maastricht School of Management.

Nahed Mokdad Finance Officer

Nahed joined AFAC as Finance Officer in January 2011. She is a graduate of the American University of Science and Technology (AUST) in Beirut, with a BA in Finance. Previously she worked as an accountant at Management and Development Company (MDC), from January 2006 to December 2010.

Julie Terzian Office Manager

Julie joined AFAC in November 2015. She has a BT degree in Administration and accounting from Polyglot Technical institute and worked as an accountant at the Lebanese embassy in Lagos before working in the hospitality field for several years in the administration and financial department.

Financials

Amount spent in Dollars

2.3 million

Total Grant Amount

119 k

Crossroads

185 k

ADPP

288 k

ADP

112 k

ANWP

1.6 million

General Grants

238 k

Fundraising, Advocacy
and Communications

348 k

Overhead

AFAC raised \$3.1 Million in 2015. AFAC's expenses totaled \$2.9 Million. Thus total budget was balanced with a carry-over of \$200K from previous years and \$413K deposited in the reserve fund.

With \$2.3 Million of grants costs, \$238K of Fundraising, Communications and Advocacy costs and \$348K of Overhead costs we maintained our ratios of 80% for grants activities, 8% for fundraising and 12% for Overhead.

Grants activities included \$185K for ADPP, \$119K for Crossroads, \$288K for ADP, \$112K for ANWP as well as \$1.6M for the core General Grants program.

AFAC is registered in Lebanon under decree 6388 dated 24 September 2011 as the Lebanese branch of the foundation AFAC, registered in Zug, Switzerland on 23 June 2006, under article 80 of the Swiss Civil Code. Previously, AFAC was registered in Jordan as the Jordanian branch of the foundation AFAC, under registration number 2099, dated 11 April 2007. PricewaterhouseCoopers in Zurich, Switzerland will audit AFAC for year 2015.

