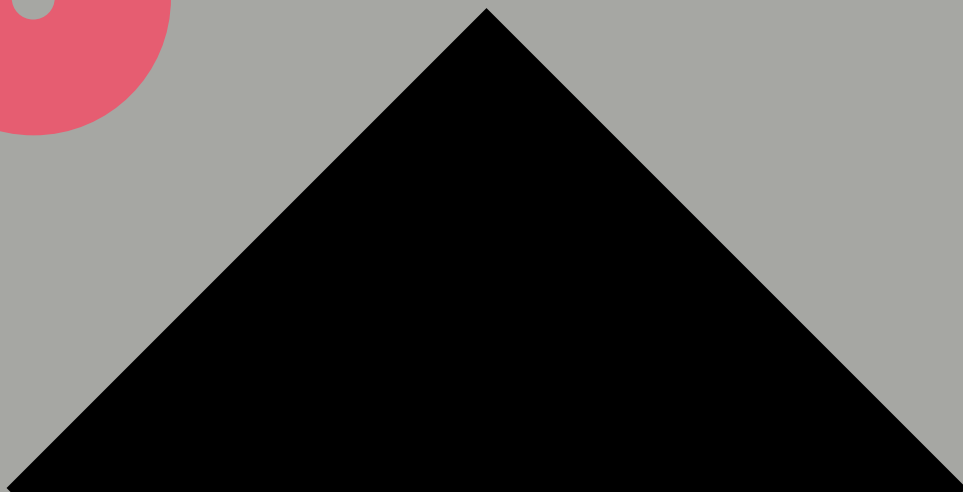
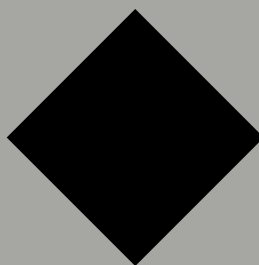
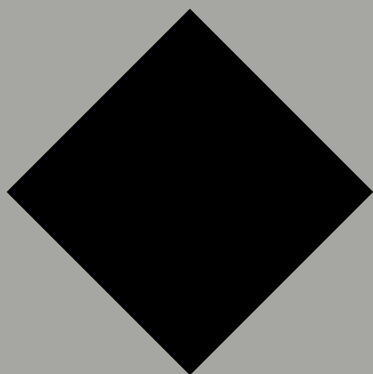


AFAC Annual Report 2018



AFAC ARAB FUND FOR
ARTS AND CULTURE
الصندوق العربي
للثقافة والفنون





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drosos (...)



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TO CONTACT US

Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
Sursock Street, Charles Aoun Building
Saint Nicolas Stairs
P.O.Box Beirut 13-5290
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 00 961 1 218901
Email: info@arabculturefund.org

AFAC is registered in Lebanon under decree 6388 dated 24 September 2011, as the Lebanese branch of the foundation AFAC, registered in Zug, Canton of 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. AFAC is audited yearly by PricewaterhouseCoopers in Zurich, Switzerland.

About AFAC

The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture - AFAC was founded in 2007 through the initiative of Arab cultural activists as an independent foundation to support individual artists, writers, researchers, intellectuals, as well as organizations from the Arab region working in the field of arts and culture. Since its launch, AFAC's programs have steadily expanded to cover cinema, documentary film, documentary photography, visual and performing arts, music, creative and critical writings, research on the arts, entrepreneurship, trainings and regional events. Based in Beirut, AFAC works with artists and organizations all over the Arab region and the rest of the world.

Our vision

AFAC strives to build a flourishing cultural and artistic scene across the Arab region that contributes to establishing open and vibrant societies, where young and seasoned voices engage with each other in the wake of the massive transformations being witnessed by the region.

In such a context, AFAC seeks for works of art and culture to contribute to the following goals:

- Take advantage of the grey areas and collapse of self-evident certitudes in our region to spur fresh thinking and innovative visions of the future.
- Search for tools to bear witness to the hopes and hindrances our region is living through, with techniques that go past traditional documentation to create new forms of experimentation in writing and ways of dealing with the image.
- Rediscover the complexity and diversity of our societies, and search for marginalized narratives in both the near and distant pasts.
- Promote engagement between Arab societies and their diasporas, especially after such a large number of Arab artists have become refugees or been forced into exile across the world, which has reflected on them personally and the art they produce, as well as on the various societies they are now working in.
- Expand the space for civic engagement through the offerings of intellectuals, artists, researchers and civil society organizations; a space for dialogue, questioning, critical reflection, and tolerance.

How we work

1. Autonomy: AFAC is keen on diversifying its funding sources allowing us autonomy to work towards realizing our vision.
2. Transparency: AFAC adheres to transparency at every stage of work, beginning from the grants application forms which are accessible and open to all, up until the selection process itself, which is the responsibility of a committee of jurors chosen annually for each category.
3. Dynamism: AFAC carries out periodic evaluations of its work, taking into consideration deliberations between jurors, social and political changes, and the new creative genres that accompany them, which allow us to be constantly prepared to evolve or modify our programs.

Strategic Areas of Work

Supporting the production of cultural and artistic work lies at the core of AFAC's work. Since our inception, numerous changes have taken place in our funding programs in response to the needs, gaps, and emergence of new forms of expression and storytelling. The fund for supporting novelists has transformed into encouraging other genres of creative writing, while the support for documentary filmmaking has expanded, adding a dedicated program for enhancing documentary photography.

The support that AFAC offers is not restricted to cultural and artistic work; it extends to cover research on the arts, to secure appropriate channels of distribution and to guarantee the sustainability of pioneering cultural organizations in the Arab world, whether by way of financial support or through training and mentorship. In accordance with this, AFAC's work is divided into five strategic areas: providing grants, developing training programs, building and sharing knowledge, broadening the pool of supporters for the arts, and cultivating appreciation for and engagement with contemporary arts and culture productions by connecting them with audiences.

- Grants: AFAC offers close to two hundred grants every year through open calls to submit applications. These grants are spread over nine programs: Performing Arts, Visual Arts, the AFAC Documentary Program, Music, the Research on the Arts Program, Creative and Critical Writings, Training and Regional Events, Cinema, and the Arab Documentary Photography Program.
- Training and Mentorship: In addition to the grants, AFAC sets up programs that offer training and mentorship to develop missing skills and practices, as is the case with the Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship and the Arab Documentary Photography programs.
- Knowledge Building and Sharing: AFAC's extensive database includes more than 10,000 applicants and 1,350 funded projects, which has made it into a considerable source of information on cultural trends, modes of artistic production, social impact, geographic contexts, and all the relevant statistics. AFAC shares this information through reports, infographics, grantees' stories and studies that it commissions.
- Broadening the Pool of Supporters for the Arts: AFAC is committed to strengthening philanthropy for the arts, and to working with the private sector to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship in the field of cultural and artistic production. Our aim is to expand and diversify sources of funding for artists, writers, intellectuals and researchers, as well as organizations that present artistic and cultural content.
- Building Audiences: AFAC seeks to cultivate appreciation for and engagement with arts and culture production to reinforce the transformational power of creative expression.



preface

an introduction
to the AFAC
annual report 2018



Systems of arts patronage are nearly as old as art itself. The process of creation requires support—chiefly material, but also moral, intellectual, and informational.

The role that was once played by emperors, kings, and the nobility is now fulfilled by the state and various different kinds of institutions. Patronage is vital to maintaining the cultural scene, but in order to do so, the patronage system must serve the cultural scene and not the other way around. The model of the independent, non-profit institution, while not perfect, is the one most suited to maintaining a non-exploitative model of support, provided it keeps asking itself the right questions.

When AFAC was established in 2007, it was precisely to respond to this need for an independent support system, to fill a void that existed in the Arab region. There were individual artists striving within an often quite challenging context to create their work. There were some institutions, mostly in the capital cities, nurturing—encouraging, exhibiting, supporting—this process of creation. But there was no stable and independent funding infrastructure either to support individual artists or arts organizations, and thus no ecosystem that might allow them a fighting chance at longevity or sustainability.

The metaphors used here, that of infrastructure and of ecosystem, at first glance seem to exist at odds with one another. The first is architectural, implying something not just solid but deliberate and man-made, while the second is organic, referring to a living system that adjusts itself as a whole in response to any change in the surroundings. But both metaphors are necessary in order to be able to describe the role that AFAC has come, over the last twelve years, to play on the cultural scene. As a funding body, it provides the vital infrastructure that supports artistic practice and allows it to grow. But in the other roles it has come to play, AFAC itself is in fact part of the cultural ecosystem and must shift and change in accordance with what is required to maintain health and balance.




These roles, while quite various, can roughly be sorted under three key aims: knowledge production, sustainability, and network building. All of these goals function in conjunction with one another, and are in fact reliant on one another in order to be fulfilled. Putting together our annual report is an opportunity for us to reflect on what we have achieved and how it was achieved, to ensure that our short-term plans align with our long-term goals, and to ask ourselves honest questions about where we have been and where we want to go from here.

A lot of information is covered in the actual body of the annual report and its accompanying annexes in great detail, from an in-depth overview of programs and partnerships, to a full schedule of our activities over the last year both within and outside the Arab region, to statements from each of the program juries reflecting on the year's batch of applications. Therefore, in this preface, we thought it might be more interesting to shed a light on some of AFAC's behind-the-scenes considerations. To talk about the thinking behind our strategies, the 'whys' and 'hows' of the way we set up our programs, and the questions we ask ourselves as part of a long-standing and ongoing commitment to be more transparent and retrospective with ourselves and our partners.

exchange routes

This last year, 2018, saw the first cycles of a number of new programs as well as the launch of an ambitious new initiative: the North Africa Cultural Program (NACP).

Planning and building the North Africa Cultural Program was very much an exercise of allowing a big, regional picture to emerge from much smaller, local mosaic pieces. To do so, a number of field visits were organized that included extensive meetings and discussions with various cultural actors across the five countries that comprise the North African region: Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, and Egypt.



The two grant schemes the program makes available are aimed not at individual artists, but at cultural entities and organizations, and are meant to provide institutional and programmatic support over a three-year period. The national fund supports institutional infrastructures that are already in place, while the regional fund facilitates cross-border cooperation, collaboration, and networking. And so, the goal of the field visits and meetings was to identify the particular challenges of each local context in order to pinpoint the ways that AFAC might be able to offer support without having it create a backlash for the institutions being supported, and how it might foster collaborations without imposing them.

Sensitivity to context is paramount to the way we make decisions about our programs, and during the field visits, it became quickly clear that there were various different forms of organizational structures through which cultural entities operated in the North African countries. Some took the form of traditional institutions officially registered with the government. Others, depending on the resources available to them as well as the constraints imposed on cultural work by the authorities, were much looser and more informal. Thus, the NACP fund was designed to take these circumstances into account, and is made equally available to formal institutions as well as unregistered collectives and entities with other, less traditional forms of organizational structure.

In addition, the findings of the NACP discussion groups indicated a number of issues and obstacles in common among the different North African countries, though the degree to which they posed a problem to cultural work was the biggest variable. Still, they present an interesting overview of some of the challenges that must often be dealt with at an institutional level in the region at large. For example, the issue of censorship, which can be state-imposed, but is sometimes self-imposed in order to avoid offending certain political or religious parties that might make work more difficult for organizations. There is also the issue of mobility and visa restrictions, which means that collaborations often have to be planned with such possible setbacks in mind.

The findings further showed that there was a real need for decentralization, for paying attention to the peripheries rather than just the capital cities. This is important not just from an artistic standpoint, as overlooking the peripheries means ignoring vibrant art scenes and movements whose inclusion makes for a richer cultural output, but from the standpoint of knowledge production. It is impossible to have a full picture of a particular context if knowledge is always only ever produced from (and consumed by) the center.

To decentralize knowledge production is to create a more detailed and inclusive picture of what actually is, as well as what is possible. And this becomes even more vital when read against the need, as one participant put it, “to have a budget for errors.” Organizations must be able to learn not just from one another’s successes, but from one another’s failures as well, and knowledge exchange can only be facilitated by prioritizing networks, particularly those that bypass the habitual routes.



Prioritizing these “non-habitual” routes of knowledge exchange largely informed why and how AFAC, in partnership with the Drosos Foundation, conceived the Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship Program, which saw its first cohort of participants embark on the inaugural year of a three-year program in 2018. Once more, it is a program focused on strengthening cultural institutions rather than individuals. Unlike the NACP, however, which is a little more hands-off, ACE is designed to be “an experiment in ‘learning by doing,’” whereby specialists from different sectors, both from the region and from “alternative centers” (for example, India and Brazil as opposed to the US and UK), share their expertise on everything from technological tools to fundraising to institutional ethics.

Practitioners from the region also make themselves available to mentor the grantees through the various different stages of their experience.

The strategy of consistently innovating programs meant to empower institutions is certainly a way of allowing AFAC’s resources to stretch further than they would if only individuals were being supported. But once more, the metaphors of infrastructure and ecosystem, taken together, help better explain the multifaceted aims and effects of such a strategy. For cultural institutions are not only like foundations, which, when fortified, are able to support more ambitious constructions, they are also a fundamental part of a healthy cultural ecosystem. One cultivated for the express purpose of sustainability. One that organically allows for more artistic diversity to flourish and grow by creating more venues, more audiences, more nodes of dissemination and circulation, more formal and informal networks of information, more modes of expression, more engaged communities, and ultimately, more art.

inside the judges' chambers

Looked at from a different perspective, supporting a multitude of other cultural institutions is yet another way of supporting individual artists, who end up having more room for their work at almost every level. Inside the judges' chambers

Supporting individual artists through grants is one of the fundamental functions of AFAC's existence, the bread-and-butter of its work.

Every year, a new jury of seasoned practitioners is appointed for each of the disciplines supported. After a committee of readers narrows down a shortlist of

applicants, the jury reads, evaluates and meets in person in Beirut to deliberate over several days to make a final selection of grantees, who are then awarded a fund to create or complete the work in question.

Jury members have an especially challenging—and interesting—job before them, because they are given no directives by AFAC on whom to choose, or what types of work or subjects to prioritize. They are encouraged to take risks on those artists putting their work forward for the first time, but ultimately, the jury members' extensive knowledge and experience in their respective fields are what allow them to evaluate the projects with discernment and nuance. Because what they are being asked to evaluate is not a finished work, whether it be a text or film or performance, they are required, based on the information given, to assess the potential of an artwork; to gamble on the promise of a completed artwork based on what the artist was able to convey of what they hope to achieve. And what they hope to achieve is naturally shaped by what they think AFAC hopes for them to achieve, simply because they are being asked to submit an application, which has specific criteria and specific questions for them to answer. Therefore, on AFAC's side, crafting the application itself is a process that is always subject to review. If it begins to feel like a particular question on the application is shaping the discourse around the artist's work in a confining way, then the question is either eliminated or rephrased. For example, in years prior, there was a question that asked artists to evaluate their work's "relevance to the Arab region." It was found that artists were interpreting the question as a requirement to link their work to current affairs, to a particular political landscape that they might not wish to address directly, or at all. The question is no longer on any of the applications.

Similarly, new questions might find their way onto the application should they seem necessary. In 2018, a question about audience engagement and access was added, a way of asking artists to think about the life their work will take on after completion, and what audiences it seeks to create around it. It is in fact another way of asking about “relevance” without the notion of a singular or monolithic “Arab region”.

And again, on AFAC’s side, it is also a way of considering the always-delicate balance between the esoteric/experimental and commercial, especially that we are consistently exploring ways to open avenues before as many different types of works and artists as possible, from the avant-garde to the more conventional, from first-time creators to seasoned practitioners. And this is always with the awareness that artists, too, need “a budget for errors”: room to experiment, to find or hone their voices, to discover unexpected forms of success through unanticipated failure.

The jury’s independent, non-directed evaluation process is thus our biggest asset and what allows the selection process to be so rich and nuanced. Given their experience as practitioners, jury members are able to see past the ‘pretty package’ of a work and look clearly at its substance. This is the promise of a work, visible only to a sensitive and practiced eye.

Our willingness to review and change established practices also applies to the programs being funded. This year, AFAC added two new programs to its grant schemes: Creative and Critical Writings (CCW) and Research on the Arts. The former is a replacement of the Novel Writing program, which saw the completion and publication of 27 new novels between 2014 and 2016. CCW was implemented in response to the need we perceived to encourage different, more under-represented forms of writing, such as poetry, theater, graphic novels, and critical writing on literature and the arts. The CCW jury this year praised the selections for using “advanced intellectual and aesthetic approaches that are able to imagine alternative cultures that lie on the margin of the prevailing culture.”

This, too, is another form of decentralization, which in turn creates new networks and avenues of knowledge that will feed back into the prevailing culture and hopefully contribute to the process of shifting it into more accommodating forms.

The second new program added this year, Research on the Arts, a program implemented in cooperation with the Arab Council for Social Sciences (ACSS) is one that particularly encourages interdisciplinary proposals that link the arts, humanities, and social sciences. It asks applicants to explore questions that we are also consistently asking ourselves as an institution, questions about how, for example, institutional processes, official and unofficial, affect the emergence of art, positively and negatively; how the impact of the fluctuations of the art markets and public funding affect what art is being produced; the relationship between artists and the state.

The impact of the state, of laws, of class, of history, of exile, of public perception, of institutions, on art and its creation. As a program, it is one that asks researchers to study the dynamic, ever-shifting relationship between art and society, whereby art is not simply a “premise,” or a “docile object to be examined,” as this year’s jury put it, but rather an active agent in itself, one that is affected by different factors but that also effects its own change.

a “region in crisis”

This bone-deep belief in art’s social impact is paramount to the type of work AFAC does, and it necessarily asks us to flip the question and consider, too, how social upheaval impacts artists themselves and their work. That aforementioned relationship between art and society has philosophical, moral, and aesthetic ramifications at once, and these become ever more urgent in times of crisis. Unfortunately, the Arab region has had its share of crisis, and crisis is therefore an essential component of how, what, and why some Arab artists are creating work. Ongoing wars, as well as their far-reaching consequences, have forced artists into confrontation with questions of how exactly to respond to such circumstances. This applies not only to artists who have directly experienced the consequences of crisis and upheaval, but to those who have borne or wish to bear witness as well.

At the same time, art cannot simply reproduce the humanitarian model of relief-response to crisis, because then it remains mired in the shifting quicksand of current affairs. Artists should in fact not be expected to respond to crisis in the same way, or even to produce something immediately recognizable as “a response.”



There must be room for different ways of reacting, without the presupposition that art is being made with the express purpose of acting as a counterpoint to official national narratives. To see it as such means that it can only be read against, or in conjunction with, political history, which in turn denies it the possibility to be understood on its own terms, as an expression of complex moral, emotional, personal, and technical ambition, and denies artists, too, the agency of being creative actors rather than just political subjects.

new paths
and possibilities

These considerations are always behind the way in which applications are evaluated, and in 2018, they also led to the implementation of a six-month writing workshop that took place in Berlin from May to October of that year. “Writing Catastrophe,” run by Egyptian writer Haytham al-Wardany, was aimed at recent Arab arrivals to Germany, particularly those hailing from Syria.

It was an in-depth exploration of how literature might, or can, respond to crisis, involving writers personally implicated in such a line of questioning in various different ways. Part trauma-therapy, part writing boot-camp, the workshop insisted on the fundamental premise that aesthetic and technical considerations are not ways of bypassing or minimizing emotional content, but are essential ways of filtering, understanding, processing, digesting, documenting, and representing.

Looking backward at the experiences and lessons of the last year is always the greatest motivator to looking forward to the possible prospects for the next. And the prospects for 2019-2020 are exciting and dynamic, continuing the trajectory of opening up new paths and possibilities for knowledge production, sustainability, and network building across the Arab region and beyond. Building on the overwhelmingly positive response to the inclusion of Creative and Critical Writings on the list of funded programs, AFAC is organizing a conference on Critical Cultural Journalism in early 2020, a possible preliminary step toward opening up yet another funding scheme. A robust culture of art and literary criticism, one built on real critical engagement with the work rather than nepotism, gate-keeping, or score settling, serves to raise the bar for the cultural scene in general. The current shortage of intelligent and insightful critical



art journalism is not due to a shortage of qualified journalists, but rather a combination of different factors, including a lack of platforms and financial compensation so poor it acts as a deterrent to this sort of journalism, which requires time—both to experience and reflect on a piece of art as well as to write thoughtfully and at length about it. Part of the function of the conference will be to examine these factors in more detail, to work out what might be done, if anything, what role AFAC might be able to play, and to reinvigorate the simple idea that good art criticism makes for better art. It is yet another essential element of a healthy cultural ecosystem, over the long term pushing everyone—artists, critics, and audience alike—to engage more thoroughly with the creative process.

During this next year, AFAC will also be studying the possibility of creating a structure to support work after it is finished—that is, a fund for distribution, dissemination, and circulation. Knowing that they have the financial support necessary to see them through this part of the process, an artist is less likely to accept an unfair or exploitative distribution deal, one that might in fact limit their rights to their own work only in order to receive quick financial compensation. Artists are empowered to feel that they indeed own their work, and the sense of financial security gives them the capacity to negotiate. Again, and ideally, the long-term effect of such a thing should translate into healthier and more sustainable distribution models overall as artists take the fate of their work back into their own hands.

There is likewise a discussion on the table about an annual convention, one that would bring together arts practitioners, curators, researchers, and actors from different organizations and institutions together in one place once a year. Ideally this would act as a platform for people to meet and present their work in such a way that encourages the crosscutting of disciplines, topics, and themes, creating a forum for critical engagement, and for knowledge production and exchange.

We are still and always looking for ways to be more actively inclusive: to engage, attract, and encourage more women applicants across all disciplines, and to bring in more applicants from the underrepresented countries and areas of the Arab region (this year we had our first grantees from the Comoros Islands and Djibouti). There is also the question of how to explore new funding sources in order to ensure sustainability for cultural institutions.



The first Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship workshop of the cycle saw intense debate around the issue of engaging the private sector, on whether it might provide an opportunity for new partnerships or whether such an approach might require uncomfortable compromises in the long run.

There are plans to continue adding to our new communications strategy and tools, to find ways of utilizing different forms of media to reach more people, to make AFAC, and information about AFAC, more interactive and accessible to people across the region and beyond.

maintaining change

As an arts institution, AFAC needs to be solid. It needs to provide stable ground upon which others can build, as well as a sense of security. A sense that, in a rapidly-shifting, volatile world, there are certain places of safety and order that one can count on. This is because art, or more importantly, the sort of rich reflection that incubates art, requires a measure of stillness in order to unfold.

This stillness is complex and difficult to pin down, but one of its definitions, certainly, is unstructured time. Another one is the cessation of anxiety. In providing funding to artists and arts organizations, what AFAC is really offering is the gift of time. Time that doesn't have to be spent earning money, worrying about earning money, worrying about not earning money, worrying about how all the components of a work of art might be able to come together if one is constantly worrying about money. It is this precious and intangible thing that AFAC is working to provide through the provision of material support.



At the same time, as an institution dedicated to upholding and promoting the arts, AFAC needs to be responsive, fluid, and adaptable in very organic ways. Producing and disseminating knowledge, creating networks, preserving sustainability—all of these are different forms of flows. They are movements, circulations, cycles, and all of them require maintaining change. And change can only be maintained by asking constant questions, and not taking any answers for granted.

In both of these capacities, AFAC would not be able to function to its full potential without the unrestricted support offered by a number of foundations but also through individual philanthropy. Individuals who understand the value of arts and culture and the role they play in the advancement of Arab society are fundamental to our work, helping bolster us in our efforts to support and sustain. Without their generosity we wouldn't be able to do what we do, and thus they are also an essential component of a healthy cultural ecosystem.

Individual philanthropists have always been the backbone of arts patronage, using their resources to uplift artists, and, in so doing, uplifting and advancing their communities and societies. Many great works of art owe their creation not just to the artist that conceived them, but to the patron who supported the artist through the course of their work. Among its many roles, AFAC seeks to facilitate that process, to become the connective tissue between generous donors and deserving artists, allowing the impulse to give and the impulse to create to converge together and become a powerful force for regional change.



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Facts and figures

2007-2018

1350

projects supported

231

jurors from 23 countries

20

million dollars in grants

150

AFAC-supported
publications

392

female artists received
grants from AFAC

108

practitioners received
mentorship

300

regional and international awards
received by AFAC grantees

90

AFAC-supported
festivals

341

arts and culture
institutions supported

20

Arab countries
represented in grants

354

AFAC-supported
films completed

120

AFAC-supported music
albums released

200

impact stories shared



In Summary



38

On the heels of AFAC’s decade anniversary, 2018 marked a year of exponential growth and expansion. Applications reached 1441, and 201 grants (in comparison to 1049 applications and 143 grants in 2017) have been awarded through nine programs, including the first grant to Comoros Islands and Djibouti. This is in addition to 8 curated projects in Germany, under AFAC’s Arab European Creative Platform, bringing the total of funded projects to 209. The total grants amount for 2018 was roughly \$3 million (compared to \$2.36 million in 2017) for Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Creative and Critical Writings, AFAC Documentary Program, Arab Documentary Photography Program, Training and Regional Events, Music, Cinema, and Research on the Arts.

The calls for proposals opened twice a year. In Visual Arts, 22 projects from 12 countries out of 208 applications were supported with \$325,000 in grants. In Performing Arts, 24 projects from 9 countries out of 147 applications received a total of \$301,000 in grants. Under the new Creative and Critical Writings program,

23 projects were supported out of 117 applications. In Training and Regional Events, 25 projects from 10 countries out of 154 applications benefited with a total grant amount of \$400,400. In Music, 28 projects from 10 countries out of 148 applications benefited with a total amount of \$359,800 in grants. In Cinema, 30 projects from 10 countries out of 292 applications were supported with a total budget of \$500,000. Under AFAC Documentary Program, 23 projects from 9 countries out of 180 applications received a total amount of \$350,000 in grants. Under the Arab Documentary Photography Program, 9 projects from 7 countries out of 79 applications were supported with a total budget of \$45,000 in grants and mentorship. The Research on the Arts Program launched with 9 supported projects out of 84 applications, with a total budget of \$160,450 in grants.

The 2018 selected projects hailed from 17 Arab countries – Algeria, Comoros Islands, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia/Djibouti,

Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen – as well as from Europe and North America.

The continued practice of placing grant decisions in the hands of experienced and reputable jurors from all over the Arab region is a pillar of strength and transparency, invoking shared responsibility and auto governance by the arts and culture sector for the sector, and creating a community of practice around quality but also values of diversity and inclusion. AFAC engaged with 40 readers and 32 independent jurors who deliberated on projects of 2018 based on the criteria of quality, innovation, relevance and budget.

Many of the projects chosen provoke diverse narratives about urgent topics through words and images. They instigate critical thinking and stimulate local economies by cultivating audiences and engaging professionals. Many were encouraged to apply new technologies to make arts and culture more accessible. The testimonies of the jurors speak to the wealth of applications reviewed and the process that led to the final selection of projects to support.

Arab European Creative Platform (AECF)

2018 propelled the Arab European Creative Platform (AECF) into its second successful year featuring a number of timely initiatives in support of exiled Arab artists in Germany and offering a platform to promote creative expression from the Arab region. All activities were implemented in partnership with German institutions and featured Arab and European collaborations. 2018 was replete with successful events: opening of the 48th Forum of this year’s Berlin International Film Festival with a cine-concert titled “Georges Méliès’ Solitudes”, accompanied by solo musical performances by Khyam Allami, Tony Elieh, Abed Kobeissy, Magda Mayas and Sharif Sehnaoui; “Against Oblivion” music exhibition by the Foundation for Arab Music Archiving and Research - AMAR in partnership with Humboldt Box in Berlin; a series of Arab artists presentations at the Roter Salon entitled “Unspoken Series” in collaboration with Volksbühne; the Arab Documentary Convention (aDC) in collaboration with DOK Leipzig, IDFA Bertha Fund and the Sundance Institute; a six-month long workshop in Berlin (starting April) titled “Writing Catastrophe” under the mentorship of Egyptian writer Haytham Al-Wardany addressed to Arab writers who have recently immigrated to Germany; a Music and Film Festival that resonated beautifully with local audiences in partnership with Bethanian Haus, bringing together singers/composers and films: Kamelya Jubran, Bassel Rajoub and Malika Zara on the music front and Mohamed al Daradji, Fawzy Bensaidi and Mohamed Ben Attia with their films; two symposiums titled “Imagining the Future” and “Revisiting Archive in the Aftermath of Revolution” in

partnership with Archive Kabinett and HKW; the highly acclaimed co-production of Sulayman Al Bassam’s play “Ur” in partnership with Residenztheater in Munich which premiered in September.

AFAC responded with vigor to trends and priorities in the arts and culture sector, ensuring that its programs (grants and professional services) are relevant and responsive. Three new programs were launched in 2018 in response to the recommendations that were generated from the 2016-2017 ten years’ study and that organically complement what and how we support: Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship, Critical and Creative Writings, and Research on the Arts.

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship (ACE)

The first new program, Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship (ACE) builds on our efforts to advocate for support to arts and culture from individuals and the private sector. This three-year program is in partnership with Drosos Foundation, and is also supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. The ACE program is designed to inspire small and medium arts and culture institutions working in the Arab region - with strong connections to their respective communities - in the areas of fundraising, entrepreneurship, communication and leadership. It aims at founding a creative environment where these institutions can reflect on alternative ways to sustain themselves, with the help of experts/mentors, inspiring case studies primarily from the global south, lectures and related readings and exercises. Each cycle comprises three extensive workshops, and on-going mentorship by experts in the field, and culminates with an incentive grant that allows the participating institutions to implement an innovative activity inspired by their learning during the span of the program. The novelty of ACE is that it is not a technical course with pre-set notions of what participants should learn, but rather a collective reflection on sustainability challenges and exposure to diverse options across sectors, including the private sector.

Creative and Critical Writings (CCW)

The Creative and Critical Writings (CCW) grants program benefits a wide range of writers, artists and institutions who collectively will enrich the Arabic library with new, innovative, creative and critical productions. It is an extension of the AFAC Literature grants program (2007-2013) which supported over 95 projects including novels, poems, stories, translations, children’s literature, research and writing workshops; followed by the AFAC Novel Writing Program (2014-2016) which contributed to the completion and publication

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of 27 new novels by emerging writers. CCW reflects an accurate analysis of the conditions under which publishing and distribution of books in the Arab region occur and addresses gaps. It gives special attention to critical writings on literature, as well as on the arts including plastic arts, theatre, cinema and music. It provides a stimulus to writers focusing on under-represented literary genres such as theatre writing, poetry, short stories and graphic novels. Moreover, it encourages children and youth literature by supporting writers and publishing houses specialized in this genre. Being cognizant of the technical developments pervading the publishing field, AFAC through this grant encourages electronic platforms specialized in publishing literary texts, especially that the print media is in crisis today.

Research on the Arts Program (RAP)

The third program, Research on the Arts Program (RAP) is a collaboration with the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS). AFAC aspires to attract researchers from the social sciences, humanities and political studies - hence the choice of a solid partner like ACSS - in addition to those specialized in the arts. Given the lack of research on the arts, let alone cumulative and comparative studies across the region, AFAC spearheaded this initiative to examine the arts as indicators of societal, political and economic manifestations, thus fortifying the connections between the sphere of arts and society and highlighting the purpose of the arts beyond its aesthetics.

Partners Acquisition and Cultivation

Along with these three programs, strong partners were brought on board and others were cultivated; four new donors joined in with a total of \$7.1 million in new funds (Drosos Foundation, German Federal Foreign Office, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Arab Council for the Social Sciences), committed for the next 3-5 years, allowing AFAC to meet the Open Society Foundations’ challenge matching grant on target. Generous individual donors – both recurring and new - provided nearly \$692,583 in individual giving that constitutes around one third of AFAC’s budget for grants. Such engagements are in addition to the general multi-year grant from the Ford Foundation; as well as annual contributions from the Prince Claus Fund, specifically for the Arab Documentary Photography Program. For 2018, AFAC received \$6.9 million in contributions. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DOEN Foundation renewed their support for 2018-2020, with \$780,000 and €1,050,000 respectively.

Mentorship and Professional Support

Punctual mentorship and professional support that compliment grants in some programs demonstrated a successful strategy to address particular trends and needs of practitioners in under-developed genres and oriented towards younger practitioners: out of 201 grantees, 68 were emerging artists who, through the AFAC grant, were able to make their first step into the professional world of art and cultural production. Special programs such as the Arab Documentary Photography Program (ADPP) address talents with first projects, while the new program on Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship (ACE) caters to small and medium-sized structures, boosting their sustainability through a flexibly crafted training and mentorship components, coupled with an incentive grant.

Communication

In terms of communication and promotional material, AFAC completed the creative process of the new logo, website and other communication tools that reflect the identity of AFAC and the qualities we wish to affirm – that AFAC is transparent, unbiased, and retrospective; that it is dedicated, professional, and successful; that it is a reference for art and culture production in the Arab region; that it is open, inclusive, and diverse; that it is dynamic, passionate, young and attractive in the sense that audiences will want to be affiliated with our network; and that it is a unique and avant-garde agent both in the region and internationally. The communication strategy including the brand campaign launch of the new AFAC logo and website is expected early 2019 accompanied by a communication campaign. The website’s look and feel follows the new brand guidelines while surfing on the latest web design trends, and the user journey and experience have been carefully studied to optimize visits and ensure returns. The online application forms have also been upgraded for a smoother process.

The AFAC 2017 Annual Report and Reflections was released in August 2018 in English and Arabic and in print for the first time which proved to be handy with donors’ packages and gifts. The report revealed the 2017 highlights including the celebration of AFAC’s 10th anniversary, the ensuing 10-year study and focus group discussions, and the valuable recommendations that were consequently generated. Moreover, the 151 projects supported by AFAC in 2017 were presented in an Annex to the report. Through in-depth interviews, a selection of stories of 15 grantees titled “Stories Boldly Told” was produced to illustrate how their projects have challenged various social, political and economic contexts throughout the Arab region and placed arts and culture in the center of the battle for social change. The stories broach tightening public



spaces, inequality, and forced displacement, among other topics and serve as beacons of hope in their environments. On the social media front, AFAC adopted an active and dynamic approach on its main channels, namely its Facebook page and Instagram account. Page promotion efforts and paid ads on both Facebook and Instagram boosted the number of followers, tripling the number of Facebook fans and doubling Instagram followers since December 2017.

Thought-provoking storytelling material was also released: a trailer for the new ACE program and TED-style videos with each of the three program experts from the first cycle’s 2018 workshop: Arundhati Ghosh (India), Carla Fonseca (Brazil), and Mike van Graan (South Africa).

AFAC Reached Out and Spoke Up for the Arts and Culture Sector

With a compact yet dedicated team, AFAC made efforts to be present at key events, forums and festivals, to reach out to new audiences, to remain connected to developments in the sector, but to also profile arts and culture from the region to potential enthusiasts, be they individuals, foundations, corporations or state-funded entities. In

2018 AFAC was solicited by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Pro Helvetia to deliver the keynote speech and participate in a panel at “Crossroads” - a conference, conversations and a cultural program in Basel. AFAC participated in the meeting “Investing in Philanthropy Development” co-hosted by WINGS and “la Caixa” Banking Foundation in Barcelona, on foundations’ role within the philanthropy ecosystem and how contributing to it ultimately benefits civil society as a whole. In April, AFAC participated in a donors’ and partners’ meeting on “Knowledge at Risk: Conflict, Collaboration and Ethics”, organized by the Arab Council for the Social Sciences in Amman. Additionally, AFAC co-organized with the Culture Resource the 11th Informal Arts and Culture Donors Meeting in Brussels on April 21-22. AFAC participated in a panel discussion in the Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018 ISPA Congress, Off the Beaten Track, The Netherlands, in June, reflecting on how migration and nationalism have changed the composition of the global landscape and what role can arts and culture leaders play in addressing the situation of refugee artists. AFAC held its 6th AFAC Film Week program, organized in partnership with Project’heurts, Planète Cinuvers and the ONCI in Algeria, 5-12 September. It comprised 10 films which hailed from seven countries in the Arab region. Parallel to the main program, four films were showcased at the Cinema Azul in Béjaia as part of

the 16th Rencontres Cinématographiques de Béjaia special program “AFAC Carte Blanche”. AFAC participated in the 13th edition of the Festival Arabesques in Montpellier, 21-22 September, to discuss the opportunities for emerging Arab musicians and how they can be supported. We were also present at Al Gouna Film Festival in Cairo, in September. Out of the ten AFAC-supported films selected for the different competitions at the Festival, three received top awards during the closing ceremony. In parallel, AFAC met with stakeholders in Cairo – both individual and institutional grantees - at CLUSTER to brief about the SDC-funded North African Cultural Program and to get initial feedback. In addition to meeting with grantees, AFAC was solicited by the Ford Foundation to present its work to their staff from across the region. In an informal setting, AFAC hosted an apero to bring together grantees, donors and stakeholders from the arts and culture community in Beirut, in October. At the closing of the new program ACE’s first workshop, AFAC invited diverse stakeholders mainly CSR representatives of banks but also interested philanthropists to a dinner and music event at Antwork in Beirut, in November, as part of its efforts to make the business and arts and culture world meet and interact. And in December, AFAC’s Executive Director was invited to a panel-organized by the Ford Foundation and UN Habitat in the framework of the Week of Sustainable Development held by the League of Arab States in Cairo - to speak about the role of artists in building soulful Arab cities.

Financial Allocations

Generous contributions from diverse donors enable AFAC to carry out its mandate and ensure a level of sustainability. AFAC is thankful to the 13 individual donors in 2018 in addition to our institutional donors: DOEN Foundation, Prince Claus Fund, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Drosos Foundation, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Foreign Office, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Financial allocation in 2018 was as follows:

Total Amount: \$4,623,313	Overheads: \$433,320 equivalent to 9% of total expenditures
Grant Activities: \$3,819,690 equivalent to 83% of total expenditures	Difference of Exchange: \$125,146 equivalent to 3% of total expenditures
Fundraising and Communications: \$144,946 equivalent to 3% of total expenditures	Other Losses: \$100,211 equivalent to 2% of total expenditures

PricewaterhouseCoopers in Zurich, Switzerland successfully completed the 2018 audit. AFAC’s financial statements comply with the Swiss law and the Foundation’s deeds.

Outlook 2019

From 2019 onwards, we will steer our programs, activities and overall operations into three main axes, that feed into one another and stand interconnected: Knowledge Production and Accumulation; Sustainability Building for an Impactful Discourse; and Interaction and Network Building.

In terms of Knowledge Production and Accumulation, two of our 2018 programs, namely the Research on the Arts Program and the Creative and Critical Writings program, feed into building knowledge around the sector and support outreach of works through research and critical writings, yet a gap remains to be addressed in this area of knowledge and bridging works of arts and audiences: critical cultural journalism. Responding to this need, in January 2020, AFAC will organize a conference on Critical Cultural Journalism in Beirut. The findings and recommendations of this conference, which will gather key intellectuals and journalists in the region, will dictate the possibility of AFAC’s designing a building-capacity program in this area. Furthermore, the accumulation of knowledge produced at the two main 2018 forums of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECPP) in Germany, namely “Revisiting Archive in the Aftermath of Revolution” and “Imagining the Future: The Arab World in the Aftermath of Revolution”, will further constitute an empowering wealth which will be compiled into publications for dissemination and distribution.

In parallel, we will work internally on generating and sharing more knowledge and analysis on trends based on our own extensive database. This will be primarily carried out as in-house research, which will be also visualized through infographics, and will be disseminated in academic publications and via symposiums and panels. Our new website will also feature an online data management system supporting better data collection. In connection, and for our ongoing effort to mobilize philanthropy for arts and culture, we will continue to invest in generating impact stories (written and audio-visual) with grantees and to follow-up on case studies of how their works are provoking debate, instigating action but also looking at the breakthroughs in how artistic initiatives function under often disruptive conditions.

Moving to the axe of Sustainability Building for an Impactful Discourse, the Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship program, also launched in 2018, is built so as to provide an opportunity for small



and medium cultural institutions of the Arab region to acquire new skills and capacities to improve their long-term sustainability. Another new program for 2019, the North Africa Cultural Program, is especially designed to empower independent North African arts and culture entities, encourage regional collaborations, and focus on supporting distribution, circulation and dissemination of artistic works in all fields, in view of strengthening their structures, increasing engagement and outreach, and consequently securing their sustainability and continuity. With these programs, we aim to build a support system for sustainability which would allow arts and culture entities and institutions of the region to hold a discourse geared towards impact, and act towards a sustainable future.

The third axe, Interaction and Network Building, closely interconnects with the first two axes, as we strive, with our panoply of programs and activities, to build closely knit communities of artists and cultural practitioners who share a passion for change and network and collaborate for maximized impact. The Arab Documentary Photography Program (ADPP) and its 50 grantees since 2014 to present, represent such a strongly connected community, as will be shown in the in-house research on the ADPP in the course of 2019. Furthermore, the Arab European Creative Platform represents an ideal platform for exchange, interaction and networking between Europeans and the Arab diaspora. We hope



Recognition of Grantees



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January

A Drowning Man by Mahdi Fleifel

was nominated for the BAFTA's Best British Short Film Award

A Drowning Man by Mahdi Fleifel, Poisonous Roses by Ahmed Fawzi Saleh and Muayad Alayan's The Reports on Sarah and Saleem

participated in the International Film Festival Rotterdam

February

Reem Saleh's What Comes

Around (Al Gami'ya), Jumana Manna's Wild Relatives and Ziad Kalthoum's Taste of Cement

were screened at the Berlinale

March

Of Father and Sons by Talal Derki, Room for a Man by Anthony Chidiac, Taste of Cement by Ziad Kalthoum, What Comes Around by Reem Saleh and Amal by Mohamed Siam

were screened at The 20th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival (TDF)

The third Haifa Independent Film Festival - HIFF 2018

was held with the support of AFAC

"Arab Voices: Stories of Palestine"

was hosted by Dar El-Nimer for Arts and Culture in Beirut

The 5th edition of "Theater is a Must" Performing Arts Festival was held in Alexandria

Best Director Award went to Tamara Stepanyan for her AFAC-supported film Those from the Shore. AFAC grantee Ziad Kalthoum also received the

Best Cinematography award for his film *Taste of Cement* at the Global Cinema Film Festival of Boston

Dream Fragments by Bahia BenCheikh-El-Fegoun

received Al Ard Award and Ghost Hunting by Raed Andoni won the Sardegna Palestina Award at the 15th edition Al Ard Documentary Film Festival

The Journey by Mohamed Al Daradji

won two awards at the 10th Muscat International Film Festival

Last Men in Aleppo by Feras Fayyad

received an Oscar nomination in the Best Documentary Category

April

Al Kamandjâti Festival of spiritual and traditional music

toured in Palestine

"Past Disquiet" exhibition

opened in Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende - MSSA in Santiago, Chile

"Ēvolvō" by Yara Boustany

performed as part of Beirut International Platform of Dance – BIPOD 2018

Samar Hazboun and Tasneem Sultan

were selected to participate at the 2018 Joop swart Masterclass to which 11 other ADPP grantees were nominated

La Philharmonie de Paris

hosted "Love and Revenge" by Wael Koudaih and Randa Mirza and "Lekhfa" by Mostaqel

June

"May He Rise and Smell the Fragrance" contemporary dance project

was performed in the Festival d'Avignon

"The Seven Lives of M. Said" by Salah Saouli

was exhibited at Agial Gallery in Beirut

August

Nuha Innab's book "Traces of Socialism"

was launched at MMAG Foundation in Amman

Youness Atbane's performance "The Architects"

received in Zurich the award of recognition ZKB Zürcher Kantonalbank

September

Sara Fattahi's documentary Chaos won the Golden Leopard for best film at the Filmmakers of the Present competition of the Locarno Film Festival in Locarno, Switzerland, while Ghassan Halawani's debut film Erased__Ascent of the Invisible received the jury's special mention in the First

Feature category. Freedom Fields by Naziha Arebi, The Day I Lost My Shadow by Soudade Kaadan, aKasha by Hajooj Kuka, Screwdriver by Bassam Jarbawi, Divine Wind by Merzak Allouache and Erased__Ascent of the Invisible by Ghassan Halawani were featured at TIFF

Sary & Ayad Khalifé

released their latest album "Soobia" in Beirut

"A Decade of MAqam" by Maqam ensemble & Maias Alyamani was released

The Day I Lost My Shadow by Soudade Kaadan received the Lion of the Future Luigi De Laurentiis Award for a Debut Film at the Venice Film Festival and Movement by Nadir Bouhmouch

won the Final Cut in Venice prize for the best film in post-production

Nabil Anani Launched his latest book "Nabil Anani: Palestine, Land & People" at The Palestinian Museum

Adila Laïdi-Hanieh's Turkish version of her book "Fahrelnissa Zeid: Painter of Inner Worlds" was launched at Dirimart Istanbul

Algerian artist Zineb Sedira's first solo exhibition "Of Words and Stones"

opened in Beirut Art Center

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October

The Tiro International Art Festival

marked the reopening of Tyre's Rivoli cinema after 29 years of neglect. The Festival offered a varied program of cinema, music and theater shows

November

Fadi Toufiq's multimedia theater performance "The Story of the Man Who Inhabited His Shadow", directed by Hashem Adnan,

opened in Beirut, coupled with an art exhibition, "The Unfinished Works of Kevork Kassarian", in collaboration with Shereen Suleiman

Syrian Leish Troupe's physical theater performance "Embraces"

opened at the Syrian Opera House in Damascus

The 4th edition of the International Cairo Comics

Festival, Cairo Comix 4, was held in the Mahmoud Mokhtar Museum in El Gezira

The International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) 2018

featured Sara Fattahi's Chaos (Syria), Anthony Chidiac's Room for a Man (Lebanon), Erige Sehiri's Railway Men (Tunisia), Naziha Arebi's Freedom Fields (Libya), Ghassan Halwani's Erased____ Ascent of the Invisible (Lebanon) and Wael Kadlo's The Way Home (Syria)

Syrian director Feras Fayyad's documentary Last Men in Aleppo

won the News and Documentary Emmy Awards' Outstanding Current Affairs Documentary award

Ghassan Halwani's Erased Ascent of the Invisible (Lebanon), Erige Sehiri's Railway Men (Tunisia), Mohamad Siam's Amal (Egypt) and Bassam Jarbawi's Mafak (Palestine)

were awarded at the Cinemed Montpellier Mediterranean Film Festival

Out of the ten AFAC-supported films selected for El Gouna Film Festival 2018, Talal Derki's Of Fathers and Sons, Cyril Aris' The Swing, and Mohamed Ben



Attia's Dear Son

received top awards during the closing ceremony

Mohamed Siam's Amal (Egypt) picked up the Golden Tanit, while Amal Ramsis' You Come From Far Away (Egypt)

won the Silver Tanit, and Ghassan Halwani's debut film Erased____ Ascent of the Invisible (Lebanon) collected the Bronze Tanit Carthage Film Festival's Official Feature Documentary Competition

December

Thomas Dworzak

received The Royal Photographic Society's Hood Medal for his AFAC-supported book "Europa, an Illustrated Introduction to Europe for Migrants and Refugees"

Ahmed Fawzy Saleh

was awarded at the Cairo International Film for his film Poisonous Roses.

Ghassan Halwani

was also awarded the Fathy Farag Prize for Best Artistic Contribution for Erased____ Ascent of the Invisible

Good Morning by Bahij Hojeij

received the Best Scenario and Best Male Actor awards at the Rabat International Film Festival in Morocco

Erased__Ascent of the Invisible by Ghassan Halwani

secured first prize at the Laceno d'oro Festival in Italy, and special jury mention at Transcinema International Festival in Peru

Nesrine Khoury

launched her book "I Kick the House and Go Out" at the International Beirut Book Fair

Milestones of 2018

JANUARY

January 30

AFAC kicks off 2018 with the launch of the new Creative and Critical Writings program

FEBRUARY

February 01

Open call for Visual Arts, Performing Arts, AFAC Documentary Program, the Arab Documentary Photography Program and the Creative and Critical Writings grants program

February 08

Launch of the Un-Spoken Series in Berlin, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

February 08 → 10

AFAC participates in Crossroads conference in Switzerland

February 16

Opening concert Forum der Berlinale – Cine–Concert: Georges Méliès’ “Solitudes”, 16 February, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

February 28

Screening of “Asphalt” at the AFAC Film Night in Sursock Museum

MARCH

March 22

Opening of “Against Oblivion: [laut] Die Welt hören / [sound] Listening to the

World”, at the Humboldt Box in Berlin, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

March 26 → 27

AFAC participated in the meeting “Investing in Philanthropy Development” co-hosted by WINGS and “la Caixa” Banking Foundation in Barcelona, Spain

March 28

Screening of “Challat of Tunis” at the AFAC Film Night in Sursock Museum

APRIL

April 04

AFAC participated in a donors’ and partners’ meeting on “Knowledge at Risk: Conflict, Collaboration and Ethics”, organized by the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) in Amman

April 04 → 08

AFAC hosts the second ADPP Workshop of the 4th cycle in Beirut

April 12 → 14

AFAC and DOX BOX launch the first edition of Documentary Convention in Leipzig, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

April 21 → 22

AFAC organized the 11th Arts and Culture Donors Meeting in Brussels

April 30

AFAC and Drosos Foundation launch the new ACE program

MAY

May 1

Calls closed for Visual Arts, Performing Arts, AFAC Documentary Program, Arab Documentary Photography Program and Creative and Critical Writings

Open Call for Cinema

May 03 → 05

Launch of the “Writing Catastrophe” workshop in Berlin, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

May 07 → 08

AFAC Board Meeting

May 14

AFAC and ACSS jointly announce the new Research on the Arts Program

May 31

AFAC and Dar El-Nimer announce Film Tuesdays partnership

JUNE

June 01

Open Call for Music and Training/Regional Events

June 09

Forum “Imagining the Future: The Arab World in the Aftermath of Revolution” in Berlin, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

June 11→15

AFAC participated in a panel discussion

in the Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018 ISPA Congress, Off the Beaten Track, The Netherlands

JULY

July 5

AFAC announced 9 new grantees for the Arab Documentary Photography Program

July 26 → September 24

AFAC collaborated with Sursock Museum to hold a new edition of Past Disquiet which was curated by Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti

July 30

AFAC announced 22 new grantees for Visual Arts

July 31

AFAC announced 24 new grantees for Performing Arts

AUGUST

August 01

Call closed for Cinema

August 06

AFAC announced 23 new grantees for its Documentary Program

August 10

AFAC announced 23 new grantees for Creative and Critical Writings.

Call closed for Research on the Arts Program

August 16

AFAC announced the 8 Arts and Culture institutions to participate in the ACE program

August 24 → 26

AFAC held the second edition of “Wish You Were Here: AFAC Music and Film Summer Festival” in Berlin, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

SEPTEMBER

September 01

Call closed for Music and Training/Regional Events

September 05 → 12

AFAC held its 6th AFAC Film Week program, organized in partnership with Project’heurts, Planète Cinuvers and the ONCI in Algeria

September 21 → 22

AFAC participated in the 13th edition of the Festival Arabesques in Montpellier, France

September 23 → 28

AFAC participated in Al Gouna Film Festival and met with stakeholders in Cairo

September 28

World premiere of “Ur” by Sulayman al-Bassam, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

OCTOBER

October 26 → 28

Forum “Revisiting Archive in the Aftermath of Revolution” in Berlin, as part of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP)

NOVEMBER

November 02 → 06

First Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship (ACE) program workshop in Beirut, as part of a cycle of three workshops

November 30

AFAC announced 28 new grantees for Music

DECEMBER

December 03

AFAC announced 25 new grantees for Training/Regional Events

December 05

AFAC held a social convening on the sidelines of its annual Board meeting, at Villa Linda Sursock

December 11

AFAC announced 30 new film projects for Cinema

December 12

AFAC and ACSS announced the 9 selected research projects for the first cycle of the Research on the Arts Program (RAP)

December 14 → 15

Research on the Arts Program (RAP) first workshop in the presence of the program’s 9 grantees, 5 jury members and 2 mentors.

Grants and Programs

The 2018 General Grants and Programs were launched on February 1st with the open calls of the first cycle of grants, namely Visual Arts, Performing Arts, AFAC Documentary Program, and Arab Documentary Photography Program. With the closure of the three-year special program ANWP, AFAC also launched a new open call for Creative and Critical Writings in the same period, offering grants to a wide array of writers in genres ranging from critical writings on the arts to poetry, novellas, children and youth literature, graphic

novels and electronic literary platforms. The calls closed on May 1st. Five readers’ and juries’ committees for the above categories were solicited to evaluate the submitted projects and meetings. Grants announcements were declared during the months of July and August.

The call for applications for the second cycle of grants opened on May 1st and 14th (for Cinema and Research on the Arts respectively) and June 1st (for Music and Training and Regional Events) and closed in August and

September with jury meetings and grants announcements in November and December. The research component has been taken out of the RTR category and assigned a separate program - Research on the Arts - given that it is largely underdeveloped and lacking in resources. The Research on the Arts program is in partnership with the Arab Council for the Social Sciences and aspires to attract researchers from the social sciences, humanities and political studies - in addition to those specialized in the arts - to examine the arts as indicators of societal, political and economic phenomena and manifestations thus fortifying the connections between the sphere of arts and society and highlighting the purpose of the arts beyond its aesthetics.

Another new program - Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship (ACE) – in partnership with Drosos Foundation, was launched not as an open call, but through a nomination process. Nominated cultural institutions were invited to apply as of May 20th until June 25th, and the jury meeting and announcement of selected participants took place in August. ACE comes as a response to the huge challenge that faces arts and culture institutions in the region: that of sustainability. The 3-year program is designed to inspire small and medium arts and culture institutions working in the Arab region - with strong connections to their respective communities - in the areas of fundraising, entrepreneurship, communication and leadership. It aims to foster a creative environment where these institutions can reflect on alternative ways to sustain themselves, with the help of experts/mentors, inspiring case studies focusing on the global south, lectures and related readings and exercises. Each cycle comprises three extensive workshops and culminates with an incentive grant that allows the participating institutions to implement an innovative activity inspired by their learning during the span of the program. The first workshop was held in Beirut between November 2 and 6. The five-day workshop brought together 16 young cultural managers from the Arab region; 5 experts from Lebanon, Syria, South Africa, India and Brazil; 6 figures from the private sector and of course the AFAC team. The workshop program consisted of a series of presentations around topics of Impact Investment, Fundraising, Storytelling, Measuring the Impact of Arts and Culture; global context analysis regarding trends, connections between the public, private and NGO sectors, landscape of wealth; Q&A sessions with stakeholders (business people, philanthropists and entrepreneurs); as well as field work on two case studies and a pitching exercise. Parallel activities included a team-building cooking evening, a tour of Ras Beirut area with the Arab Center for Architecture and music and theater performances supported by AFAC. The workshop set-up and design were meant to drag participants out of

their comfort zone to reflect on their positioning within a changing global context where existing structures and modes of support are shifting and new schemes are emerging. Within that frame, the participants were challenged and prompted to explore the continuity of their work along the existing and new dimensions. Feedback from the participants was extremely positive and indicative of how timely this initiative is.

The latest program in development, the North Africa Cultural Program, is set to take off in May 2019. It aims at supporting the role of cultural actors in this sub-region and for 2018, AFAC has been preparing the grounds for launching the open calls in 2019. The inception phase in the last quarter of 2018 included field visits and meetings with diverse arts and culture independent initiatives and spaces as well as developing the design and guidelines of the program. Visits to Egypt and Algeria have been conducted, where AFAC met with numerous individual and cultural institutions, and the next scoping visits are planned for Tunisia, Morocco and Libya by proxy. The first phase 2019-2022 includes a Regional Fund covering all of North Africa and a National Fund covering each of the following countries in North Africa: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Regionally, the program will support through open call grant schemes, joint artistic projects that are created regionally; the distribution, dissemination and circulation of artistic works and productions to broad audiences; the documentation, archiving and sharing of data, knowledge, and contemporary practices in arts and culture; as well as exchanges on the development of frameworks for arts and culture education and cultural policies. Nationally, support in each of the five countries of North Africa will be mainly through open call grant schemes. Arts and culture institutions will be supported with core funding. Cultural spaces will also be supported for increased engagement and outreach programs, as will training and skill-building initiatives for young artists and emerging professionals.

Applications and Grants

The total applications received under the different categories in 2018 was 1441, in comparison to 1049 in 2017, and the total number of grants in 2018 to date is 201 covering nine categories out of the ten categories, in comparison to a total of 143 grants in 2017. The total budgeted grants amount for 2018 is roughly \$3 million compared to \$2.36 million in 2017.



Application Statistics

Total Number of Applications Received

1441

Applicants in 2018

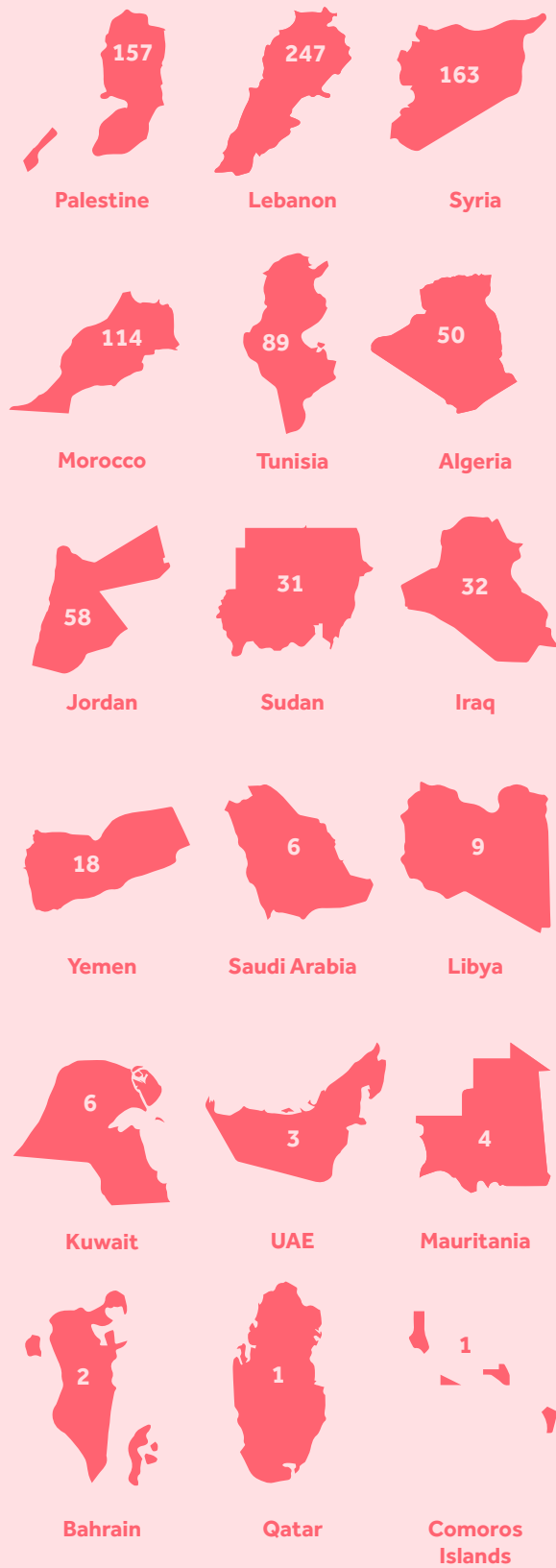
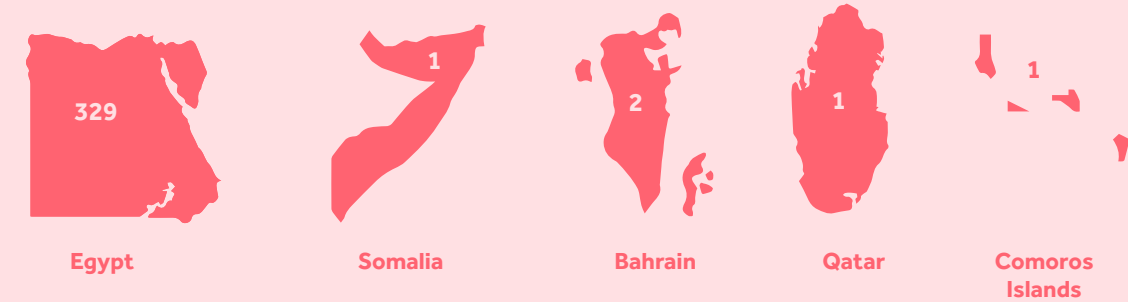
1049

Applicants in 2017

Geographic Spread in the Arab region

20

Arab Countries



Non-Arab Geographic Spread

Europe (79)
North America (33)
Asia (1)
Africa (3)

Grants and Programs Applicants 2018/2017

Visual Arts

208/138

Performing Arts

147/100

AFAC Documentary Program

180/98

Arab Documentary Photography Program

79/80

Cinema

287/325

Music

148/112

Training and Regional Events

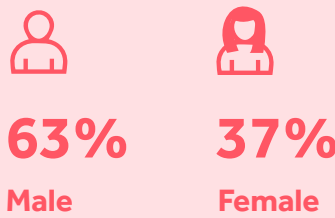
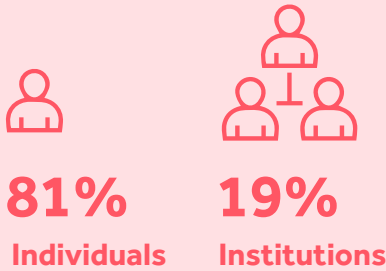
154/196

Creative and Critical Writings 117

Research on the Arts Program 84

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship 37

Applicants Ratios



Comparative per country 2018/2017

Egypt: 329/243	Comoros Islands: 1/1
Lebanon: 247/174	Qatar: 1/2
Syria: 163/107	France: 33/24
Palestine: 157/111	USA: 31/17
Morocco: 114/85	UK: 17/17
Tunisia: 89/65	Germany: 10/12
Jordan: 58/36	Belgium: 5/3
Algeria: 50/26	Netherlands: 4/5
Iraq: 32/17	Switzerland: 3/3
Sudan: 31/24	Africa: 3/0
Yemen: 18/14	Italy: 2/1
Libya: 9/7	Canada: 2/1
Kuwait: 6/6	Greece: 2/0
Saudi Arabia: 6/9	Luxembourg: 1/2
Mauritania: 4/4	Slovenia: 1/0
UAE: 3/6	Asia: 1/0
Bahrain: 2/4	Australia: 1/0
Somalia/Djibouti: 1/0	

Grantee Statistics

Total Number of Grantees 2018/2017

201

Grantees

1441

Applicants

Visual Arts

22/26

Performing Arts

24/19

AFAC Documentary Program

23/13

Arab Documentary Photography Program

9/10

Cinema

31/29

Music

27/21

Training and Regional Events

25 /30

Creative and Critical Writings

23

Research on the Arts Program

9

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship

8

Grantees as per Individuals/Institutions, Nationalities and Grant Amounts per Category

Visual Arts 16/6

Egypt (6), Lebanon (5), Tunisia (2), Algeria (1), Iraq (1), Kuwait (1), Libya (1), Morocco (1), Palestine (1), Sudan (1), Syria (1) and Italy/Iraq (1)

Total amount of Grants: \$325,000

Performing Arts 15/9

Lebanon (9), Syria (3), Palestine (4), Egypt (2), Tunisia (2), Jordan (1), Morocco (1), France/ Syria (1) and USA (1)

Total amount of Grants: \$301,000

AFAC Documentary Program 23/0

Palestine (6), Algeria (3), Syria (3), Tunisia (3), Morocco (2), Egypt (2), Jordan (2), Comoros Islands (1), and Lebanon (1)

Total amount of Grants: \$350,000

Arab Documentary Photography Program 9/0

Egypt (3), Algeria (1), Lebanon (1), Mauritania (1), Morocco (1), Syria (1), Yemen (1)

Total amount of Grants: \$45,000

Cinema 30/0

Lebanon (7), Palestine (6), Egypt (4), Algeria (3), Morocco (3), Tunisia (3), Kuwait (1), Libya (1), Somalia (1), Syria (1)

Total Grants Amount: \$500,000

Music 21/7

Lebanon (6), Tunisia (5), Palestine (4), Syria (4), Egypt (2), Jordan (2), Morocco (2), Algeria (1), Iraq (1), Mauritania (1)

Total Grants Amount: \$359,800

Training and Regional Events 12/19

Egypt (7), Lebanon (5), Palestine (5), Algeria (2), Iraq (1), Tunisia (1), Yemen (1), Belgium (1), France (1), United Kingdom (1)

Total amount: \$400,400

Creative and Critical Writings 19/4

Egypt (8), Syria (6), Lebanon (4), Morocco (1), Palestine (1), Sudan (1), Yemen (1), France/ Tunisia (1)

Total amount: \$219,200

Research on the Arts Program 9/0

Lebanon (2), Palestine (2), Egypt (1), Jordan (1), Morocco (1), Saudi Arabia (1), Sudan (1), Tunisia (1)

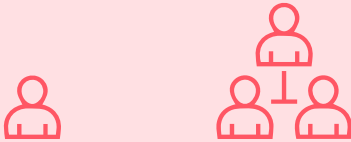
Total amount: \$160,450

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship 0/8

Egypt (3), Lebanon (2), Morocco (1), Syria (1), Palestine (1)

Total amount: \$200,000

Grantee Ratios



By Country 2018/2017

Lebanon: 40/36	Libya: 2/1
Egypt: 38/18	Mauritania: 2/2
Palestine: 24/20	Saudi Arabia: 1/0
Syria: 19/18	Somalia: 1/0
Tunisia: 16/3	Comoros Islands: 1/0
Morocco: 12/14	France: 12/5
Algeria: 10/5	Germany: 3/3
Jordan: 5/5	UK: 2/4
Sudan: 3/6	USA: 2/0
Yemen: 3/1	Belgium: 1/0
Iraq: 2/2	Italy: 1/0
Kuwait: 2/0	

Arab Spread:

180

Non-Arab Geographic Spread

Europe (19)
North America (2)

Total Number of Individual Grantees:

149 individuals
(out of 201 total grantees),
86 Male and 63 Female

Total Number of Institutional Grantees:

52 Institutions (out of total 201 grantees)
68 Emerging talents, 133 Established talents

Year-round programming for exiled artists in Germany under the framework of AFAC’s Arab European Creative Platform

AFAC-supported projects impact on communities locally, regionally and internationally

100 Local, 82 Regional, 12 International

Geographic spread

155 Region-based
46 Diaspora

Other Project Statistics

Arab-European Creative Platform 8/8
Total amount: \$407,095
for 8 projects in Germany with local partners

2018 Granting Schedule

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, AFAC Documentary Program, Arab Documentary Photography Program, and Creative and Critical Writings

Open Call
February 1st

Close Call
May 1st

Announcement of Grantees
July and August

Cinema

Open Call
May 1st

Close Call
August 1st

Announcement of Grantees
December 4th

Research on the Arts Program – RAP

Open Call
May 14th

Close Call
August 10th

Announcement of Grantees
October 25

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship – ACE

Application submission based on nomination
May 20th

Close Call
June 25th

Announcement of Grantees
August 7th

Music & Training and Regional Events

Open Call
June 1st

Close Call
Sept 1st

Announcement of Grantees
November 23rd and 28th respectively

Visual Arts

Number of Applicants

208

Number of Grantees

22



7 Females
8 Males



7 Institutions

Countries

Egypt (6)
Lebanon (5)
Tunisia (2)
Algeria (1)
Syria (1)
Iraq (1)
Kuwait (1)
Libya (1)
Morocco (1)
Palestine (1)
Sudan (1)
Italy/ Iraq (1)

Total in Grants

\$325,000

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Alia Farid	Kuwait	The Space between classrooms	Video & Installation Exhibition
Abdalsalam Alhaj	Sudan	Old wishes	VR and AR with video Exhibition
Aicha El Beloui	Morocco	Alive (vivants)	Publication and exhibition
Ali Tnani	Tunisia	Impersonal memory	Series of drawing based and video installation
Bassam Al-Sabah	Iraq	Wandering with a sun on my Back	Computer-generated imagery video
Adelita Husni Bey	Libya	Chiron	Workshops and lecture performance
Mohamed Abdelkarim	Egypt	Let the sea eat me: To perform a ferry	Performance and publication
Roger Anis	Egypt	My dear friends	Photobook and exhibition
Akram Zaatari	Lebanon	Father and son	Filmic work, performative lecture, reproduction of the sarcophagus and final exhibition
Nasri Sayegh	Lebanon	Lam adri ma tiba a inaq ala al hawa / Fragments for an Arab melancholy	Photography, embroidery and video installation
Shirin Abu Shaqra	Lebanon	A thigh over the spy	Mixed-media exhibition
Malek Gnaoui	Tunisia	Yellow as the sky	Exhibition
Doa Aly	Egypt	The end of the world is not tomorrow	Video installation
Lara Baladi	Egypt	Vox Populi (Latin for 'the voice of the people')	Online platform
Yasmina Reggad	Algeria	We dreamt of Utopia and we woke up screaming	Lecture performance
Fehras Publishing Practices	Syria	Mapping publishing: 5 Photo-Novels	Research and publication
The Ninth Art	Egypt	CairoComix 4	Festival
Beirut Art Center Association	Lebanon	Of words and stones (from then and there)	Exhibition, artists talk and workshop

DARST Projects	Italy	A Kurdish Archive	Photobook and traveling exhibition
Beirut Art Residency	Lebanon	La Vitrine	Public art intervention
Medrar for Contemporary Art	Egypt	Roznama - Studio Program	Mentoring for young artists & cycle exhibitions
Al Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art	Palestine	The Jerusalem Show IX	Visual arts festival

“It was exciting to see projects that are positioned at the intersection of storytelling and technology, including augmented reality (AR), virtual reality, digital archives and other new media, noting that most of the projects shed light on pertinent political, social and environmental issues”

Visual Arts jury

The 2018 Jury Committee for Visual Arts included Hour Al Qassimi (United Arab Emirates), Alia Sebti (Morocco) and Tarek Abou El Foutouh (Egypt).

Jury Statement

“We were delighted to have taken part in the jury for AFAC’s grants for visual arts and to work together to deliberate upon proposals of a very high quality. The jury went through nearly 100 applications submitted by individuals and institutions of which 22 were chosen. The selected individual artists, both established and emerging, work in a broad range of mediums; many dealing with history, unknown archives and bringing multiple voices to challenge the single narrative. It was exciting to see projects that are positioned at the intersection of storytelling and technology, including augmented reality

(AR), virtual reality, digital archives and other new media, noting that most of the projects shed light on pertinent political, social and environmental issues. We strongly believe that it is important to support art institutions to continue their essential work that might not be able to flourish without the backing of funding bodies like AFAC. We would have loved to have seen more applications from the Maghreb region and the Gulf, hopefully more artists will consider applying in the future. We would also encourage AFAC to consider adding the French language to the application system.”

Performing Arts

Number of Applicants

147

Number of Grantees

24



7 Females
8 Males



9 Institutions

Countries

- Lebanon (9)
- Syria (3)
- Egypt (2)
- Palestine (4)
- Tunisia (2)
- Jordan (1)
- Morocco (1)
- France/ Syria (1)
- USA (1)

Total in Grants

\$301,000

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Rochdi Belgasmi	Tunisia	The Cabaret of Tunis	Dance Performance
Ossama Halal	Syria	The Other Side of the Garden	Theater Performance
Youness Atbane	Morocco	Untitled 14 km	Dance Performance
Randa Mirza / Wael Kodeih	Lebanon	Tarab and Arab Modernity	Music and Visual Performance
Sawsan Bou Khaled	Lebanon	Dans La Peau	Theater performance
Wael Ali	Syria	Apocalypse	Theater performance
Mohamad Al Khansa	Palestine	OYUNU	Dance performance
Ghida Hachicho	Lebanon	Beyond a Certain Point Movement Itself Changes	Lecture performance with live choreographed movement, a video and spoken text
Khouloud Yassine	Lebanon	Just The Two of US	Dance performance
Amir Sabra	Palestine	Hip Hop Gees	Dance performance
Rana Karam	Syria	Eyelids	Interactive theater performance
Mohamedali Ltaief	Tunisia	The Path of the Sun or the Bare Life	Dance performance
Hamza Hamadeh	Lebanon	Demande d'Emploi	Theater performance
Chrystèle Khodr	Lebanon	Augurs	Theater performance
Joyce Raie	Jordan	Another Kind of Death	Dance theater performance
Zoukak	Lebanon	Zoukak Sidewalks - The Festival (2018)	Theater festival
Al-Harah Theater	Palestine	Palestine International Theater Festival for Children and Youth - Bethlehem 2020 Edition	Theater festival
Mahatat for Contemporary Art	Egypt	Art of Transit: Art Interventions in Public Spaces	Residency and theater performance
Nût Dance Company	Egypt	Breaking Walls Festival	Dance festival

HEK-MA	France	We Are Not Going Back	Dance performance
Awrad - Clown Me In	Lebanon	Trashion Show	Applied theater
Leish Troupe	Syria	Embraces	Theater performance
Richard B. Fisher Center	United States	How Can There Be a Window Where No Wall Remains?	Dance and theater performances
The Palestinian National Theatre - el Hakawati	Palestine	Alkhubz al Mor	Theater performance

The 2018 Jury Committee for Performing Arts was composed of Bashar Murkus (Palestine), Hala Omran (Syria) and Khaled Amine (Morocco).

Jury Statement

“We are honored by this opportunity to review such a diversified number of artistic projects, which in turn enrich the Arab art scene and reflect the desire of Arab artists to express themselves through the performing arts. It was a real pleasure to dive into these projects, which are eager to explore broad experimental horizons, in parallel with the current transformations in the Arab region. During the evaluation process, we noticed a real preoccupation with the revocation of boundaries between the cultures of performance. There was a clear inclination towards moving away from scripts in an attempt to challenge the established authority, including that of the dramatic text, thereby transforming the actor into a performer and the viewer into a witness. The proposed projects suggest a new presence for the Arab body through a visual dramaturgy that focuses on research and documentation,

on memory and its reconstruction. Our reading of the projects reveals that language fails at times to convey the voice of the Arab artist. This can be interpreted as a kind of escape from oral expression, towards different forms of expression that derive their vocabulary from new media and from the performer’s body in particular. After studying the projects thoroughly and evaluating them individually, we discussed them collectively and selected the projects that strive to go beyond the closed frame of the individual self and adopt a direction of performing arts that leaves a real impact on society here and now. Quality and innovation were central to this selection. Moreover, we made sure to give a particular attention to young artists who are working on their first projects, as we believe that the Arab artistic scene is in continuous need of new and effective Arab voices.”

Creative and Critical Writings

Number of Applicants

117

Number of Grantees

23



6 Females
13 Males



4 Institutions

Countries

- Lebanon (4)
- Syria (8)
- Sudan (1)
- Egypt (8)
- Palestine (1)
- Yemen (1)
- Morocco (1)
- France/ Tunisia (1)

Total in Grants

\$219,200

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Mohamad Soueid	Lebanon	Documenting Lebanon	Critical book
Ahmed Mahmoud Shalaby	Egypt	The Grand Nights	Poetry
Dina El Deeb	Egypt	Al Hamesheyoun - The Undercommons	Essay
Ahmed Naji Saleh	Egypt	Heraz Mekamkm	Critical book
Nesrine Khoury	Syria	I Kick the House and Go Out	Poetry
Zain Alabedein Saleh	Syria	Chez the Maidenly Madam	Play
Samer Abdulfttah Abdullah	Yemen	The Author Has Another Memory	Play
Charles Elakl	Egypt	Jelly Bird	Graphic novel
Hanane Hajj Ali	Lebanon	The Dramatheque - Radical experience of HAKAWATI Theatre/ Lebanon	Critical book
Fayouz Karawya	Egypt	Afraid to tell what I feel	Critical book
Moheb Mohamed Ali	Egypt	Saleh Abdel-Hay: Jockey of Arab Music	Critical book
Roger Outa	Lebanon	Lebanese pop sex	Critical book
Dalia Taha	Palestine	Writing and return	Critical book
Hanadi Zarka	Syria	Media	Poetry
Ayman Mohamed Abdolsalam	Sudan	Where is my stuff	Short stories
Feras Hatem	Syria	Shams and the monsters	Youth literature
Hiba Mehrez	Syria	Failing exercise in living	Play
Amgad El Sabban	Egypt	Sleep thieves	Short stories
Shehab Ismail	Egypt	Digital history of British colonial Cairo: media and the potentialities of history	Online platform
Masrah Ensemble	Lebanon	Marsah – Theater texts	Online platform

Labo Beckett pour les arts	Morocco	The Holocaust of new arts - shock and deterritorialization in Arab contemporary art	Critical book
Archipels Images	France	Essays in cinema criticism	Online platform
Re	Syria	Electronic cultural platform RE	Online platform

The 2018 Jury Committee for CCW comprised of Najwa Ben Shatwan (Libya), Zeina Halabi (Lebanon) and Chokri Al Mabkhout (Tunisia).

Jury Statement

“The Jury Committee of the Creative and Critical Writings category has reviewed and evaluated approximately 90 creative and critical projects, from which twenty-three were selected. These selected projects ranged from literary writings (poem, short story, theater, comics, stories for the youth) to critical works in the fields of photography, music, theater, the relationship between literature and censorship, graffiti, and others. The Jury Committee has encouraged works which meet on a number of important cultural concerns, while still very diverse with respect to genre and their authors’ interests. Some of the works have focused on the local, national and nationalistic memories through imagery, music, and theater experiments, as well as on the memory of spaces and places with its transformations and architectural layers. Despite the variety of creative literary genres, the Jury Committee members have noticed commonalities among the projects they chose to support. In poetry for example, the supported projects dwelled in the prose poem and its aesthetics, focusing on the day-to-day life, intimacy and the formulation of distinctive poetic traits. The selected short stories, on the other hand, attempted various methods in approaching the details of daily life and

the concerns of the Arab citizen through irony, fantasy and dreams. We feel this as well in the theater plays which are daring in dealing with suppressed topics, tackled with an advanced aesthetic vision and an intellectual awareness that turns such topics into issues of common concern. Finally, the critical writing projects were an indication of the growing interest in issues of the individual and their various manifestations. Some dealt with the emergence of the individual self in Arabic music, while others addressed the issue of the body, burdened with the repressive representations of today’s consumerist society. Other critical works touch upon the issues of censorship, writing, ethics and law. The Jury Committee also chose to support electronic cultural platforms, specialized in cinema criticism, the documentation of the artistic memory of theater and music, and the expansion of the network of relations between Arab and Kurdish writers. What distinguishes these various works is that they range from the narrow local to the national with a broad humanistic vision and advanced intellectual and aesthetic approaches that are able to imagine alternative cultures that lie on the margin of the prevailing culture.”

AFAC Documentary Program

Number of Applicants

180

Number of Grantees

23



12 Females
11 Males

Countries

- Palestine (6)
- Algeria (3)
- Syria (3)
- Tunisia (3)
- Morocco (2)
- Egypt (2)
- Jordan (2)
- Comoros Islands (1)
- Lebanon (1)

Total in Grants

\$350,000

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Nahed Awwad	Palestine	Orthodox Intifada	Development
Colette Ghunim	Palestine	Traces of home	Development
Sareen Hairabedian	Jordan	Whispers of Artsakh	Development
Omar El-Khairy	Palestine	NAZ	Development
Leila Chaïbi	Algeria	Guardian of the worlds	Development
Mahasen Nasser-Eldin	Palestine	We carve words in the earth	Development
Laura Stauth	Egypt	Between walls	Development
Mira Sidawi	Palestine	Al Jidar: the wall	Development
Adnane Baraka	Morocco	Fragments from heaven	Production
Bassam Mortada	Egypt	Abo Zaabal 1989	Production
Qutaiba Barhamji	Syria	Gesar’s land	Production
Latifa Doghri	Tunisia	Nothing about my mother	Production
Hind Shoufani	Palestine	They planted strange trees	Production
Hamza Ouni	Tunisia	El Medestansi	Production
Mohamed Said Ouma	Comoros	Red card	Production
Ridha Tili	Tunisia	The color of phosphate	Production
Hind Meddeb	Tunisia	Paris Stalingrad	Post-production
Dina Naser	Jordan	Tiny souls	Post-production
Wael Kadlo	Syria	The way home	Post-production
Lamine Ammar Khodjation	Algeria	Une maison pour Buster Keaton	Post-production
Dorothee Myriam Kellou	Algeria	In Mansourah you separated us	Post-production
Wissam Georges Tanios	Lebanon	We are from there	Post-production
Eyas Almokdad	Syria	The final scene	Post-production

“We were in the presence of “Desire”; the desire for self-affirmation, for drawing new maps, and the desire to not suffocate by limited geographies, boundaries or taboos. We are witnessing a new momentum in Arab documentary filmmaking, where authors have cut off with the heavy burden of yesterday. When they revisit history, they stand firmly in the moment and head into the future with a unique individuality.”

AFAC Documentary Program jury

The 2018 Jury Committee for ADP brought together Carine Doumit (Lebanon), Reda Ben Jelloun (Morocco) and Diana El Jeiroudi (Syria).

Jury Statement

“We were in the presence of “Desire”; the desire for self-affirmation, for drawing new maps, and the desire to not suffocate by limited geographies, boundaries or taboos. We are witnessing a new momentum in Arab documentary filmmaking, where authors have cut off with the heavy burden of yesterday. When they revisit history, they stand firmly in the moment and head into the future with a unique individuality. Many projects emerged out of sincere self-expression and knowledge of its locale and of the other, where filmmakers are reclaiming the narrative through a creative discourse. We favored those projects

that chose to deal with urgent historical and political matters but with critique and a personal approach, and which kept an unsettled distance with their topics and subjects and brought about novelty. We were impressed by those projects that had artistry and craftsmanship, and that were preoccupied with the ordinary and the individual search for meaning in today’s madness. We especially admired that film projects were made with such seriousness, conviction and uncompromising research, each attempting a complete and an integral narrative.”

Arab Documentary Photography Program

Number of Applicants

79

Number of Grantees

9



3 Females
6 Males

Countries

- Egypt (3)
- Lebanon (1)
- Mauritania (1)
- Morocco (1)
- Algeria (1)
- Syria (1)
- Yemen (1)

Total in Grants

\$45,000

(and in addition, mentoring is offered for the duration of the cycle; the budget for such professional support in 2017 was \$170,000).

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title
M'hammed Kllito	Morocco	Among You
Roger Mokbel	Lebanon	Describe the Sky to Me
Heba Khamis	Egypt	Transit Bodies
Elwely Vall	Mauritania	In the Light of Change
Nadine Al Koudsi	Syria	Those Who Dance on the Staircase
Abdo Shanan	Algeria	Dry
Ravy Shaker	Egypt	Letters to Moses
Shaima Al Tamimi	Yemen	As If We Never Came

The ninth grantee name is kept confidential due to the sensitivity of the project’s topic.

“We were honored to jury the fifth class of the Arab Documentary Photography Program, an initiative that has been transformative in the lives of its participants. It has also been crucial for expanding visual storytelling about the region from within, rather than as told by outsiders. Unlike a simple grant program, this mentored program allows photographers to develop their unique voice and participate in each other’s growth.”

Arab Documentary Photography Program jury

The 2018 Jury Committee for ADPP was made up of Kristen Lubben (USA), Mohamed Somji (Tanzania / UAE) and Rana El Nemr (Egypt).

Jury Statement

“We were honored to jury the fifth class of the Arab Documentary Photography Program, an initiative that has been transformative in the lives of its participants. It has also been crucial for expanding visual storytelling about the region from within, rather than as told by outsiders. Unlike a simple grant program, this mentored program allows photographers to develop their unique voice and participate in each other’s’ growth. Our jury reviewed 72 proposals and selected nine finalists and three backups. We were impressed by the range and diversity of the approaches and topics we saw in the applications. We were especially drawn to projects that relied upon a deep and thoughtful knowledge of a particular subject,

and a considered approach to translating that subject photographically. In future years, we would strongly encourage more women to apply to the program; only 39% of the applicants were women, a number that has been fairly stable over the years. There has also been a dearth of candidates from Palestine, the Gulf region, and Iraq, and we hope to see more in future years. We would like to thank AFAC for such a thorough and thoughtful jury process; they provided a level of organization and analysis of the applications that enabled a deep and gratifying deliberation.”

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship

Number of Applicants

37

Number of Grantees

8



8 Institutions

Countries

- Egypt (3)
- Lebanon (2)
- Morocco (1)
- Syria (1)
- Palestine (1)

Total in Grants

\$200,000

Grantee Name	Nationality	Sector
Zawya Cinema & Distribution	Egypt	Cinema
Nowhere Online Music Platform	Egypt	Music
Photopia Cairo	Egypt	Photography
Beirut Art Residency	Lebanon	Visual arts
Damascus Theatre Laboratory	Syria	Performing arts
Atelier Kissaria	Morocco	Visual arts
SJ Music Productions	Palestine	Music
Minwal	Lebanon	Performing arts

“ACE is an incredibly important program at a critical moment in the region. The region continues to develop valuable creative initiatives at a fast pace reflecting the dynamism and aspirations of younger citizens. Yet more than ever, there is an urgency to stabilize and energize arts and culture organizations by enabling them to be more strategic, entrepreneurial in their thinking and projects and better managed to withstand the myriad challenges facing civil society and the creative community.”

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship jury

The 2018 Jury Committee for ACE was made up of Khadija El Bennaoui (Morocco), Ahmed El Attar (Egypt), and Moukhtar Kocache (Lebanon/Syria).

Jury Statement

“ACE is an incredibly important program at a critical moment in the region. The region continues to develop valuable creative initiatives at a fast pace reflecting the dynamism and aspirations of younger citizens. Yet more than ever, there is an urgency to stabilize and energize arts and culture organizations by enabling them to be more strategic, entrepreneurial in their thinking and projects and better managed to withstand the myriad challenges facing civil society and the creative community. There are virtually no support opportunities for emerging leaders in the culture sector to sustain themselves intellectually and critically and in terms of skills; and to share and distribute knowledge to ensure continuity, renewal and transitions. Where other sectors have developed opportunities for seeding and incubating new ideas and new ventures and to solidify and re-focus existing structures and institutions, the arts and culture sector still lags behind. Leaders of arts and culture organizations are often left to fend for themselves and it is high time for them to receive the support and know-how they badly need and to build a

community of practice in order to expand their reach, develop diverse income streams and anchor their mission and work with broader stakeholders and the grassroots. We felt energized by the diversity, passion, commitment and drive of the applicant pool of organizations – this highlighted the potential that a more sustained, efficient and impactful sector could have on the development of societies in the Arab region.

The opportunity to review dozens of applicants highlighted the alarming fragility and the financial constraints facing many of existing important organizations, as well as emerging new structures. In many instances applicants required a more urgent and holistic intervention that would fall outside the mandate of the ACE program. Our decision-making was not necessarily solely based on the excellence of the organizations nor on their urgent need for support but whether they could fully benefit from the structure, the time frame and the offerings that ACE is designed to produce.”

Research on the Arts Program

Number of Applicants

84

Number of Grantees

9



7 Females
2 Males

Countries

- Lebanon (2)
- Saudi Arabia (1)
- Egypt (1)
- Palestine (2)
- Jordan (1)
- Morocco (1)
- Sudan (1)

Total in Grants

\$160,450

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Adham Selim	Egypt	Digital Arabs: A Brief History of Digitally-conceived Architecture in the Arab World During the 1990s	Architecture
Shama Babiker	Sudan	Multiple Spaces, Continued Mobilizations: Conceptual and Stylistic Visual Arts Transformations in Visual and Spatial Arts in Sudan 1980-2010	Urbanism and
Joan Chaker	Lebanon	The Muleteer in the Lebanese Novel:Social Transformation in the Era of Global Capital	Literature
Lara Khaldi	Palestine	A Genealogy of Palestinian Museums and Renegade Objects	Visual Arts
Mary Jirmanus Saba	Lebanon	We Felt Again That Everything is New: Political Cinema and Social Movement Praxis in 1970s Arab Left	Cinema
Widad Adas	Jordan	Sayed Darwish and Contemporary Youth Musical Practices in Egypt	Music
Hassan El Bakkari	Morocco	Sociology of Music; Education in Secondary School in Morocco as a Model	Music
Reema Fadda	Palestine	A Healthy Distrust	Visual Arts
The ninth grantee name is kept confidential due to the sensitivity of the project’s topic.			

The 2018 Jury Committee for RAP was made up of Dr. Alia Mossallam (Egypt), Dr. Maya Kesrouany (Lebanon), Dr. Ismael Nashef (Palestine), Dr. Omar Fertat (Morocco), and Prof. Walid Sadek (Lebanon).

Jury Statement

“The jury members of the Research on the Arts Program by the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) and the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS), having met over a period of two days on the 18th and 19th of October 2018 to review and assess the submitted applications, wish to communicate the following general remarks: The jury found that the parameters of this year’s call were generative in foregrounding an important problematic in the relationship between the social sciences and the arts that seems to permeate, to various degrees, all of the submitted applications. The jury clearly saw an imbalance between these two fields, which tends to place the arts in the position of a docile object to be examined and utilized for the production of data. The jury repeatedly noticed how art was employed to illustrate a premise, to justify ends through quantitative data collection or further summoned as a symptom of a socio-political

condition. Accordingly, art was made to seem without an internal aesthetic coherence or a compelling materiality that would allow it to resist, inflect and even generate other considerations and alternative criteria. It is the jury’s opinion that in desisting from a utilitarian use of the arts and in avoiding an over-emphasis on conventional quantitative methods, the social sciences can begin to respond to the indeterminacy, untimeliness, even ambivalence, of art with critical and self-reflective projects that can speak with a range of writing strategies and address a variety of audiences. It is the jury’s opinion that an exploration of the tension between the social sciences and the arts can generate new directions in contemporary Arab social research on the arts. It is also the jury’s opinion that such new directions are being initiated and explored in this year’s selected projects.”

Music

Number of Applicants

148

Number of Grantees

28



7 Females
14 Males



7 Institutions

Countries

Lebanon (6)
Tunisia (5)
Palestine (4)
Syria (4)
Egypt (2)
Jordan (2)
Morocco (2)
Algeria (1)
Iraq (1)
Mauritania (1)

Total in Grants

\$359,800

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Mjama Widad	Morocco	N3rdistan	Electronic and dub step composition recording
Aisha Cheghali	Mauritania	Ardennes Festival	Women music festival
Sami Hawat	Lebanon	Time Has Changed	Folk composition and recording
Asma Ghanem	Palestine	Damaged Brains Music	Experimental music composition + visual art sketches booklet
Feras Shahrestan	Syria	Sound from the North (North of Syria)	Classic composition with ethnic instrument and recording
Yacine Boulares	Tunisia	Ifriqiya	Jazz composition and recording
Donna Khalife	Lebanon	Hope is the thing with feathers	Jazz album composition and recording
Imed Alibi	Tunisia	Frigya	Fusion composition and recording
Jasser Hajj Youssef	Tunisia	Memories	Classic composition for the Viola d'Amore and recording
Abed Kobeissy	Lebanon	The Prosecution of Mustapha al-Agha	Electro-Acoustic album recording
Adham Zidan	Egypt	Baskot Lel Baltageyya	Electro - Pop composition and recording
Natik Awayez	Iraq	Manbarani	Experimental music album
Rafik Rezine	Algeria	Electro Zebala	Instrument creation and recording
Safana Baqla	Syria	Women Who Adored God	Women Choir and Recording
Basel Rajoub	Syria	The River of Lights	Classic and Ethnic Music Album
Samir El Ferjani	Tunisia	Shéhérazade Opéra	Oriental Opera Composition
Raed Yassin	Lebanon	Archeophony	Experimental Music Album
Suad Bushnaq	Jordan	Original Soundtracks from Independent Arab Cinema	Sound Track and Film Composition Music Album
Mohamed Zouari	Tunisia	Electro Btaihi	Electro Oriental Music Album
Abdul Hadi Hashem	Palestine	Asifeh - Al-Hiffeh	Rap Music Album
Muriel Kahwagi	Lebanon	Zajal: Between Improvisation and Institutionalization	Archive and Publication of Zajal

Festival Arabesques	Morocco	Festival Arabesques	Festival for Music from the Arab world in Montpellier/ France
Global Week for Syria	Syria	Global Week for Syria	Music Events in Lebanon and Amsterdam
Al Balad Theatre	Jordan	Al Balad Music Festival - 6 th edition	Music Programming/ Festival
European-Egyptian Contemporary Music Society	Egypt	Manassat North / South	Platform for Electronic Music
Mahrajazz	Palestine	MahraJazz - alternative jazz festival	Jazz Music Festival in Haifa
Edward Said Conservatory	Palestine	The Palestine National Music Competition	Music Events
Beirut & Beyond	Lebanon	Beirut & Beyond International Music Festival 2018	Independent Music Festival

The 2018 Music Jury Committee was composed of Rima Khcheich (Lebanon), Hamdi Makhoulf (Tunisia) and Maan Abu Taleb (Jordan).

Jury Statement Highlights

“Means of cultural production in general, and music production more particularly, are scarce in the Arab world today, outside the framework governed by political forces, or market forces that are not restrained by non-profit considerations. This represents a missed opportunity for a large number of artists and musicians to execute their projects. From this perspective, the jury committee values the role of AFAC in creating an essential and valuable space for musics that fall outside these frameworks. This space however is complex, with its own mechanisms, opportunities and risks. Today, as the world has opened up and mixed via the internet, travel and the diaspora, musics have spontaneously intertwined and merged, and new musics have emerged in a constant live operation that occurs every day at a micro scale, that no one can deny or prove exclusively. For this reason, the so-called originality, or heresy, a blind tradition, or revival of tradition are merely ambiguous criteria, often arising from concerns that are not related to music.

The jury committee has therefore avoided these criteria, and has opted not to ask-upon evaluating every application- what it is bringing to “Arabic music”, or how Arabic it is, what societal objectives it fulfills... thereby focusing its evaluation on the quality of the proposed artistic project, its appropriateness, its seriousness, its proposition of a convincing budget, in an attempt to extrapolate the kind of concerns that move the project,

whether artistic or otherwise. Over the course of weeks during which the jury committee members have reviewed dozens of applications, and during the 2-day jury meeting during which these applications were discussed, the marked presence of some trends was clear, such as the fusion music as a genre in itself. Numerous applications also aimed to enhance Arabic music, to bring it closer to modern music, or render it more appealing to the new generation. The jury committee was forced to discuss the controversy of these concepts and their oversimplification. Several applications also revolved around specific instruments, whether because of their rarity, or by placing them in unconventional contexts. Furthermore, the jury committee received numerous applications that used experimentation as a point of entry. The jury committee members attempted to induce whether this experimentation was a stand or actual. In other words, has this experimentation frozen to become a clear pattern with its own equations? Or is it a real experiment that seeks new forms and meanings?

Further to discussions, deliberations and scrutiny, the jury committee members selected projects that stood out with their innovation, seriousness and transparency, which they present to you in all confidence with what transpired from them, and with excitement and enthusiasm for what will result from them.”

Cinema

Number of Applicants

292

Number of Grantees

30



10 Females
20 Males

Countries

- Lebanon (7)
- Palestine (6)
- Egypt (4)
- Morocco (3)
- Kuwait (1)
- Syria (1)
- Tunisia (3)
- Algeria (3)
- Somalia (1)
- Libya (1)

Total in Grants

\$500,000

Maysaa Almumin	Kuwait	J'ai Le Cafard	Short film in Production
Louly Seif	Egypt	On The Longing to Be Devoured by A Shark	Short film in Production
Valentin Noujaïm	Lebanon	El Najem	Short film in Production
Anissa Daoud	Tunisia	The Bath	Short film in Production
Muhannad Lamin	Libya	Prisoner and Jailer	Short film in Post-Production

The 2018 Cinema Jury Committee was formed of Adania Shibli (Palestine), Adnen Jdey (Tunisia), and Ahmed El Maanouni (Morocco).

Jury Statement

“The disparity in the overall pool of applications received, whether at the level of diversity of originating countries of the applicants, or the subjects treated, did not only instigate appreciation, but optimism as well. Several of the submitted projects were courageous and unrelenting in their addressing of taboos at the societal and political levels. Also, a clear tendency towards experimentation was prevalent, going beyond the conventional approaches to cinematographic treatment and attempting to create different visual and narrative bases. The applications received also included submissions by emerging talents, which confirms the continuous and vibrant interest in this

artistic field at the level of the various Arab countries in all their diversity. The number of grantees therefore exceeded the usual number of grants offered in previous years, reaching 30 grants this time.

At the same time, a number of submitted projects converged on topics dominated by the question of memory, the experience of war and violence. Despite the fact that these topics are pressing, as they are present in the daily life of numerous Arab citizens, their treatment in a modern and genuine manner, or from a novel perspective untapped before, was scarce.”

Training and Regional Events

Number of Applicants

154

Number of Grantees

25



0 Females
6 Males



19 Institutions

Countries

- Egypt (7)
- Palestine (5)
- Algeria (2)
- Lebanon (5)
- Iraq (1)
- Tunisia (1)
- Yemen (1)
- Belgium (1)
- France (1)
- United Kingdom (1)

Total in Grants

\$400,400

Grantee Name	Nationality	Project Title	Type
Mokhtar Eldenary	Egypt	Theatre of the Oppressed Workshops	Workshops and Performances
Waguih El Laqany	Egypt	Deaf Film Lab	Short Film Workshop
Toufik Douib	Algeria	DIGI-DZ	Digital Art Platform
Shareef Sarhan	Palestine	Workshops and Trainings on Sculpture Techniques	Sculpture Workshop
Hashem Adnan	Lebanon	Oh To End	Translation + Play + Publication
Zaid Atta	Iraq	Hacking Up Baghdad	Digital Media and Art workshop
Dar Alkalima University College of Arts and Culture	Palestine	Bethlehem Students Film Festival	Students Film Festival
Echos Electrik	Tunisia	No Logo	Mobile Media Art Events
Dar Yusuf Nasri Jacir for Art and Research	Palestine	Cultivating Community Ownership of Art and Space	Cultural Space to hold art exhibitions
Sareyyet Ramallah	Palestine	Ramallah Contemporary dance Festival	Contemporary Dance Festival
YAZAN	Lebanon	YAZAN Professional Actors Training	Acting Workshops
The Cultural Association for Film and Audio-Visual Production Beirut DC	Lebanon	The 10 th Edition of Beirut Cinema Days	Independent Film Festival
Dawar for Arts and Development	Egypt	Arts Rise! Promoting Community Cultural Development in Ezbet Khairallah	Arts Workshops
Editions Snoubar Bayrout	Lebanon	Forty Years of Creation in Arabic Children’s Literature	Children Literature forum & Publication
Collectif Kahraba	Lebanon	Us, the Moon and the Neighbors	Performing Arts Festival
CLUSTER-Cairo Lab for Urban Studies, Training and Environmental Research	Egypt	Public Inter-Library Online Technology-PILOT	Training and Research on Arab Arts Lexicon
Haifa Independent Film Festival - HIFF	Palestine	Haifa Independent Film Festival - 2019	Independent Film Festival

Contemporary Image Collective - CIC	Egypt	Popular Narratives	Exhibition and Talks
Hewar Company for Independent Theater and Performing Arts	Egypt	Theater Is A Must Forum 2019 6 th edition “Crossing Over”	Performing Arts Festival
Artist Residency in Algiers	Algeria	Madrasa #3	Curator Residency and Workshop
Romooz Foundation for the Arts and Cultural Development	Yemen	Creative Writing Workshop for Yemeni Young Writers	Writing Workshop
Seen Films	Egypt	First Film Forum	Training Film Program
Aflam	France	6èmes Rencontres d’Aflam	Film Festival
omnes vzw	Belgium	Arab Cartoon Festival Workshop Program	Comics and Cartoon Festival and Workshops
Shubbak: A Window on Contemporary Arab Culture	United Kingdom	Shubbak Festival 2019	Multidisciplinary Festival

“The variety that we saw in the proposed projects delighted us, in terms of mediums, subjects, approaches and execution. This revealed the consciousness of the applicants and their connection with the needs, issues and dreams of their respective communities. Furthermore, we felt their desire to distribute the works of Arab artists and render them available to a wider audience inside and outside Arab countries, to raise voices that have long been marginalized.”

Training and Regional Events jury

The 2018 Training and Regional Events Jury Committee consisted of Maria Daif (Morocco), Rowaida Khulaidi (Yemen), and Rime Naguib (Egypt).

Jury Statement

“The TR jury committee brought us together – three Arab women from the extreme Arab Mashreq to the Maghreb region – to gain the opportunity to evaluate a profusion of artistic and cultural projects. This experience granted us hope and confidence in the great potential in our region, despite all the difficulties and obstacles that the cultural practitioners are faced with in the region. During the evaluation process, we took into consideration the differences in opinions and experiences of the jury members. This diversity, far from slowing down the selection, further enhanced the discussions and decision-making process. The variety that we saw in the proposed projects delighted us, in terms of mediums, subjects, approaches and execution. This revealed the consciousness of the applicants and their connection with the needs, issues and dreams of their

respective communities. Furthermore, we felt their desire to distribute the works of Arab artists and render them available to a wider audience inside and outside Arab countries, to raise voices that have long been marginalized. However, we have noticed the low number of projects proposed by women or by institutions led by women, and the lack of projects from some Arab countries. We had hoped to see regional projects that would be organized by actors from different Arab countries, thereby creating real, strong and worthy partnerships for the change of the current artistic and cultural scene. We thank AFAC for the opportunity that it granted us as a jury committee to discover all these rich and innovative projects. We also thank them for the efforts undertaken to insure the integrity and quality of the jury evaluation process, and for the vital role that AFAC plays in supporting Arab arts and culture.”



KILA UTAKALO FANYA UKUTA KNI

Arab-European Creative Platform – AECP



2018 was replete with exciting activities in Germany, under the Arab European Creative Platform, supported with a total budget of \$407,095:

Opening concert Forum der Berlinale - Cine-Concert: Georges Méliès’ “Solitudes”

Berlin, February 16

The 48th Forum of this year’s Berlin International Film Festival opened with a cine-concert titled Georges Méliès’ Solitudes, presented in collaboration with AFAC in the framework of the Arab European Creative Platform (AECP). The cine-concert included screening of recently restored

archival prints of short films by French film pioneer and illusionist Georges Méliès, accompanied by solo musical performances by Khyam Allami, Tony Elieh, Abed Kobeissy, Magda Mayas and Sharif Sehnaoui, respectively.

Against Oblivion: [laut] Die Welt hören / [sound] Listening to the World, Humboldt Box

Berlin, March 22

The Foundation for Arab Music Archiving and Research - AMAR opened “Against Oblivion” at the [laut] Die Welt hören / [sound] Listening to the World. “Against Oblivion” is an exhibition that focuses on endangered oral music

traditions of the Arab World, whether secular or religious, in dire need of preservation.

Arab European Documentary Convention

Medien-campus Villa Ida in Leipzig, April 12-14

AFAC and DOX BOX e.V., Germany launched the first arab.european Documentary Convention (aDC). An annual meeting of international practitioners and decision-makers in documentary, aDC was designed to foster connectivity, spark critical debate and ignite change. International associate partners of the first edition were DOK Leipzig, IDFA Bertha Fund and the Sundance Institute.

Writing Catastrophe: Writing Workshop

Berlin, May-October

AFAC organized a six-month workshop in Berlin titled ‘Writing Catastrophe’ under the mentorship of Egyptian writer Haytham Al-Wardany. The workshop was addressed to Arab writers who have recently immigrated to Germany, particularly those hailing from Syria, who are grappling with the burdens of complex, painful and bitter experiences endured during the revolution/war, the trauma of escaping the violence and making their way to safety. How can writing approach disaster? Might it be enough to tell what happened? Is writing dystopia effective? Might the personal story be enough, or the documentary chronicle more appropriate? Or might a poetic approach be more significant? Or irony? What is the role of fiction vis-à-vis a catastrophic reality? Does literature carry a moral responsibility, and is it borne by the writer? The workshop explored these and several other questions, in the hope of helping writers with their artistic approach to their experience of disaster. The workshop culminated with public readings of the texts during the AECP Forum: Revisiting Archive in the Aftermath of Revolution (October 26-28, 2018) in partnership with Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW).

Partnership with Warsaw Museum on a residency for a Syrian filmmaker

The Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and AFAC are supporting Reem Al-Ghazzi as a first fellow with a grant for a filmmaker from Syria. The mission of the six-month residency is to provide the institutional and creative framework for a filmmaker to progress in her/his project, benefit from the museum’s network of affiliations with



other institutions, access to archives and experts in order to enrich her/his film project. Reem’s project is a documentary on the making of Iphigenia, supported by AFAC as part of AECP.

FORUM: Imagining the Future Forum in partnership with Archive Kabinett and EUME

Berlin, June 9-10

This Forum was organized by AFAC in partnership with the Archive Kabinett and Europe in the Middle East - The Middle East in Europe (EUME) and curated by Khaled Saghie. The surge of counter-revolutions, the stepping up of mechanisms of internal repression, compounded by the active intervention of international powers in the aftermath of insurgencies in the Arab world have caused tremendous material and immaterial damage. Whereas science fiction, comics, and creative writings continue to enable imagining the unimaginable and unveiling horizons for better tomorrows for some, it invited others to delve into deeper levels of despair. The Forum explored the following questions by looking at the new literary and artistic forms in the Arab world, in which “the future” is represented or incarnated: Has dystopia become a fount for intellectual and artistic production? Are we to relinquish the very idea of a future carrying promises for betterment and bliss? Or, on the contrary, should we hang on to the notion of utopia as the harbinger of a future for all? Does the moment of the Arab uprising still allow us to conceive of such utopic futures? If this is indeed possible, how do contemporary imaginings compare with those that the generations of the 1960s carried, or even those



of the modernist pioneers of the turn of the last century?

The Dwarfs of East Agouza: A European Tour

Following their acclaimed first album *Bes* (2014), The Dwarfs of East Agouza (from Egypt) embarked on a European tour after the release of their long awaited new album, titled *Rats Don't Eat Synthesizers*, which came out in April on the label Akuphone in collaboration with Annihaya. Supported by AFAC in the framework of its Arab European Creative Platform, the tour included Cappadocia, Brussels, Amsterdam, London, Birmingham, Lärz, Berlin and Roskilde.

The second Music and Film Summer Festival, titled "Wish You Were Here"

Berlin, August 24-26

The Festival, held in partnership with ALFILM, opened with a concert featuring Malika Zarra, an inspiring new international voice, accompanied by Amen Viana (Guitar), Elvin Bironien, (Bass) and Adhil Mirghani (Percussions) at Freiluftkino Kreuzberg, followed by the screening of *The Journey* (al-Rihla) directed by Mohamed al-Daradji. The



Festival continued at Silent Green Kulturquartier, with a concert by Kamilya Jubran (singer, oud) and Werner Hasler (trumpet, electronics) followed by the screening of *Volubilis* (Walili) directed by Faouzi Bensaïdi. The closing featured a concert by saxophonist Basel Rajoub and virtuoso Matthias Loibner, followed by the screening of *Hedi* (Inhebbek Hedi) directed by Mohamed Ben Attia.

Ur theatrical piece in partnership with Residenztheater

Munich, September 28

Acclaimed British-Kuwaiti playwright and stage director Sulayman Al Bassam's latest theater production *Ur*, a co-production between the Residenztheater, Sabab Theater and AFAC premiered at the Residenztheater in Munich and registered full house for the first four shows (144 seats each). It was the first ever co-production of this sort bringing together a rich and dynamic cast of Arab and German actors. *Ur* springs from an interpretation of the tragic story of the ancient Mesopotamian city of Ur, one of the first cities in the history of humanity, recorded on stone tablets in cuneiform signs, in one of the Sumerian languages, dating back to 2000 BC. The play traverses time with a captivating agility. The drama moves back and forth between the eve of Ur's destruction in 2000 BC, and the year 1903, which marks the arrival of European archaeologists to Mesopotamia, then forward again to our recent present, the year 2015, marking the brief, yet destructive passage of ISIS, to finally jump to the year 2035 with a coup de theatre in the finale. At the heart of the dramaturgy are questions of cultural memory and oblivion that transpire through the series of events and are embodied in *Ur*'s main character, Nin Gal, goddess daughter and governor of Ur. The play brought together an ensemble of accomplished Arab actors with members of the Residenztheater ensemble, including: Lara Ailo (Nin Gal), Tim Werths (Elamite/Walter Andrae), Hala Omran (Priestess), Dalia Naous (Diyala), Marina Blanke (Photographer/Woman in 2035), Mohammed Al Rashi (Nanna/Enlil/Hammoudi), Gunther Eckes (Friedrich Delitzsch/Daesh Soldier/Man in 2035), Bijan Zamani (Robert Koldewey/Khaled Al Asaad), Ensemble (Skarabäus/ISIS Soldier//Kaiser Wilhelm II).

Un-Spoken Series in partnership with Volksbune

February-November

Un-Spoken is a series of conversations, presentations and performances with Arab artists and filmmakers, based



in Germany, Europe and the Arab world, that proposes to explore practice, process, and language based on the artist or filmmaker's on-going works-in-progress project. Inverting the conventional artist or filmmaker talk, the encounter offers a roundabout approach looking at un-making, un-veiling and un-speaking. Guests included filmmakers Khaled Abdulwahed, Mahdi Fleifel, Avo Kapraelian, and artists Philip Rizk and Maha Maamoun.

FORUM: Revisiting Archive in the Aftermath of Revolution in Partnership with Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW)

October 26-28

In the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, artists, activists and others have reverted to archives digging through a past buried under several layers of cultural, political

and psychological repression to rediscover country and society. The relationship between archiving and political events is multi-faceted, as the future seems contingent on archiving the present and revisiting the past. In documenting revolutions and their unfolding, the first impetus was to interrogate iconographic and representational languages, new functions of social media and the new role of citizen journalism. Documenting present-day disastrous realities - in the aftermath of revolutions - is a more complex undertaking that raises questions about memory, mourning and the formal choices artists make to capture these realities. The artistic and intellectual practices and articulations of archiving as personal and political practice were explored within this three-day forum. It gathered academics, writers, artists and filmmakers from the Arab world and Europe to reflect on and enact the multifold practices and approaches in lectures, discussions, a reading and screenings.

“Several of the submitted projects were courageous and unrelenting in their addressing of taboos at the societal and political levels. Also, a clear tendency towards experimentation was prevalent, going beyond the conventional approaches to cinematographic treatment and attempting to create different visual and narrative bases.”

Cinema jury

Professional Support



Arab Documentary Photography Program

Between April 4 and 8, AFAC hosted the second workshop for the group of nine 2017 ADPP grantees who, for the past 8 months, have been paired with distinguished mentors to develop their projects and benefit from one-on-one discussions. The nine photographers worked on finalizing their photo stories and presenting them to their peers and mentors for an open discussion and feedback. The participating projects from six countries were: Djinni Diaries by Btihal Remli (Morocco), Live With It by Sima Ajlyakin (Syria), Hoshmar by Mohamed Altoum (Sudan), In Their Place by Rawan Mazeh (Lebanon), The Cult of Souls

by Fethi Sahraoui (Algeria), Room With Seven Roses by Tarek Haddad (Lebanon), We, The Living Dead by Ahmed Gaber (Egypt), Moon Dust by Mohamed Mahdy (Egypt), and The Way to Hell by Hesham Elsherif (Egypt).

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship Program

The first workshop of the first cycle of ACE 2018-2019 was held between November 2 and 6 in Antwork (a co-working space) in Beirut, involving 8 institutions (16 participants) from Morocco, Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. It was a chance for the participants to meet and exchange first ideas



about their context, their success stories and challenges with each other as well as with the program's specialists from the region, Moukhtar Kocache and Oussama Rifahi, and those from India (Arundhati Ghosh), South Africa (Mike van Graan) and Brazil (Carla Fonseca). The workshop evoked the relevance of cultural institutions' work to their communities, sustainability of their operations, audience cultivation tools and practices. It also explored the latest trends in storytelling and development/fundraising. The experts shared the specificities of their geographical areas and representatives of the corporate world talked about their priorities, requirements and visions. There were reflections as a group on the acceptance and relevance of sustainable development goals and creative economy methodologies in a global context and how the diversity and inequality debate is shaping/distorting work on the ground. The participants interacted with representatives from the private sector, and engaged as a group with two local peer institutions in Beirut as case studies. The workshop concluded with a fun competitive exercise focused on project development and pitching in front of a three-jury member.

Research on the Arts Program

AFAC and ACSS kicked off the newly launched Research on the Arts Program's workshop on December 14 and 15 in the presence of the program's 9 grantees, 5 jury members and 2 mentors.

Participants presented their research proposals which were then thoroughly discussed with the jurors and mentors. The valuable insights and enriching discussions shared during the 2-day meeting will be carried through by the grantees during their research work. The RAP 2018 grantees will present their updated research projects in April 2019 in Beirut within the 4th Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) Conference.

“It is the jury’s opinion that in desisting from a utilitarian use of the arts and in avoiding an over-emphasis on conventional quantitative methods, the social sciences can begin to respond to the indeterminacy, untimeliness, even ambivalence, of art with critical and self-reflective projects that can speak with a range of writing strategies and address a variety of audiences.”

Research on the Arts jury

Outreach and Cultural Advocacy



AFAC carried out the following activities in 2018 in its efforts to promote arts and culture from the Arab region; whether by initiating or participating in forums and events, or establishing partnerships and collaborations that benefit its diverse grantees:

AFAC participated in Crossroads - a conference, conversations and a cultural program organized by Pro Helvetia and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), in partnership with the University of Basel and Kaserne Basel

Basel, February 8-10

The conference focused on culture in an international context and the role art and culture play in the process of social change. It brought together cultural practitioners from Switzerland, India, the Arab region and Southern Africa. Rima Mismar, Executive Director of AFAC delivered

the opening speech at the University of Basel where the conference was held, and Heba Hage-Felder, Senior Programs Manager of AFAC, participated in the panel discussion 'Conversations' at the Kaserne Basel. The conference touched on cultural rights under pressure and a reflection on the relation between arts and development policy. It brought up issues related to shifting identities, colonialism and post-colonialism, vulnerability and solidarity. A number of recommendations were invoked: not to instrumentalize art, so as to avoid it becoming propaganda; that art should be integral to development strategies and not simply a cherry on the top; to recognize the intimate relation between art and money and reflect on power dynamics to avoid conditional support.

AFAC continued its collaboration with Sursock Museum and initiated a partnership with Dar El-Nimer for the organization of Film Nights featuring AFAC-supported films

Asphalt and Challat of Tunis were screened at Sursock Museum in February and March respectively, while the "Film Tuesday" series featured AFAC-supported films such as Hedi, As I Opened My Eyes, Until the Birds Return and The Sea Is Behind every Tuesday during the months of June and July 2018 at Dar El-Nimer.

Dunyana program (Arabic BBC Service) featured AFAC and its Arab Documentary Photography Program female participants from the 4th cycle

March 12

During the show, discussions about the cause of Arab women and the role of photography in relaying these causes were undertaken.

AFAC participated in the meeting "Investing in Philanthropy Development" co-hosted by WINGS and "la Caixa" Banking Foundation

Barcelona, March 26-27

This meeting was meant for funders (and potential funders) of philanthropy infrastructure to engage in discussions around foundations' role within the philanthropy ecosystem and how they can better contribute to it, ultimately benefiting civil society as a whole. This includes activities and policies that strengthen the sector, a legal framework that empowers them, a tax structure that provides incentives for giving, an accountability system that builds confidence in philanthropy and civil society, sufficient institutional capacity to implement effective activities and sufficient resources to undertake these activities, and a strong culture of giving to grow philanthropy. This positive environment is what is referred to as philanthropy infrastructure. The meeting provided examples of the impact of infrastructure organizations from different regions of the world. Discussion revolved around how to develop grassroots philanthropy for long term development; how can we build local resources for local communities; how to adapt to a changing global landscape of support to philanthropy; how to develop strong and locally-relevant philanthropy support ecosystems; beyond foundations, who are the unusual suspects in infrastructure funding; and evaluating philanthropy infrastructure's impact.

AFAC participated in a donors' and partners' meeting on "Knowledge at Risk: Conflict, Collaboration and Ethics", organized by the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS)

Amman, April 4

The fourth ACSS meeting took place in conjunction with the ACSS Research Forum, a biennial gathering of ACSS grantees, selection committee members and Board of Trustees. The meeting was meant as a forum for discussions among sister organizations around topics of mutual interest as well as to enhance institutional cooperation across the region and internationally. Discussions focused on the Arab regional context within which knowledge production and research takes place. What impact do contexts of conflict, violence and population displacement, have on civil society and on research communities? How do different organizations (universities, NGOs, donors etc.) help create and protect spaces of innovation and creativity? How

can collaboration, mutual learning and cross-regional interconnections be enhanced? How are increasingly complex legal and financial landscapes to be navigated? What is the current state of freedom of expression and research in the region today? What ethical considerations come into play both on individual and institutional levels?

AFAC organized the 11th Arts and Culture Donors Meeting

Brussels, April 21-22

The meeting took place in parallel with the EU-UN co-organized conference on The Future of Syria and the Goethe Institute initiative Syria Art Space. In addition to the sessions on donors' exchange and update and the future of supporting arts and culture in the region beyond philanthropy, the meeting agenda included a session on the role of Arab arts and culture institutions in pushing for arts and culture to be on the agendas of external policies, mainly the EU external policy. A working group, led by AFAC, was assembled as such to work on a list of recommendations to be suggested to the EU by the advocacy body More Europe.

AFAC participated in a panel discussion in the Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018 ISPA Congress, Off the Beaten Track

The Netherlands, June 11-15

The mission of the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA) is to strengthen the performing arts globally through the advancement of leadership, the exchange of ideas and by fostering a diverse and engaged membership. There were 310 delegates from 46 countries. AFAC spoke on the panel "The New Human Landscape" which examined how migration and nationalism have changed the composition of the global landscape and what role can arts and culture leaders play in addressing the situation of refugee artists. It also looked at how government agencies and institutions are coping with this challenge and how migrant artists are faring as they search for a new stage.

AFAC collaborated with Sursock Museum to hold a new edition of Past Disquiet which was curated by Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti

Beirut, July 26 - September 24

Past Disquiet is a documentary and archival exhibition centered on research conducted on and around the story

"The Jury Committee also chose to support electronic cultural platforms, specialized in cinema criticism, the documentation of the artistic memory of theater and music, and the expansion of the network of relations between Arab and Kurdish writers. What distinguishes these various works is that they range from the narrow local to the national with a broad humanistic vision and advanced intellectual and aesthetic approaches that are able to imagine alternative cultures that lie on the margin of the prevailing culture."

of the International Art Exhibition for Palestine, which opened in the spring of 1978 at the Beirut Arab University. Past Disquiet displays, mediates, and incarnates themes and questions that have guided the curators’ research, using montaged video of archival material and film as well as contemporary interviews and writing, in addition to



reproductions of documents. It maps constellations of artists and collectives bound by political affiliations and solidarities, beginning with solidarity with Palestine and expanding to the rest of the world.

AFAC held its 6th AFAC Film Week program, organized in partnership with Project'heurts, Planète Cinuvers and the ONCI

Algeria, September 5-12

It comprised 10 films which hailed from seven countries: Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq and Syria. Six films were featured in the fiction selection: 3000 Nights by Mai Masri and A Drowning Man by Mahdi Fleifel both from Palestine, Ali, the Goat and Ibrahim by Sherif El Bendary from Egypt, L'échappe by Hamid Saïdji & Jonathan Mason from Algeria, And Romeo Married Juliette by Hinde Boujemaa from Tunisia and Headbang Lullaby by Hicham Lasri from Morocco. Documentary screenings constituted a significant part of the program with four documentary films from emerging and seasoned filmmakers. Shedding light on pertinent and timely issues, the four films were varied in style and approach. The documentary selection included: Atlal by Djamel Kerkar from Algeria, Challat of Tunis by Kaouthar Ben Hania from Tunisia, Amal's Garden by Nadia Shihab from Iraq and Last Men in Aleppo by Feras Fayyad from Syria. Parallel to the main program, four films were showcased at the Cinema Azul in Béjaia as part of

the 16th Rencontres Cinématographiques de Béjaia special program AFAC Carte Blanche. The AFAC Carte Blanche film selection consisted of And Romeo Married Juliette by Hinde Boujemaa, Ali, the Goat and Ibrahim by Sherif El Bendary, In the Last Days of the City by Tamer El Said and Hedi by Mohammed Ben Attia.

AFAC participated in the 13th edition of the Festival Arabesques

Montpellier, September 21-22

The aim was to discuss the opportunities for emerging Arab artists and how they can be supported. The panel included Kamiliya Jubran (presenting her recent AFAC funded project Zamkana), Kamel Dafri from festival Villes des Musiques du Monde, Habib Achour from Sacem, Stéphane Krasniewski from Zones Franches and Camel Zekri (Algerian French Composer). The acts showing at the festival included Dhafer Youssef, Souad Massi and Trio Jubran, as well as emerging artists like N3rdistan, Amel Chebbi, and Bachar Mar Khalife.

AFAC participated in Al Gouna Film Festival

Cairo, September 23-28

Out of the ten AFAC-supported films selected for the different competitions at El Gouna Film Festival 2018, three received top awards during the closing ceremony. Of Fathers and Sons, directed by Talal Derki (Syria), picked up the Silver Star in the Feature Documentary competition, as well as the Gold Star for Best Arab Documentary Film. In the same category, The Swing, by Lebanese director Cyril Aris, collected the Bronze Star after having received an honorable mention at the Open City Docs Festival in London, where it played as the closing night film. In the Feature Narrative competition, Mohamed Zarif was awarded Best Actor for his role in Dear Son by Tunisian director Mohamed Ben Attia.

AFAC met with stakeholders

Cairo, September 26-28

AFAC met with individual and institutional grantees at CLUSTER to brief about the SDC-funded North African Cultural Program and receive initial feedback. Three key issues were communicated: core support should be thought of with sustainability in mind so that supported institutions are not left in the void when the funding ends. It was also emphasized that partnership should



not be conditional but allow for organic interactions. A third suggestion was that institutional strengthening should cover mentorship and consultancies. In addition to meeting with grantees, AFAC was solicited by the Ford Foundation to present its work to their staff from across the region.

AFAC social convenings

October and December in Beirut

AFAC hosted social convenings to bring together grantees, donors and stakeholders from the arts and culture community. These events were organized in October and December in Beirut, the second concluding AFAC's annual board meeting.

AFAC made a scoping visit to Algeria

Algeria, December 6-13

The field visit was undertaken to feel the pulse of the Algerian arts and culture scene and probe opportunities for cultural exchange while consolidating local contacts with cultural and artistic practitioners. From Algiers, to Timimoun, and to Oran, the visit was a true eye-opener and insights generator.



Institutional Strengthening



Organizational and human resource manuals

Draft manuals have been developed to document existing procedures and processes at AFAC and to add new practices for strengthening the organization and the performance of responsibilities among staff. This dynamic document is meant to be updated on a regular basis and is also a reference for applying internal compliance. It has been organically developed following the staff-wide reflection on strengths but also priority areas for improvement using the Organizational Mapping Tool (OMT) as part of the BUILD Grant offered by the Ford Foundation in 2017. AFAC’s lawyer was consulted to provide advice on all legal obligations of AFAC and to make recommendations for standardizing practices and procedures.

Five-year strategic plan

Based on the ten years’ study of AFAC, in-depth focus group recommendations on programs and recommendations of the Board of Trustees, the 5-year internal plan (2018-2022) has been reviewed with priorities on key areas that propel AFAC organizationally and programmatically. It includes a set of objectives, targets and time plan on diverse aspects: mission and strategy revisiting; new programs; learning and evaluation; philanthropy advocacy; outreach and engagement; external communications; governance; financial management; fundraising and donor relations; human resources; safety and security; organizational culture; and leadership and management. Apart from looking ahead, the plan helps us keep track of progress throughout the year.

Expanding capacities

Three new team members have joined AFAC. Rana Kobeissi is the communication officer who brings to AFAC extensive experience from the private sector, having worked in different marketing and communication capacities in Europe and the Gulf. Reda Al Houchaimi is the grants coordinator whose recent experience was with a humanitarian NGO and who is trained in documentary film. Most recently, Maha Kays, a researcher and visual artist professor at ALBA, has come on board to mainly work on the extensive database and knowledge at AFAC’s disposal after 12 years in operation and produce analytical papers that inform on trends and topics in specific categories and across disciplines.

Fundraising

13 individuals generously contributed a total of \$692,593 to AFAC (a number of donors prefer to remain undisclosed). AFAC is currently supported by six foundations: DOEN Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Ford Foundation, Prince Claus Fund, Drosos Foundation, Arab Council for the Social Sciences; and three governments: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, German Federal Foreign Office, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs represented by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The major highlight of 2018 is the CHF 5.5 million SDC bid which AFAC won to implement Phase I of the North Africa Cultural Program (NACP) starting May 2019 and until the first quarter of 2022. This propels AFAC into a longer-term investment in support of the role of cultural actors in the sub-region of North Africa. It builds on our huge body of work, knowledge and networks, and allows for an intervention at a more infrastructural and development level with longer-term engagement that is key to creating change and to making impact. It responds adequately to the recommendations made in AFAC Ten Years’ Study and focus group discussions, namely to reinforce AFAC’s presence in North Africa; to increase its efforts in distribution and circulation; and to provide more support to arts and cultural institutions and spaces within countries as well as on transboundary initiatives. It allows AFAC to address emerging priorities in distribution, research, institutional strengthening, engaging public programs beyond big cities, and to build on common concerns as well as common heritage through co-productions.

Besides SDC, three new institutional partners were brought on board this year including German Federal Foreign Office with €200,000 over one year and likely to be renewed as the Foreign Office support scheme does not

allow for multi-year support; Drosos with \$976,000 over three years, and ACSS with \$390,000 over three years. All funds will be matched by OSF under the scheme of the challenge grant (2016-2019) until mid-2019 and up to \$10 million. For 2018, the target was \$7.8 million, out of which AFAC obtained \$7.24 million in contributions and commitments. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DOEN Foundation renewed their support for 2018-2020, with \$780,000 and €1,050,000 respectively.

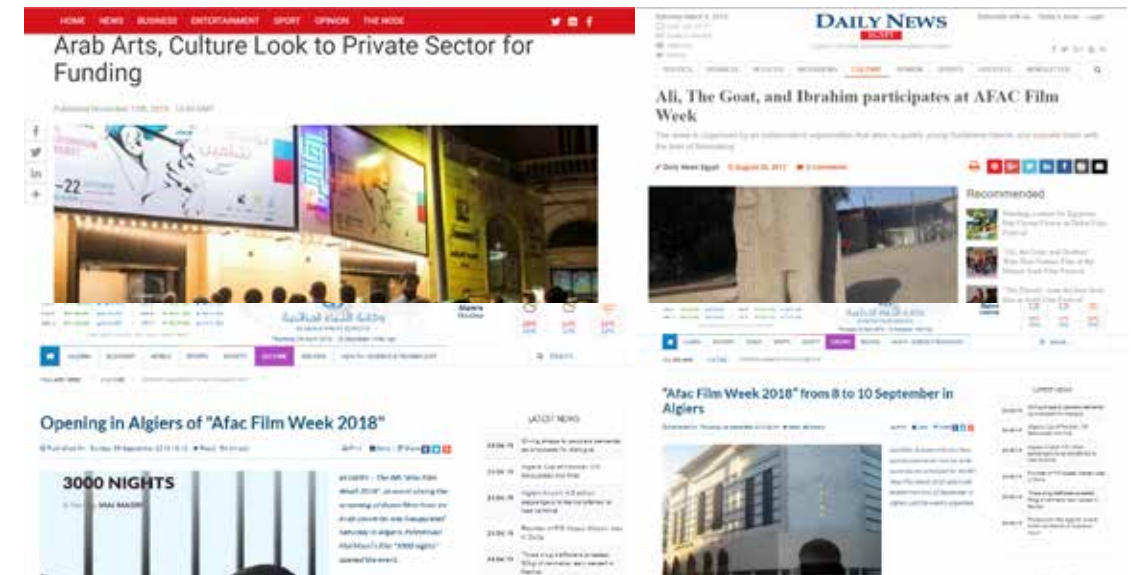
As part of an engagement plan developed for 2018 for different categories of donors, efforts were made to engage individual donors in some activities. The top 20% of existing individual donors were targeted with the idea to involve them more in AFAC as advisors in specific processes and observers behind the scenes, but also to create opportunities for them to interact with grantees through events held during the year. This was tried out on a small scale this year through organizing a special preview of an AFAC-supported exhibition at the Sursock Museum as well as through our ACE program where we created a slot for some donors to engage with the participants and to explain their motivations and expectations when supporting artistic ventures. Parallel efforts to mobilize individual donors are ongoing through consistent one-on-one meetings, personalized e-updates and postal packages containing key AFAC publications. New persons have taken interest in AFAC’s work, and renewed interaction with previous individual donors prompting a few to revive their contributions to AFAC.

Communication

AFAC issued over 38 press releases, news stories and flashes including highlights such as the open call announcements of AFAC’s 9 grants programs and the announcement of the selected grantees for each program respectively. During 2018, AFAC issued six bi-monthly newsletters featuring the latest events and opportunities, as well as email blasts when AFAC grantees won prestigious awards such as the Oscar nomination of Feras Fayyad for his film The Last Men in Aleppo. Furthermore, a special end-year newsletter entitled “Hits 2018... Hints 2019” featuring the highlights of 2018 and a sneak-peak into 2019 activities were disseminated.

In 2018, Stories Boldly Told revealed 15 projects from 2017 that have challenged various social, political and economic contexts throughout the Arab region and placed arts and culture in the center of the battle for social change. In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 artists and cultural practitioners from the Arab region whose works served as beacons of hope in their environments. The stories collected, across all artistic categories

“The proposed projects suggest a new presence for the Arab body through a visual dramaturgy that focuses on research and documentation, on memory and its reconstruction. Our reading of the projects reveals that language fails at times to convey the voice of the Arab artist. This can be interpreted as a kind of escape from oral expression, towards different forms of expression that derive their vocabulary from new media and from the performer’s body in particular.”



and spanning diverse critical areas of the region, were captivating and awe-inspiring in their boldness and fervor. A documentary film camp in war-torn Yemen mentors 12 aspiring filmmakers from different walks of life in Yemen over 6 months, who unfold their stories in 12 compelling short films that are touring the world. One photo documentary from Syria portrays the utter Abnormal that has turned into Normal in the day-to-day life of refugees. Another documentary photographer from Egypt presents the suffering of Wadi El Qamar residents and mobilizes the global community in their support. A Palestinian laboratory of visual innovation launches an “Impact Data Lab” for the generation of infographics and info pods that tell arresting action-driven narratives. In cinema, a Moroccan filmmaker sheds the light on marginalized yet vanguard Moroccan filmmaker, poet and writer Ahmed Bouanani, in an active attempt to revive collective memory in Morocco. Another film, the award-winning debut film of a Lebanese director, literally scratches beyond the surface of the current reality in Beirut, searching for the thousands of people who disappeared during the Lebanese Civil War. A young Palestinian alternative rock band crosses borders with their music and challenges Arab youths to take a stand against oppression, corruption, displacement and travel restrictions.

Members of the 2018 jury committees were interviewed after the programs’ jury meetings in Beirut, capturing their impressions on the trends of the arts and culture scene in the region. The six video interviews were published on social media.

In terms of new communication material, AFAC’s Annual

Report 2017 was released both in English and Arabic, in online and offline formats. As part of ACE, one trailer entitled “The Story on India”, featuring the expert and director of India Foundation for the Arts, Arundhati Ghosh was released as was the ACE workshop trailer.

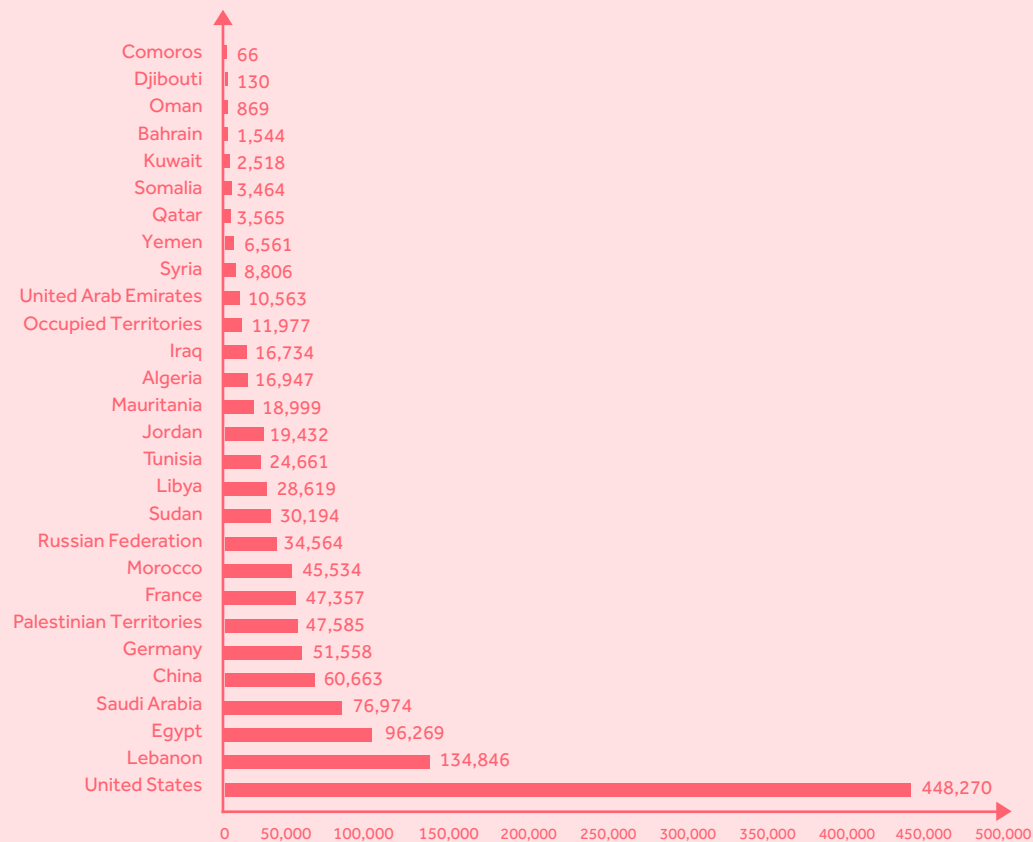
Towards the end of 2018, AFAC finalized its new communication strategy, which comprised a completely revamped brand identity and website. AFAC’s iconic calligraphy-based logo was replaced with a sleek, modern and revamped new logo that reflects the rootedness of the institution, its youthful spirit and dedication to enhancing contemporary creative expression and knowledge production across the Arab region. The new logo carries the touch of Lebanese artist, critic and poet Samir Sayegh, a master and innovator of Arabic calligraphy, and was designed by Studio Safar in Beirut. Furthermore, the website was completely redesigned according to the new brand guidelines, and enhanced with a more user-friendly navigation and upgraded application forms for a smoother process. A launch campaign is planned for early 2019, comprising of a social media teaser and reveal campaign as well as an offline campaign at the regional level.

On the media front, AFAC partnered with The Daily Star (local newspaper) to talk about ACE and its first workshop with planned sequels for the remaining two workshops. It also participated in Duniya (Arabic BBC service) featuring discussions with ADPP participants and AFAC staff. Tribe Magazine issued an article about the role of AFAC in promoting Arab documentary photography.

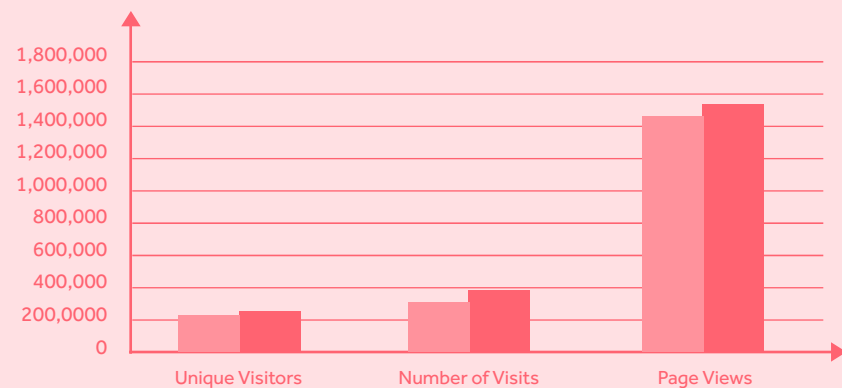
“It was exciting to see projects that are positioned at the intersection of storytelling and technology, including augmented reality (AR), virtual reality, digital archives and other new media, noting that most of the projects shed light on pertinent political, social and environmental issues”

Web Statistics

Page Views by Country

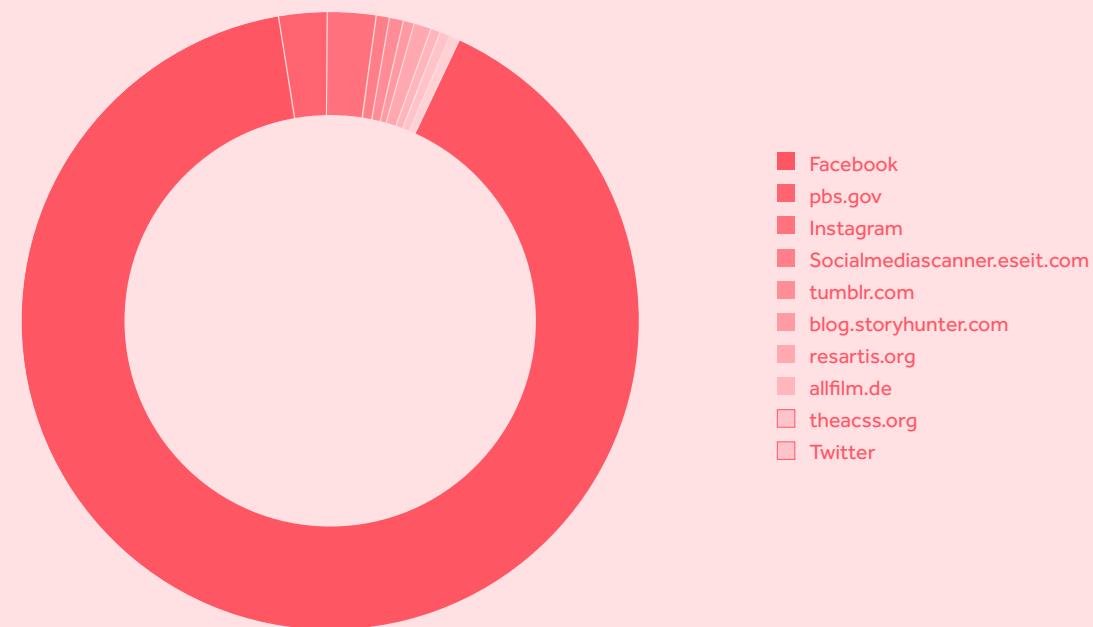


Website visitors, visits, and page views



Social Media Statistics

Page Views by Country



Facebook

Likes 2018

37513

Likes 2017

13083



Instagram

Followers 2018

2700

Followers 2017

1005



Twitter

Followers 2018

2587

Followers 2017

2310



Youtube

Subscribers 2018

710

Subscribers 2017

548

Why Invest in Arts and Culture?

Creative expression has the power to inspire new visions for our region, provoke important questions, and re-invent Arab societies that are open, self-sustained and have the power to produce their narratives.

AFAC is about conveying broad geographies of the mind and imagination from the Arab region. We proliferate diverse narratives about urgent topics through words and images. We instigate critical thinking to create more open societies. We stimulate local economies by cultivating audiences and engaging professionals. We spur on new technologies to make arts and culture more accessible.

In twelve years, we invested in 1,350 talents and independent voices from the Arab region and in diaspora. Join to expand the creative space for many more emerging artists and established practitioners through performing arts, visual arts, documentary photography, documentary film, cinema, music, creative and critical writings, arts and culture entrepreneurship, research on the arts, and training and regional events. AFAC supports Arab artists in exile through local collaborations, such as our active engagement in Germany through the Arab European Creative Platform.

If you are not yet an AFAC supporter, join our circle of supporters by making your first contribution. If you are already an AFAC supporter, renew your esteemed support to scale up opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners from the Arab region.

Write to us on support@arabculturefund.org or visit our Support page: www.arabculturefund.org/support





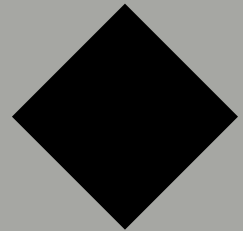
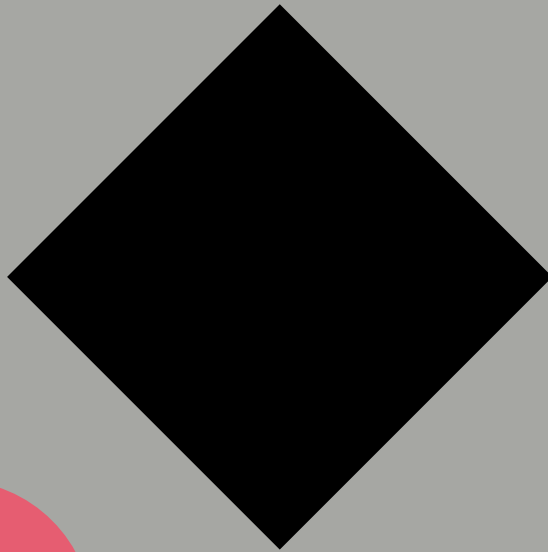
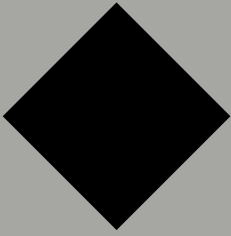
PHOTO CREDITS

Inside cover: Ghassan Halwani, “Erased___Ascent of the Invisible”, Cinema, Lebanon, 2017.

- p. 2-3: Jumana Manna, “Wild Relatives”, ADP, Palestine, 2017.
- p.6: Ravy Shaker, “Letters to Moses”, ADPP, Egypt, 2018.
- pp 10-11: Ossama Halal, “The Other Side of the Garden”, PA, Syria, 2018.
- p.12: Wael Kadlo, “The Way Home”, ADP, Syria, 2018.
- p. 15: Rana Karam, “Eyelids”, PA, Syria, 2018.
- p.17: Mohamed Said Ouma, “Red Card”, ADP, Comoros, 2018.
- pp. 18-19: Nadir Bouhmouch, “Amussu”, Cinema, Morocco, 2017.
- p. 20: Talal Derki, “Of Fathers and Sons”, ADP, Syria, 2015.
- p. 22: Naziha Arebi, “Freedom Fields”, ADP, Libya, 2018.
- p. 23: Mahdi Fleifel, “A Drowning Man”, Cinema, Palestine, 2016.
- p. 26: Manar Moursi, “The Loudspeaker and the Tower”, VA, Egypt, 2017.
- pp. 54-55: Shaima Al Tamimi, “As If We Never Came”, ADPP, Yemen, 2018.
- p. 56: “Against Oblivion”, AECP, Berlin, 2018.
- p. 57: “Imagining the Future” Forum, AECP, Berlin, 2018.
- p. 58-59: Aicha Chighaly, “Ardennes Festival”, TR, Mauritania, 2018.
- p. 60: Basel Rajoub at the Music and Film Summer Festival “Wish You Were Here”, AECP, Berlin, 2018.
- p. 61: Sulayman Al Bassam, “Ur”, AECP, Germany, 2018.
- p. 62: First workshop of the 5th ADPP cycle, Beirut, 2018.
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- pp. 68-69: Jumana Manna, “Wild Relatives”, ADP, Palestine, 2017.
- p. 70: AFAC team.
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- p. 76: Elwely Vall, “In the Light of Change”, ADPP, Mauritania, 2018.
- pp. 80-81: Shaima Al Tamimi, “As If We Never Came”, ADPP, Yemen, 2018.

Back cover: Ghassan Halwani, “Erased___Ascent of the Invisible”, Cinema, Lebanon, 2017.







AFAC ANNUAL REPORT 2018

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Grants & Programs

Visual Arts

Project Descriptions

Alia Farid
Kuwait

THE SPACE BETWEEN
CLASSROOMS



"The Space Between Classrooms" is a short film that looks at the public schools in Kuwait designed in the 1960s by Swiss architect Alfred Roth. Originally envisaged as secular spaces and 'optimum learning environments', these buildings have been altered to match current views and attitudes.

Abdalsalam Alhaj
Sudan

OLD WISHES



"Old wishes" is a multimedia project that revives the wishes of the Friends of Al-Sibyan magazine, the first magazine of youth in Sudan and the Arab world. The

Aicha El Beloui
Morocco

ALIVE



"A7ya2" is a graphic project offering an illustration of 12 neighbourhoods of Casablanca that aims to create images of the city from its reality as lived and experienced by its own inhabitants, and open up the city for exploration.

Questions about belonging, governance, urbanism, transport, and freedom of movement will be important to the work, leading to the creation of a representation of Casablanca through and for its own people.

Ali Thani
Tunisia

IMPERSONAL MEMORY



"Impersonal Memory" is a project mixing drawing and video in a documentary

approach where the artist confronts his memories with those of others, to transform personal memories into an impersonal collective memory. The documentary will be built from one place to another in various regions of Tunisia, places which carry a trace, a memory waiting to be dusted off by making the inhabitants voices resonate in their respective spaces.

Bassam Al-Sabah
Iraq

WANDERING WITH A SUN
ON MY BACK



As a child (at the age of 9), the artist experienced the Iraq/USA war. This CGI (computer-generated imagery) film project will look at the experience of war and violence from the perspective of that child and how this traumatic experience manifests itself over time. The work will imagine a surreal world where human representations live in closed spaces surrounded by environments that will oscillate between utopian and post-apocalyptic landscape.

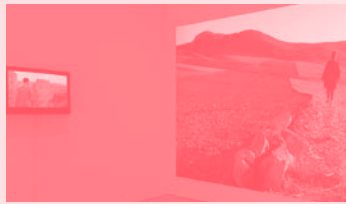
A red ink drawing of a stylized human figure, possibly representing a person or a deity. The figure is drawn with simple outlines. Various Arabic words are written around the figure:

- فوق** (Above)
- مودة** (Love)
- بني** (Sons)
- لهون** (Softness)
- كان** (Was)
- حصة** (Share)
- نزل** (Descended)
- الغزل** (The Gaze)
- المشرق** (The East)
- قمر** (Moon)
- عالم** (World)
- البر** (Righteousness)
- نيل** (Nile)
- لحم** (Flesh)
- عام** (Year)
- توبه** (Repentance)
- استغاثي** (Seek Help)

A Kodak Professional Disc is shown with handwritten notes in French. The text on the disc includes "La voie des étoiles", "5M O'ring", and "Exp 1/1000 1/125". The disc is silver with a red center and has the "Kodak Professional Disc" logo printed on it.

CAIRO COMIX
مهرجان القاهرة الدولي للقصص المصورة

5

Beirut Art CenterLebanon**OF WORDS AND STONES**

Of Words and Stones will be Zineb Sedira's first solo show in Beirut and will host a large body of work starting with her first films from the late 1990s until present day. Sedira is known for her use of film, photography, and other media, through which she confronts the poetics and politics of Algeria's recent history.

DARSTItaly**A KURDISH ARCHIVE**

"A Kurdish Archive" entails the research, study and dissemination of the photographic archive of Iraqi photographer Twana Abdullah who, between 1974 and 1992, tirelessly photographed the everyday life and the society in northern Iraq. With the production of a book and a traveling exhibition, the aim is to shed light on a rare, precious and essential record of Iraqi visual history.

Beirut Art ResidencyLebanon**LA VITRINE**

'La Vitrine' demonstrates how each artist interprets a constricted area available to

the public from the sidewalks of Beirut. Primarily serving as a street-level exhibition space, 'La Vitrine' promotes experimental and non-commercial work by Lebanese artists.

Medrar for Contemporary ArtEgypt**ROZNAME - STUDIO PROGRAM**

Roznama – Studio program is an evolving version of the Roznama exhibition that started in 2006. This edition comes in the context of a lengthy and intensive project to support contemporary visual arts by young Egyptian artists. The project offers a working space as well as a production and knowledge-related context for a group of artists over a period of 6 months.

Al Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary ArtPalestine**THE JERUSALEM SHOW IX**

The Jerusalem Show is an art and culture festival that is comprised of art exhibitions, performances, workshops, and creative encounters (talks, film screenings, guided tours, symposium), taking place in the old city of Jerusalem, in Ramallah and in towns and villages in Palestine in collaboration with partner institutions.

Visual Arts Jurors

Hoor Al Qasimi, President and Director of Sharjah Art Foundation, is a curator and practicing artist who received her BFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London (2002), a Diploma in Painting from the Royal Academy of Arts, London (2005) and an MA in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London (2008). In 2003, she was appointed curator of Sharjah Biennial 6 and has since continued as the Biennial Director.

Al Qasimi is President of the Africa Institute and serves on the Board of Directors for MoMA PS1, New York; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Ashkal Alwan, Beirut; Darat Al Funun, Amman and the Sharjah Architecture Triennial. She is President of the International Biennial Association; Chair of the Advisory Board for the College of Art and Design, University of Sharjah, and member of the Advisory Board for Khoj International Artists' Association, New Delhi.

She is currently a member of the Prince Claus Award Committee (2016–current) and is a member of the jury for the 5th edition of PinchukArtCentre's Future Generation Art Prize (2018).

Al Qasimi has served on the juries and prize panels for the Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art (2018), Maria Lassnig Prize (2017), Mediacity Seoul Prize (2016), Hepworth Wakefield Prize for Sculpture (2016), Berlin International Film Festival among others.

Recent curatorial projects include major retrospectives for Hassan Sharif: I Am The Single Work Artist (2017–2018), Yayoi Kusama: Dot Obsessions (2016–2017), Robert Breer: Time Flies (2016–2017), Simone Fattal (2016) and Farideh Lashai (2016) as well as 1980–Today: Exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates, UAE Pavilion, 56th Venice Biennale (2015); Rasheed Araeen:

Before and After Minimalism (2014) and Susan Hefuna: Another Place (2014). Al Qasimi was co-curator for Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige: Two Suns in a Sunset (2016), exhibited not only in Sharjah but also at Jeu de Paume, Paris; Haus der Kunst, Munich and IVAM, Valencia. She co-curated the major survey shows When Art Becomes Liberty: The Egyptian Surrealists (1938–1965) in 2016 and The Khartoum School: The Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan (1945–Present) in 2016–2017.

Alya Sebti is the director of the ifa-Galerie Berlin, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen.

She is guest curator of the Dakar Biennale 2018 and was the artistic director for the Marrakech Biennale V (2014).

Her recent curated exhibitions include: Solo show with Pascale Marthine Tayou (ifa Galerie Berlin 2017), Solo show with Hicham Berrada (Wentrup Gallery, Berlin, 2015), Carrefour / Treffpunkt (ifa Galerie Stuttgart, Berlin, 2015), Casablanca, black energy (Mons, European Capital of Culture 2015); Now eat my script with Mounira Al Solh (KW, Berlin, 2015); Equilibres/ Augleich with Hicham Berrada and Felix Kiessling (Wentrup Gallery, Berlin, 2014). She co-curated the exhibition In the Carpet (2016 ifa Galerie Stuttgart, 2017 ifa Galerie Berlin) with Mouna Mekouar and Salma Lahlou. From 2012 to 2014, she created a cycle of online exhibitions and publications on contemporary art in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia with ArteEast.

Co-editor of the book Pas de Deux following the program of residency she curated at Villa Romana (Florence, 2014), she has written and lectured extensively on art and the public sphere. In 2016, she was teaching a curatorial class On Curating, translating the polyphony of Voices at the Salzburg International Academy.

She is board member of the Cabaret Voltaire (Zurich).

Tarek Abou El Fetouh is an independent curator born in Cairo who lives and works in Brussels.

Abou El Fetouh's curatorial projects include Durub Al Tawaya, the annual performance in Abu Dhabi (2013–2017); Captive of Love, Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing (2017); The Time is Out of Joint, Sharjah Art Foundation and Asian Culture Complex, Gwangju (2016); Lest the Two Seas Meet, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2015); Home Works 6, Ashkal Alwan, Beirut (2013); Sharjah Biennial 9 (2009); Roaming Inner Landscapes, Alexandria (2004); Windows (a multidisciplinary festival of contemporary arts), Minya and Cairo (2004); DisORIENTATION, House of World Cultures, Berlin (2003); and It's Happening in the Garage, Jesuits Cultural Center, Alexandria. He was a member of the curatorial committee of the Amman International Festival (1997–2001).

He initiated the Meeting Points Festival of Contemporary Arts (MP) in 2001 and curated the first four editions (MP 1–4), which took place in several cities in the Arab world. He served as the artistic director of MP5 with curator Frie Leysen (2007/8), MP6 with curator Okwui Enwezor (2011/12) and MP7 (2013/14) with the Zagreb-based collective WHW.

Performing Arts**Project Descriptions****Rochdi Belgasmi**Tunisia**THE CABARET OF TUNIS**

Belgasmi delves into, and questions, the universe of the singing cafés, its sounds, its lights, its dances, its songs. In this project, Belgasmi invites a living myth: El Khadhra, a popular dance figurehead of the 1980s and 1990s, who has left the dance world around twenty years ago.

Ossama HalalSyria**THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GARDEN**

This performance revolves around loss, sacrifice and death. It presents "The Story of a Mother" by Hans Andersen, about a mother who seeks the king of death to bring back her son. During her journey, she loses her voice, her hair and her eyes, and fails to rescue her son. This radical transformation of the mother during her journey reminds us of the transformation of humans during war.

Youness AtbaneMorocco**UNTITLED 14KM**

"Untitled 14km" addresses the notion of contemporariness, and its connection to identity, through an artistic dialogue between two fictional characters. An Andalusian poet and the director of a contemporary art museum attempt to define contemporariness in arts by analyzing Andalusian poetry as well as a selection of contemporary Arab art pieces.

Randa Mirza/ Wael KodeihLebanon**TARAB AND ARAB
MODERNITY**

Tarab music archives and historical photographs from the Arab world are at the center of this performance, reflecting on Arab modernity (Nahda). The revival of these archives into a dynamic live music and video performance allows for the appropriation of self-representation and the unmasking of the wealth of diversity, history and experience of the Arab world with modernity.

Sawsan Bou KhaledLebanon**DANS LA PEAU**

"Dans la peau" is a solo performance on happiness. It is an attempted conference where words could lose their meaning and become absurd when confronted with a distorted body. A tragic yet ironic body, which hesitates between becoming tamed and well-conditioned to integrate society, or displaying its deformity and reclaiming its unique being.

Wael AliSyria**APOCALYPSE**

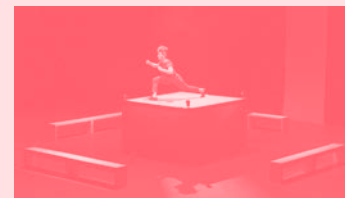
The project questions the notion of prediction as a way to read a world that appears illegible. It attempts to delve into the language of predictions, and questions their presence in our daily lives. Predictions have multiplied and expanded, in diverse forms: from coffee readings, to military readings facing colored maps; from the old tragic fortune teller, to the current modern predictors of the future on television.

Mohamad Al KhansaLebanon**OYUNU**

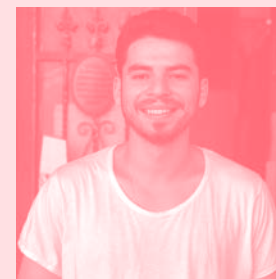
OYUNU is a post-modern interdisciplinary performance about a gender-queer dancer, struggling with his identity as he goes through a discovery phase fueled by physical changes, intimacy, insecurities, morals, beliefs, Sufism, oppression, and borders. The show is a contemporary Middle Eastern sonic journey featuring Middle Eastern avant-pop music, heart throbbing rhythms, dance choreography, aerial arts, singing, poetry, and interactive live visuals.

Ghida HachichoLebanon**BEYOND A CERTAIN
POINT MOVEMENT ITSELF
CHANGES**

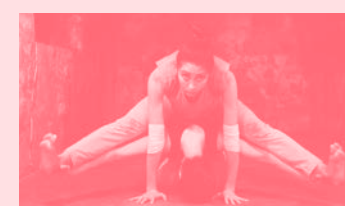
What kind of choreography appears between two checkpoints? What kind of spatial configuration dictates certain movements or restricts them? Can a planned movement change that space in return? This audio-visual lecture performance explores the spatial dynamics of the Mathaf crossing and its continuous transformation during the Lebanese Civil War, up to 1987 when an organized protest dismantled that border for one day.

Khouloud YassineLebanon**JUST THE TWO OF US**

The performance space morphs into a confrontation zone: two bodies facing each other and facing their audience, fighting, loving, and negotiating and all this in front of an audience: an audience that knows well the rules of the confrontation and agrees, an audience/ witness. An audience that has power, or thinks that it owns it and is capable of manipulating the image and distributing roles.

Amir SabraPalestine**HIP HOP GEES**

Hip Hop Gees dance performance addresses the Palestinian citizen and his/her suffering in the current restrictive situation with continuous violations of land and humanity. The show reflects an intellectual space where an attempt is made to present the life of the Palestinian through dance, with the struggle for freedom at its core.

Rana KaramSyria**EYELIDS**

Eyelids is a physical theater performance that represents a journey with the self, using the symbolism of the "door" to embark on this journey. In an interactive performance, the audience is confronted with a number of questions and ideas related to their personal choices in life and their defense mechanisms.

Mohamedali LtaiefTunisia**THE PATH OF THE SUN OR
THE BARE LIFE**

"The Path of the Sun or the Bare Life" is a visual and choreographical performance. It is a melodrama inspired by "Sonnenallee" street in Berlin: the street was once a part of "Berliner Mauer" and eventually became the meeting point for the Arab diaspora. Crossing Berlin-Neukölln, separating North and South, "Sonnenallee" brings together cafés, popular restaurants and shops, distinguished by an oriental/ orientalist outlook.

Hamza HamadehLebanon**DEMANDE D'EMPLOI**

The project is a theater performance staging the script "La demande d'emploi" by French writer Michel Vinaver, adapted

to the Syrian-Lebanese reality. The characters in "Demande d'emploi" (namely a father, a mother and their daughter, as well as a recruiter in a firm) undergo the pressures of daily life. The dialogue is based on a plot in which the speech of each character intertwines with the rest, transforming language into a violent tool.

Christèle KhodrLebanon**AUGURS**

Two actresses and an actor come back to their journey in theater, from the moment they have decided to work in theater in the early 80s during the civil war. Their testimonies reconstitute the memory of Beirut, at the time where the city was divided between east and west. They retrace through their personal and professional souvenirs the map of the theaters and venues that no longer exist. The project questions the theatrical activity during a decade of war – since 1980 until 1991; the year of the signature of the amnesty law that ended 15 years of fighting in Lebanon – and the relation of these actors to their profession today.

Joyce RaieJordan

In life, we experience death every day and everywhere in all its different forms. Through the characters we will watch our lives unfold, see the effect of our surroundings and the consequences of our decisions, leaving us to decide what it is that we want to contribute to; life, or death?

Zoukak Lebanon

ZOUKAK SIDEWALKS - THE FESTIVAL (2018)



Zoukak Sidewalks - The Festival 2018 (2nd edition) provides a shared space between international artists, local practitioners, students and a diverse audience. It presents multidisciplinary performances by artists from diverse backgrounds residing in Lebanon, alongside work from the Arab world, Europe and Asia. Through artist talks, masterclasses, conferences and debates, the festival introduces renowned international artists, and allows the audience to discover local emerging talents.

Al Harah Theater Palestine

PALESTINE INTERNATIONAL THEATER FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH - BETHLEHEM 2020 EDITION



This 10-day biennial festival hosts international and Palestinian troupes presenting theatre and artistic performances in the West Bank and Jerusalem to children and youths. The festival's 2020 edition will present performances in historic sites as part of the events in Bethlehem, proclaimed capital of Arab culture 2020. Efforts for the inclusion of persons with special needs in theater will be undertaken.

Mahatat for Contemporary Art Egypt

ART OF TRANSIT: ART INTERVENTIONS IN PUBLIC SPACES



Mahatat, an Egyptian social and cultural enterprise focused on public art, and the Lebanese collective Kahraba join forces to develop awareness towards the importance of the democratisation of art and its accessibility, along with the significance of professional exchange and development of performing artists and the use of public spaces in the region.

Nüt Dance Company Egypt

BREAKING WALLS FESTIVAL



Breaking Walls is a month-long festival of collaboration between international and local artists. These meet in Cairo to develop innovative site-specific performances in unconventional locations, bringing people and the city into interaction with each other. The festival builds equitable relationships between artists and provides professional development opportunities to the Egyptian contemporary dance community.

HEK-MA France/Syria

WE ARE NOT GOING BACK



The violence of the international migration system leaves permanent scars on both bodies and souls. We face many visible and invisible obstacles in our daily movement: body control, inequality, racism, borders. How is it still possible to believe in freedom and equality? This revolt will be manifested on stage through physical research, movements, gestures and images.

Awrad - Clown Me In Lebanon

TRASHION SHOW



The project aims to highlight the garbage/political crisis in Lebanon by combining garbage collection, street performance, online videos and a "Trashion Show". "Trashion show" will be performed by professional clowns on the streets of Lebanon, in 20 different locations. The clothes and accessories showcased at this unusual fashion show will be created by a fashion designer out of the garbage collected through 5 clown attacks staged on public beaches.

Leish Troupe Syria

EMBRACES



"Embraces" is a physical theater performance based on 6 short texts from

Performing Arts Jurors

Hala Omran: Hala graduated from the High Institute of Dramatic Arts in Damascus/ Syria. She continued her training with Eugenio Barba, Arian Mnouchkine, Pascal Rambert, Matthias Langhoff...

In theatre, she played roles like Nina in A. Chekov's Seagull, Blanche in Tennessee Williams' A Streetcar Named Desire, Andromache in Sophocles' s Andromache, Oenone in Racine's Phedre, Lady Capulet in Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliette, Dora in Albert Camus' The Just, Almassa in Saadallah Wannous's Ritual for a Metamorphosis, along with stage directors such as Cherif, Pascal Rambert, Marcel Bozonnet, David Bobee, Nullo Facchini, Sulayman Al-Bassam, Jean Christophe Sais, Mehdi Dehbi, Olivier Lettelier, Ali Chahrour...

She played leading roles in movies such as: Shams in The Gate To The Sun, directed by Yousry Nasrallah (Official Selection Cannes 2004), and The Third Woman in The Box Of Life, directed by Ossama Mohammad (Official Selection Cannes 2002). She is also an actor trainer and she gives workshops for professional and nonprofessional actors. Interested in poetry, she organizes and participates regularly in reading events, concerts, or festivals and translates theatre and poetry between Arabic and French.

She took part in the Berlinale Talent Campus during the Berlin Film Festival 2003. She was also part of the Sundance Institute Theatre Lab in Marrakech in 2016 and 2018.

Khalid Amine: Professor of Performance Studies, Faculty of Letters and Humanities at Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Tetouan, Morocco, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Interweaving Performance Cultures, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany (2008-2010), and winner

of the 2007 Helsinki Prize of the International Federation for Theatre Research. Since 2006, Founding President of the International Centre for Performance Studies (ICPS) in Tangier. Among his published books: Beyond Brecht, Meknes: Sindy Publications, 1996; Moroccan Theatre Between East and West, Tetouan: Faculty of Letters Publications, Abdelmalek Essaadi University, 2000; Fields of Silence in Moroccan Theatre, Rabat: Union of Moroccan Writers, 2004; Dramatic Art and the Myth of Origins: Fields of Silence, International Centre for Performance Studies Publications, 2007. He has numerous publications in International Theatre Journals: TDR, Theatre Journal, Documenta, Etcetera, Journal of Middle Eastern and North African Intellectual and Cultural Studies, FIRT Journal and many others. Amine's recent contribution is an article entitled "Performing Postcoloniality in the Moroccan Scene: Emerging Sites of Hybridity", which appeared in the edited volume Contesting Performance: Global Sites of Research, published by Palgrave in 2010. He is currently co-authoring with distinguished Professor Marvin Carlson a book project entitled Theatre in North Africa: The Performative Turn in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia to appear in the Palgrave Series: Studies in International Performance, edited by J. Reinelt and B. Singleton.

Bashar Murkus: A prolific playwright and theatre director, Bashar Murkus has presented a panoply of theatre productions in local and international theatres. Among his latest works are: Parallel Time, Other Places, New Middle East, HASH.

His works have been presented around the world, namely in Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, France, Tunisia, USA...

Bashar is one of the founders of a theater ensemble (where he is active since 2011) and of Haifa's

Uruguayan journalist and novelist Eduardo Galeano's "The Book of Embrace" and "Voices of Time: a Life in Stories". The project presents the issue of disability as one of the concepts of alienation, through the path of the two main characters in the performance: a psychiatrist and his female patient.

Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College United States

HOW CAN THERE BE A WINDOW WHERE NO WALL REMAINS?



This project is a performance festival and public discourse on borders-national borders, international borders, internal borders, and the borders of the body. By presenting artists from cultures currently deemed a "threat" to U.S. national security, the meaning of making political art that transcends protest to pose difficult questions and advances evidence and research about witnessing and responsibility, will be explored.

The Palestinian National Theatre - el Hakawati Palestine

ALKHUBZ AL MOR



In this Palestinian performance based on storytelling, and inspired from Majed Abu Sharar's book "The Bitter Bread", concerns of national and social nature intertwine. The project also addresses the suffering of refugees and its reflection on people's psyche.

independent theatre Khashabi, which was launched in October 2015. Bashar also works as artistic director for Khashabi Theatre.

Bashar also teaches acting and directing in diverse universities and institutes.

AFAC Documentary Program

Project Descriptions

Development

Orthodox Intifada

Palestine

Director: **Nahed Awwad**
Producer: **Marsia Tivara**



“Orthodox Intifada” is a feature documentary set in the Bethlehem region, a Palestinian area in the core of what is known as the ‘Holy Land’. Following extraordinary characters from the local Christian community, it deals with the social and political effects of the Greek control over the Roman Orthodox church and this Palestinian Christian community. The story unfolds through the eyes of the local filmmaker accompanying friends and relatives who fight for their community’s rights. At the same time, she attempts to come to terms with her upbringing and social norms. The film deals with problems caused by decisions of the Greek Patriarchate in the Roman Orthodox Church, which increasingly presents itself as a foreign body with foreign interests. The activists oppose the Greek domination and demand change of leadership. They want to have their own people to set the Church’s affairs and a Patriarch who answers to local interests. For some, especially the older generation, this constitutes heresy.

Traces of Home

Palestine

Director: **Colette Ghunim**



“Traces of Home” is a 60-minute film documenting the harrowing past of filmmaker Colette Ghunim’s parents, immigrants from Palestine and Mexico respectively. Forced to escape decades ago, they embark on a journey to find their original houses, discovering what home means along the way.

Whispers of Artsakh

Jordan

Director: **Sareen Hairabedian**
Producer: **Azza Hourani**



“Whispers of Artsakh” follows the footsteps of three Armenian 10-year old children, who were brought to this world as a result of a mass wedding in 2008. Their purpose in this world is to protect their homeland Artsakh and make it flourish. Artsakh is a land that still remains unrecognized to the world today.

NAZ

Palestine

Director: **Omar El-Khairi**
Producer: **Elhum Shakerifar**



Naz is an archive-based, feature-length documentary about the life and times of the British Yemeni boxer Prince Naseem

Hamed, one of the most successful and entertaining sports icons of the 1990s. It is a film that not only speaks to a moment which we want to celebrate, but also sheds critical light on questions around nationalism and sports – and who gets to create the stories that bind the two.

Guardian of the Worlds

Algeria

Director: **Leila Chaibi**
Producer: **Ghazi Ghazouani**



One night, at the foot of a tomb, Hassan fell dead asleep. As early morning came, he decided to live among the graves. For forty years, on the hillside of Jellaz, Tunisia, he has watched over the departed and observed the living. Through passing days and nights, seasons and encounters, we discover his singular world.

We Carve Words in the Earth

Palestine

Director: **Mahasen Nasser-Eldin**
Producer: **Emilie Dudognon**



The story takes us back to the 26th of October 1929 when approximately 200 Palestinian women converged into the city of Jerusalem from major cities, towns and larger villages in Palestine, to inaugurate their feminist movement. “We Carve Words in the Earth” is a journey in the landscape of Jerusalem following the footsteps of Palestinian women who moved between what today represents the “West” and the “East” sides of the city in protest of British colonial rule. Drawing on pre and post Nakba narratives and aesthetics, connectivity between past and present Palestinian women’s political and feminist experiences are highlighted throughout this journey.

Between Walls

Egypt

Director: **Laura Amna Stauth**



Two Egyptian domestic workers from the outer districts of Cairo clean in upscale neighborhoods and compensate as sole breadwinners in the absence of men, social justice, and financial stability. In the film they are not only “subject” but also active participants reflecting upon the footage they partake in: as actors and as co-editors forming an “image” of themselves in negotiation with the director. Both storylines interlace and create two temporalities: moments of action are disputed and interrupted by the two characters.

Al Jidar: The Wall

Palestine

Director: **Mira Sidawi**
Producer: **Amie Williams**



Four teenage refugees, training as journalists in a Lebanese camp, hatch a crazy plan to make a film that will convince an international aging rock band to reunite and play a concert in their camp. The film follows their hilarious, sometimes dangerous adventures, uncovering the complex layers of living as a refugee in the pulsing city of post-war scarred Beirut.

Production

Fragments from Heaven

Morocco

Director: **Adnane Baraka**



The Moroccan desert has recently seen several large meteor showers and its arid land is the perfect place to find celestial rocks. When a meteor penetrates the atmosphere, looking like a huge blue and orange ball, it instantly turns red as it hits the ground with a thunderbolt blinding light. Not long after that, hundreds of people – men, women, and children – rush to the site in four-wheel drives, on motorcycles or by foot, trying to be the first to arrive on site. Then begins a frantic search for the meteorite fragments hidden among the desert rocks. Deep inside, everybody hopes to be the first to find a meteorite. Soon the collectors and scientists join them; working with the nomads, they help identify the type and value of each discovery. The meteorite fragments are traded locally and nationally, and some of them are even auctioned internationally. The purchase of these meteorites is not only limited to scientific research; private collectors are ready to offer an exorbitant sum of money to acquire them.

Abo Zaabal 1989

Egypt

Director: **Bassam Mortada**
Producer: **Kesmat ElSayed**



52 men from the socialist movement were severely tortured in prison after months of workers strikes. Bassam Mortada, the son of one of these men, decides to make a documentary film about what these events meant to him, his family and the

community of socialist friends. Two parallel narratives will unfold, the father’s and the son’s. Together they try to recall these memories of the past.

Gevar’s Land

Syria

Director: **Qutaiba Barhamji**
Producer: **Karim Aitouna**



Gevar, a Syrian refugee in the city of Reims in France, finds refuge in a small garden on the outskirts of Reims, far, very far from his orchards in Syria. During four seasons, Gevar learns how to farm this new land that waits for no one...

Nothing About My Mother

Tunisia

Director: **Latifa Doghri**



Siwar is 15 years old. Medical reports confirm that her life as a woman is condemned forever. Today, she wishes to take revenge on her mother and step-father, who will soon be released from prison, with a new trial, the first of its kind in Tunisia, where she lodged a complaint for human trafficking against them. Her mother and step-father forced her to prostitute, and tortured her from the age of 6 to 8, yet justice was too lenient with them.

They Planted Strange Trees

Palestine

Director: **Hind Shoufani**
 Producer: **Ossama Bawardi**



A secular Palestinian filmmaker from the diaspora returns to the Galilee, after 20 years of absence and her parents' death, to embrace the members of their Arab Christian community. She asks difficult questions on faith, erosion of identity, allegiance, citizenship and communal memory in 70 years of living under Zionism. Will she find solace for her mourning in her homeland?

El Medestansi (The disqualified)

Tunisia

Director: **Hamza Ouni**
 Producer: **Erige Sehiri**



This is the story of twelve years of Mahrez's life. Mahrez is 36 years old, a rebellious man from Mohammedia (Tunisia), and a horse racing gambler. The film spans through twelve years of hopes, failures, anger, dreams and disappointment. Interrupted studies, aborted experiences in Europe, unemployment, prison, artistic attempts, are all memories knocking into each other, as are many pieces of a broken mirror, telling a medestansi life, a disqualified life.

Red Card

Comoros

Director: **Mohamed Said Ouma**
 Producer: **Berangere Condomines**



In Comoros, three sportswomen from national teams saw their last international experience, the 2015 Islands Games, lead to failure. The Comorian delegation withdrawal and boycott of the Games reactivated historical tensions between Comoros and France. While sport is hostage to politics, these exceptional women, bounded by friendship and solidarity, play the game of life, for its beauty and cruelty.

The Color of Phosphate

Tunisia

Director: **Ridha Tlili**
 Producer: **Soumaya Bouallegui**



Dust swallows the city. People float in a grey existence defined by the rhythms of the phosphate mine. In Redeyef, Babylon of Tunisia, beauty is an act of resistance. LAID, the clown and the mine worker, struggles against marginalization and debasement through theatre, flowers, and a clown costume.

Post-Production

Paris Stalingrad

Tunisia

Director: **Hind Meddeb**
 Producer: **Sylvie Brenet**



"Paris Stalingrad" is a portrait of Paris today as seen through the eyes of Souleymane, an 18-year-old refugee from Darfur. Souleymane suffered through five years of violence in Sudan, Chad, Niger and Libya before fleeing to Paris, yet overcame his turbulent past thanks to the poetry he composes. His poetry is an answer to the harshness of the refugees' situation in Paris and interrogates our collective responsibility.

Tiny Souls

Jordan

Director: **Dina Naser**
 Producer: **Palmyre Badinier**



Marwa is 9 years old and stranded in Al Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. Like any child, studying is her greatest concern, while playing is her greatest enjoyment. After being in the camp with her mother and siblings for four months, Marwa was expecting that they would probably stay for another week... maybe two. Over the ensuing four years, the director follows Marwa's life in the camp, where she blossoms from being a child to becoming a young woman. As a young free-spirited soul, Marwa dreams of being one of the pigeons whose freedom are not constrained by the high walls and barbwires of the camp. As the years go by, Marwa gets attached to her home, friends and life in the camp, until one day, a rumor regarding her elder brother spreads. A rumor that is wild enough to jeopardize Marwa's life and her family's. From facing authorities, to reported associations with militant extremists, their settled life takes a drastic turn.

The Way Home

Syria

Director: **Wael Kadlo**
 Producer: **Nadim Tanios Daybes**



This film strives for an understanding of family/civil wars, through the tale of the director's birth, childhood and youth, which spring from a family feud and feed into the Syrian civil war. It is a family journey that addresses these family and civil wars, and searches for the reasons that stand in the way of genuine reconciliation.

Une Maison Pour Buster Keaton

Algeria

Director: **Lamine Ammar-Khodja**
 Producer: **Rebecca Houzel**



A filmmaker in a park on the edge of Paris, receives an unusual letter written by himself. Thinking of a joke at first, he is quickly overtaken by this other self, and has to give in and to respond. This opens the way to a self-portrait that does not let his close ones on the side.

In Mansourah You Separated Us

Algeria

Director: **Dorothee Myriam Kellou**
 Producer: **Mariam Hamidat**



The director sets out with her father, an Algerian filmmaker who lives in France, on a journey to the village where he grew

up as a child. There they gather the silent memory of those who bore witness to France's colonial policy of forcibly resettling Algeria's rural population. "In Mansourah You Separated Us" is a journey into the past of the director's father.

We Are From There

Lebanon

Director: **Wissam Georges Tanios**
 Producer: **Christian Eid**



Jamil and Milad, two middle-class Christian Syrian brothers in their mid-20's with contrasting personalities, escape their war-torn country to seek a better future. Jamil is a carpenter, Milad is a trumpeter. They both decide to flee illegally to Europe, at different stages, in the hope of regaining their long-lost sense of home.

The Last Scene

Syria

Director: **Eyas Almokdad**



"The Last Scene" deals with an unfinished film that the director's younger brother, who was active in the Syrian revolution, started but could not complete due to various circumstances. The director, residing in Belgium, meets his brother in Beirut and collects the film material after recording his testimonial. Back to Belgium, and through this material, the director starts looking at the better side of the revolution.

AFAC Documentary Program Jurors

Diana El Jeiroudi is an awarded documentary filmmaker and promoter. In 2002, she co-founded

Proaction Film in Syria and produced highly-acclaimed documentaries, including Silvered Water in 2014 (Cannes Séance Spéciale). In 2007, she cofounded DOX BOX festival in Syria. In 2014, Diana co-founded DOX BOX e.v. in Berlin, and has been heading it since then, empowering the documentary film scene from the Arab World, a heir to the pioneering documentary film festival she originally co-founded in Syria under the same name. For her overall work, she has been awarded the EDN Award and the Catherine Kartlidge Award. She was repeatedly seated as a juror, most distinctively at Cannes' "L'oeil d'or". She is currently working on her next feature-length documentary Republic of Silence as a director.

Carine Doumit is an independent film editor and writer based in Beirut. Her work includes a variety of feature documentaries, film essays and experimental videos, shaping unique and innovative cinematic forms. She is also involved as a consultant with filmmakers as well as on artists' projects. She teaches at the audio-visual department of the Université Saint-Joseph since 2007. She intervenes regularly in workshops and university programs for young filmmakers.

Reda Benjelloun is a Paris-Sorbonne graduate. In 1995, he embarked on a career in journalism in TV 2M (Morocco). He worked as a reporter, news presenter, and producer of news broadcasts. He is currently the director of news broadcasts and documentaries at 2M. In 2011, he produced a weekly documentary TV program, Des Histoires et des Hommes.

Arab Documentary Photography Program

Projects Descriptions

Heba Khamis
Egypt

TRANSIT BODIES



Transit Bodies is a visual story about transgender persons in Egypt. It follows a transgender couple while both of them go through transition. This project is an attempt to recognize the intimacy of the transition, the relationship between the two people, and their struggles through their journey.

Ravy Shaker
Egypt

LETTERS TO MOSES



This documentary project reflects an ongoing discussion between Ravy and his wife regarding the kind of education to choose for their son Musa (Moses), more particularly the dilemma they are facing between Islamic education at Al Azhar- where both Ravy and his wife graduated- and a secular education. Through his project, Ravy calls on the public to send him their letters in favor of one type of education or the other.

Abdo Shanani
Algeria

DRY



How could an environment influence our identity? Between a land where we live and a land or lands that we have a history with, where and how can we identify ourselves? This project questions the relation between humans and the environment where they live (or have lived), how it shapes their identity and how they define the concept of "home". Dry is a photo-essay that has Algeria as a common land between different subjects from mixed races and nationalities.

Roger Mokbel
Lebanon

DESCRIBE THE SKY TO ME



Sunlight is this powerful element that affects our mood; it triggers birds to migrate and plants to blossom. But what happens when a bridge is built on top of your balcony, rendering any ray of light a scarce resource given in small doses? Here starts the painful adaptation of Bourj Hammoud's residents to this alien dominant structure named Yerevan Bridge.

Elwely Vall
Mauritania

IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGE



With the increasing impact of climate change in the world, Mauritians find themselves in a struggle for survival. This conflict has serious consequences on the social, economic and environmental identities of Mauritania. The project explores and documents the stories of this conflict and reviews its impact. The project goes beyond health and environmental problems to shed light on social implications.

M'hammed Kilito
Morocco

AMONG YOU



The project represents a reflection on the choice of a personal identity for Moroccan youth based on a selection of powerful portraits of young people who take their destinies into their own hands.

Nadine Al Koudsi
Syria

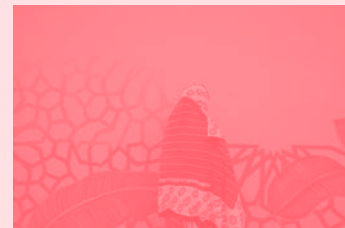
THOSE WHO DANCE ON THE STAIRCASE



Through this project, Nadine explores the different dimensions of nostalgia among Syrians currently living in Lebanon, and the complexities of the return 'home', which, in Nadine's case, comes to document a real struggle.

Shaima Al Tamimi
Yemen

AS IF WE NEVER CAME



This project is inspired by Shaima's family's journey and her personal struggle to understand the identity complexities of the Yemeni diaspora, punctuated by travels and immigration.

Arab Documentary Photography Program Jurors

Kristen Lubben is the Executive Director of the Magnum Foundation, a New York-based nonprofit organization that expands creativity and diversity in documentary photography. She is a writer, curator, and editor whose work explores the intersections of photography, art, and politics. Prior to joining the Magnum Foundation in 2016, she was a curator at the International Center of Photography for seventeen

years. She is also the author and editor of numerous publications, including Magnum Contact Sheets (Thames & Hudson, 2011).

Rana ElNemr is a visual artist based and working with Cairo's art scene and larger urban environment. Her artistic practice moves from formalist explorations of photography as a medium to genre-bending visual essays of her surroundings in Egypt. Her practice is anchored in questioning what it means to live and experience the city, through recording, describing and reflecting on this experience via photography, film, texts and conversations. Rana's artistic process incorporates formal image-making techniques with contemporary artistic practices and it strives to integrate various forms of collaborations in different constellations, such as transdisciplinary collaborations and alternative pedagogical practices among many others. She was one of the founders of the Contemporary Image Collective (CIC) in 2004 and remains an active board member.

Mohamed Somji is a Dubai-based photographer specialized in Architecture, Interiors and Editorial Photography. His commercial and editorial work is heavily influenced by the reportage style and approach that lends a unique perspective to his subjects be it interiors or editorial assignments.

In addition, he runs the Seeing Things photography and video agency based in Dubai.

Mohamed Somji is also co-director of Gulf Photo Plus, a Dubai-based photography organization dedicated to advancing the medium of photographic expression and to being a resource for aspiring and established photographers in the region through its expansive education and arts program.

Born in Tanzania and raised in Dubai, Mohamed's passion for and

interest in photography have always been for documentary projects and in his work, he aims to provide a critical commentary on social issues.

Creative and Critical Writings

Projects Descriptions

Mohamad Soueid
Lebanon

DOCUMENTING LEBANON



This project proposes a documentation of Lebanon, starting with the first cinematic shot by the Frenchman Alexandre Promio in 1897. Moving from this shot to cinema journals, touristic tapes, propaganda films, then further to broadcasting recordings and cassettes that were exchanged between residents and expatriates as well as video and digital material, this project seeks to write a new story of Lebanon, including the nations and peoples that crossed its lands.

Ahmed Shalaby
Egypt

THE GRAND NIGHTS



The project consists of the publication of a book titled "The Grand Nights", which includes 20 poems in colloquial Egyptian dialect. Every poem is named after one of the popular mawlids of Islamic and Christian traditions in Egypt. Every mawlid

serves as a platform, using colloquial poetry infused with popular passion, to shed light on a unique human participatory occurrence, embodied in these mawlis ruled by open-mindedness, tolerance and non-discrimination.

Dina El Deeb

[Egypt](#)

AL HAMESHEYOUN - THE UNDERCOMMONS



The project consists of the publication of the second edition of “Al Hamesheyoun” – the first edition was published in November 2017. This publication included a wide variety of creative texts, ranging from research-based, to imaginative, philosophical, and a performance lecture to a group of Egyptian innovators around Egyptian public affairs after January 25, springing from the marginal (hameshi) position, as defined in the book “The Undercommons”.

Ahmed Naji

[Egypt](#)

HERAZ MEKAMKM



This project revolves around a book about writing and reading inside Egyptian prisons and their respective libraries. Ahmed Naji relies on his personal experience, as he spent one year in jail due to the scandal caused by his novel “Using Life”. Naji seeks to analyze the ambiguous relation between law, literature and morals, through looking at previous literature trials and the legal papers of his own case. He also analyzes

the various aspects of the reading and writing processes inside prisons.

Nesrine Khoury

[Syria](#)

I KICK THE HOUSE AND GO OUT



The project consists of an accomplished collection of poems, which are in the form of prose and diaries. Topics vary, between self and public, springing in its vision from the writer's own self-experience.

Zain Alabedein Saleh

[Syria](#)

CHEZ THE MAIDENLY MADAM



“Chez the Maidenly Madam” is a contemporary theater project, taking as location Damascus in present days, inspired from the play “The Maids” by Jean Genet. The scenario involves two uneducated young brothers, who work in a garage in war times. Their mother, authoritarian with a strong character, is a prostitute who goes out every night. In her absence, one of the two brothers dresses in her clothes and plays the role of the mother, thereby addressing issues of gender, power and family.

Samer Abdulfttah Abdullah

[Yemen](#)

THE AUTHOR HAS ANOTHER MEMORY



“The Author Has Another Memory” is a play which follows a playwright during his theater script writing process. The script overlaps with the playwright's crisis, illustrated by his life crisis and the loss of a friend. The play consists of two acts; the first act presents the playwright as he sets to choose where he will begin writing the play that has been plaguing him. He calls the characters on stage to perform, and writes down the characters' performance. His memories of his deceased friend and the life he lived start to overtake the mood of the play. In the second act, we witness an explosion of the playwright's memory as he recalls what happened to him.

Charles Elakl

[Egypt](#)

JELLY BIRD



“Jelly Bird” is a comic strip that tells the story of a group of musicians who are passionate about music but lack talent. In the middle of Cairo's noise, pollution and explosion of population and waste, and due to a biological defect, a new society rises, competing on ground, air and audio space. Suddenly the primitive technologies and limited music tricks, which are everything the heroes of the story know, become useful.

Hanane Hajj Ali

[Lebanon](#)

THE DRAMATHEQUE - RADICAL EXPERIENCE OF HAKAWATI THEATRE/ LEBANON



This project aspires to contribute to the documentation of the history of Lebanese theater using a variety of ways that allows current and future generations to delve into it, to take note of its course and its effects, to question its problems and to interact with it. The “Radical experience of HAKAWATI Theatre/ Lebanon” is a digital audio-visual as well as printed archive of Lebanon's leading theater experiences, which left a deep mark on Lebanese and Arab theater and continue to impact the course of contemporary theater. This project envisages to take a preliminary step in the technical documentation of Lebanese theater, paving the way for the archiving and circulation of the most important theatrical experiences in Lebanon.

Fayrouz Elsayed Karawya

[Egypt](#)

AFRAID TO TELL WHAT I FEEL



“Afraid to Tell What I Feel” is a book based on research and critical writing, that addresses the formation of the concept of self in contemporary Arab songs, from the 1920s and 1930s till present day. The book examines and explores a variety of Arab musical works set in different periods of time, and seeks the concept of self and its expression through singing, music and poetry.

Moheb Mohamed Ali

[Egypt](#)

SALEH ABDEL-HAY: JOCKEY OF ARAB MUSIC



The project addresses the life and art of the talented singer Saleh Abdel-Hay, one of the most notable singers of the 20th century. It also contributes to the preservation of the important musical heritage of the Nahda, famous for its diversity of musical genres such as: taqtouqa, muwashshah, Arabic poetry, mawwal, monologue, dialogue, etc.

Roger Outa

[Lebanon](#)

LEBANESE POP SEX



“Lebanese Pop Sex” is a book of critical writing about the only visual display of sexual life in Lebanon, namely consisting of videos published on pornographic sites, filmed by citizens during their love-making sessions in intimate places. This reading focuses on the various facets of sexual life, stressing that it is an area for the promotion of conflicts between bodies, species and identities that revolve around society.

Dalia Taha

[Palestine](#)

WRITING AND RETURN



“Writing and Return” is a rumination on

writing, life and the Palestinian condition. Working across a disparate textual terrain, wrought from nationalist graffiti, personal diaries, magic amulets and NGO reports, the book asks how a re-engagement with writing as a form of encounter may help us understand anew the shape of the political present - this notion, at once intimate and abstract, more mood than moment, which Palestinians call the situation (al wada3) - and what it might in turn tell us about the relationship between writing, love, history, and the shapes of The Possible.

Hanadi Zarka

[Syria](#)

I SAW PALE CLOUD. I HEARD BLACK RAIN



This project is the second attempt by Hanadi Zarka to explore the impact of Syrian war on individuals and groups, going beyond what is written and broadcasted in this respect. She also studies the incursion of this war into daily life to become a life of death, destruction and chaos.

Ayman Abdolsalam

[Sudan](#)

WHERE IS MY STUFF



“Where Is My Stuff” is a collection of ironic stories that consists of more than 50 short stories addressing political issues, religious matters and other topics related to the citizen and his/her aspirations.

Feras HatemSyria**SHAMS AND THE MONSTERS**

"Shams and the Monsters" is a collection of children's stories that address concepts such as honesty, harmony with one's surroundings, acceptance of differences, cooperation and others.

Hiba MehrezSyria**FAILING EXERCISE IN LIVING**

The project is a text that attempts to rewrite a chapter of the life of two young Syrian men, who seek to cope with life's circumstances between Damascus and Istanbul. Marwan and Kifah represent Syrian youth today, who left their country in the hope of a better life somewhere else, only to find that the burden continues to follow them wherever they go. The project also addresses the notion of balance between the one who exited for lack of other solutions, and the one who exited out of desire for self-improvement.

Amgad El SabbanEgypt**SLEEP THIEVES**

In the strange settings of "Sleep Thieves", occur events that engulf man in a metaphysical reality that forces him to return to his primitive instincts. He is required to change his identity or to search for it, or to try to survive amid bureaucratic and arbitrary regimes that are invisible and random in order to reach a goal that does not exist or cannot be achieved.

Shehab IsmailEgypt**DIGITAL HISTORY OF BRITISH COLONIAL CAIRO: MEDIA AND THE POTENTIALITIES OF HISTORY**

The project aims at developing a site to publish electronic articles that use various audio-visual media to reconstruct an understanding of the history of Cairo under British occupation. It is based on the employment of media and maps in order to achieve two objectives: 1) overcome publication barriers that prevent the optimal use of the possibilities of Digital Media, 2) provide a new style of critical historical writing about Cairo to readers in Arabic.

Masrah EnsembleLebanon**MARSAH – THEATER TEXTS**

"Marsah" is an electronic and interactive platform of literature and theater, which publishes original Arab theatric works as well as works translated into Arabic from various cultures, and promotes them through a creative and varied interface. The project aims at creating a different experience of reception to theater texts, reaching a wider audience. It encourages the movements of content creation, translation and reading in the Arab world and opens another door for interactions and discussions around theater.

Labo Beckett pour les arts contemporains de la scèneMorocco**THE HOLOCAUST OF NEW ARTS - SHOCK AND DETERRITORIALIZATION IN ARAB CONTEMPORARY ART**

The project is a joint book by Fatima Zahra Sghir and Youssef Rihani about the transformations that contemporary art witnesses in Arab societies. Some of these societies have lost their traditional leading positions, and have been replaced by new cities that have become oases of contemporary arts in the world. The project also addresses the experiences of new artists as well as the new structures of arts management and the role of independent institutions in this transformation.

Archipels ImagesFrance/Tunisia**ESSAYS IN CINEMA CRITICISM**

The project sets the foundations of a new platform for cinema criticism in Arabic, to analyze films and contribute to the development of the discourse of critics. The project is based on the capacity to capture current productions and criticize them, as well as Arabize international texts on cinematic theories, relying on critics well-versed in Arab cinema affairs and capable of evaluating Arab cinema in the international cinema context. It also aims at providing the conditions for upcoming generations of critics to develop their capacities and skills through training workshops.

RESyria**ELECTRONIC CULTURAL PLATFORM RE**

The project aims at establishing RE electronic cultural platform with weekly updates according to a publication schedule agreed upon by the editorial board. The project will focus on publishing outstanding translations and works in the field of professional cultural journalism, by inviting well-known Arab and international writers to contribute with their writings on the electronic platform, in addition to the introduction of videos about Arab and Kurdish literary achievements, translated into different languages.

Creative and Critical Writings Jurors

Najwa Bin Shatwan is a Libyan academic and novelist, born in 1970. She is the author of two novels: *The Horses' Hair* (2007) and *Orange Content* (2008), three collections of short stories and a play. In 2005, *The Horses' Hair* won the inaugural Sudanese al-Begrawiya Festival prize, in the same year that Sudan was Capital of Arab Culture. She was chosen as one of the 39 best Arab authors under the age of 40 by the Beirut39 project and her story "The Pool and the Piano" was included in the Beirut39 anthology.

Zeina G. Halabi is Assistant Professor of Arabic Literature at the American University of Beirut. She specializes in modern Arabic literature with particular interest in questions of loss, mourning, and dissidence in contemporary literature and visual culture. She was a 2012-2013 EUME fellow at the Forum for Transregional Studies in Berlin, where she began working on her first book titled *The Unmaking of the Arab Intellectual: Prophecy, Exile, and the Nation* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017) that examines the depiction of Arab intellectuals in post-1990s fiction and film. She has authored articles on the shifting notion of political commitment in the writings of canonical and emerging Arab writers in journals including the *Journal of Arabic Literature* and *Middle Eastern Literatures*. As a fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship (2018-2020), she is working on her second book project provisionally entitled *Excavating the Present: History, Power, and the Arab Archive*, which explores archival practices in contemporary literature.

Chokri Al Mabkhout is a Tunisian academic, critic and novelist. He earned his PhD in literature from the Arts College of Manouba. He

has written several works of literary criticism and sits on the board of several literary journals. Professor at the University of Tunis, he was Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Arts and Humanities of La Manouba before becoming president of Manouba University (2011-2017).

Director of the 33rd and the 34th edition of the Tunis International Book Fair, he is also a member of the editorial board of several refereed journals, including *Ibla* magazine (published by the Institute of Arabic Literature in Tunis) and *Romano Arabica* (published by The Centre for Arab Studies in Bucharest).

His novel *Etalyenni* (The Italian), published in 2014 won the prestigious "International Prize for Arab Fiction".

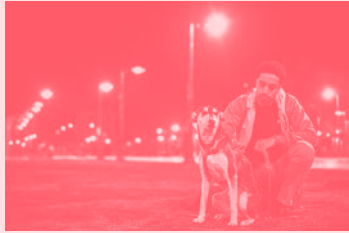
Cinema**Projects Descriptions****The Meursault Investigation**AlgeriaDirector: **Malek Bensmail**

Haroun is an old bachelor who has been living in Oran. A retired civil servant, he leads the life of a recluse until the day he meets Kamel in a bar, a journalist to whom he tells an incredible story: he is the brother of the "Arab" killed in the story of the famous novel, *The Stranger* by Camus.

The Seek for Mr. Rambo Haven

Egypt

Director: **Khaled Mansour**
Producer: **Rasha Hosni**



Rambo, Hassan's dog and only friend, is unjustly involved in a dangerous incident. He suddenly becomes hunted by the government and Kareem, Hassan's neighbor, which forces Hassan to find an unofficial secure way of exiting Rambo out of the country, and saving him from the unknown.

Let's Wait and See

Palestine

Director: **Mahdi Fleifel**
Producer: **Patrick Campbell**



Ain El-Helweh, Lebanon. As dawn breaks, the camp is plunged into chaos with the sudden arrival of several high profile UN officials. It quickly transpires that the people of Ain El-Helweh have been granted the right to return. But before Abu-Osama, one of the camp's longest residents can return to Palestine, he must first come to terms with leaving home.

Mothership

Egypt

Director: **Mariam Mekiwi**



A sci-fi film in three parts that explores notions of body's needs, demands and disruptions. A female scientist works in the Museum of Obstetrics and Gynecology that possesses the rarest specimens obtained from her own operations on female bodies. Together with a fellow scientist, they embark on an experiment to create a mothership that stems its energy from mother's own body.

All That the Wind Can Carry

Egypt

Director: **Maged Nader**
Producer: **Tamer El Said**



Combining home-shot video tapes, narrative scenes, dreams and hallucinations, comes the story of a middle-class Egyptian Coptic family that suffers from memory loss.

The Return of the Epistle

Tunisia

Director: **Nadia Rais**
Producer: **Imed Marzouk**



The project revolves around NIMA, a young artist and admirer of the Syrian poet Al-Ma'ari. In response to the decapitation of the statue of this poet by fanatics,

Nima meets the ghost of the poet and then decides to adapt "The Epistle of Forgiveness" into an animated film, that he titled "The Return of the Epistle". Unfortunately, NIMA is faced with the same censorship.

The Veil

Lebanon

Director: **Mohamed Berro**
Producer: **Fuad Halwani**



The Veil is a diptych film made up of two mid-length films by different directors. Both chapters tell the story of a family fleeing their country's apocalypse. The first chapter is set in Russia, 1991, months before the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second chapter is set in an imagined post-capitalist Syria, 2050 after the fall of the Assad regime.

Beirut 1931

Palestine

Director: **Kamal Aljaafari**



K arrives in his native Jaffa after the sudden death of his uncle, from uncertain causes, in an Israeli mental hospital. K learns that his uncle, who was interned for 25 years, used to make occasional furtive visits to the family home, like a ghost. The reconstruction of K's uncle's wanderings frames a melodic mosaic of recollections and reflections, spanning 70 years.

The Doubt

Palestine

Director: **Ihab Jadallah**
Producer: **Marisa Meier**



After being sentenced 12 years in prison, the Palestinian topographer Ibrahim finally comes back to his wife and son. While society celebrates him as a hero who carries the grief of a nation, he and his family have to cope with the fact, that he has become a broken distrusting man, whose only chance of happiness lies in a restart.

The Dam

Lebanon

Director: **Ali Cherri**
Producer: **Janja Kralj**



North Sudan, Merowe Dam. Abu Salma, a seasonal worker from Darfur, spends his days laboring in a mud-brick quarry and his nights erecting a structure out of mud in secret. One night, his creation mysteriously disappears. Soon, strange occurrences begin to take place and Abu Salma begins to get the uneasy feeling that someone—or something—is watching him...

Barzakh

Palestine

Director: **Laila Abbas**
Producer: **Roshanak Behesht Nedjad**



The father of Mariam and Kawthar dies alone in his old house. If his death is declared, his son in America will inherit a larger share of his estate. To hide their

father's death, the sisters need to take care of his body.

The Last Queen

Algeria

Director: **Damien Ounouri**
Producer: **Adila Bendimerad**



At the beginning of the 16th century, Algiers the capital city experienced a particular moment when her destiny changed: from a small Berber republic focused on the land, Algiers became a powerful capital city open to the sea.

Pirates were summoned to free Algiers from the Spaniards, but their leader Barberousse assassinated his Algerian ally, King Salim Toumi, and took the power for himself. It is in this context that a particular woman entered the arena: Zaphira, also known as the Last Queen.

Harvest

Lebanon

Director: **Ely Dagher**
Producer: **Arnaud Dommerc**



"Harvest" follows Jana's return home after years struggling to live a fulfilled life abroad. Through her the director draws a portrait of youth, of a generation and ultimately the story of Beirut.

Mediterranean Fever

Palestine

Director: **Maha Haj**
Producer: **Baher Agbaryia**



A Palestinian man from Haifa in his early forties is trying to be a writer. Unhappily married with children and deeply depressed, he befriends his neighbor and gradually convinces him to assist him in committing suicide in such a way that it would look like natural death.

The Gravedigger

Somalia

Director: **Khadar Ahmed**
Producer: **Misha Jaari**



"The Gravedigger" is a love story about Guled, a 45-year old Somali gravedigger who lives with his wife Nasra, 39, in the slums of Djibouti City. Nasra is very ill and suffers from a chronic kidney disease. Guled has two weeks to save Nasra.

Zanka Contact

Morocco

Director: **Ismaël El Iraki**
Producer: **Said Hamich**



"Zanka Contact" reveals the romantic idyll and eventful odyssey of a has-been rocker and a night girl with a golden voice in Casablanca. He tries to get himself out of heroin and she, out of the street. Their sole horizon is music. Their love will turn upside-down a Morocco that is unknown,

nocturnal and dangerous.

Mica Morocco

Director: **Ismael Ferroukhi**
Producer: **Lamia Chraïbi**



Mica, 10, lives in Meknes' slums. An old man brings him to Casablanca to be a handyman in a tennis club. Mr. Slimani, owner of the club and member of the Moroccan nomenclature, dreams of making his son, a tennis champion. Therefore, he hires Sophia, ex-tennis champion, as his trainer. Sophia ends up noticing Mica instead and his remarkable rising talent.

Under the Concrete Lebanon

Director: **Roy Arida**



Beirut 2015. A series of bombs explode across the country. Over the porous border, Syria sinks into a devastating war. The economic situation is in meltdown. Civil peace seems to be under threat. Refusing to submit to the situation, Alain decides to take his destiny in hand and attempt to break the world record in deep diving.

Errans Lebanon

Director: **Mira Adoumier**
Producer: **Rolly Dib**



A woman arrives in Lebanon to find someone she met during his exile in Iceland. Guided by stories and places he shared, she drifts, encountering guardians and messengers, each carrying a warning. The sounds of sirens looming over the city progressively usher the intrusion of visions, alluding the existence of an invisible place on the frontier of myths and reality.

Double Vision Syria

Director: **Ibraheem Ramadan**
Producer: **Julia Bruton**



Based on 2008 and 2010 videos and archive material of the 1974 reportage about the Lebanon-Syria Rally, and through adding a virtual element (cars and rally champions) over the real materials, "Double Vision" will take us on a one of a kind road trip in a mix of documentary and animation. A road trip through time without borders, wars or fear in Syria.

The Greatest Wait Palestine

Director: **Razan AlSalah**
Producer: **Emilie Dudognon**



"The Greatest Wait" is an experimental film that investigates the Palestinian

exilic condition in the story of impossible and eternal return to Palestine through virtual reality. Zei, a passport-less third-generation refugee, travels the world through Streetview VR to trace her family's forced migration. Geographies collapse, histories too, as she experiences interconnected events between Haifa, Beirut and Montreal in the 1940s, 90s and 2020s.

Curfew Morocco

Director: **Karim Souissi**
Producer: **Yassine Benjamaa**



In the near future, after a number of extremely violent sexual assaults, a new law is passed installing a curfew for women. One night, because she misses the last shuttle back home, Latifa, a single mother, ends up having to survive the harassment of gangs of ruthless teenagers roaming the desolate streets.

A Forgotten Filmmaker Algeria

Director: **Zineb Sedira**



Tahar Hannache is the first Algerian filmmaker. He directed 'Aux Portes du Sahara' in 1938. The anti-colonial film disappeared during World War II but was recently found at the Cinémathèque of Penthaz, Switzerland. Hannache's daughter, Tourya, and Zineb Sedira will go on a journey of discovery to watch the film. Zineb will subsequently direct an art-biopic about the forgotten filmmaker.

Tawaseef Lebanon

Director: **Ali Shiran**
Producer: **Fourate Chahal**



A production team is filming a video in a Syrian refugee camp. The director of the crew had promised Tawaseef, a young mischievous girl from the camp, to take her and her friends to swim. As he deceives his promise, Tawaseef decides to sabotage the crew's work.

Strong Girls Tunisia

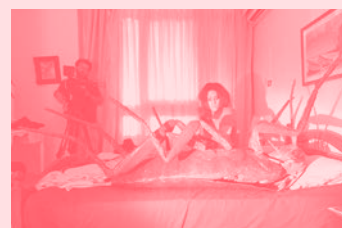
Director: **Inès Arsi**
Producer: **Mehdi Hmili**



Victim of a rape by her young neighbor, Donia, 19, sees her family forcing her to marry the rapist to bury the scandal. But her life changes when she realizes she is pregnant. Donia has one goal, to abort before it is too late. During her battle, Donia faces a patriarchal society and a hypocritical system.

J'ai Le Cafard Kuwait

Director: **Maysaa Almumin**
Producer: **Eiman Mirghani**



Maryam, a single forty-two-year-old office employee, is struggling with keeping up the facade she puts on to cope with her

depression in a highly active corporate world. When she inadvertently develops a friendship with a cockroach she encounters in the office toilet, it becomes both her saving grace and cause for angst.

On the Longing to Be Devoured by a Shark Egypt

Director: **Louly Seif**
Producer: **Fuad Halwani**



Three life-long friends approaching their 70's go into a studio that morphs into multiple spaces and times creating hyperreal worlds. Born on an island, they seek to flee it as they shuttle between the primitive and the hyper-modern. Together, they take a leap into fictional characters and stories that are loosely based on their real lives.

El Najm Lebanon

Director: **Valentin Noujaïm**
Producer: **Orane Gibier**



The Man only speaks Arabic, the Woman French - while the Son speaks both. One night, the Unknown appears in the sky and speaks to them, changing their respective worlds.

The Bath Tunisia

Director: **Anissa Daoud**
Producer: **Lotfi Achour**



Imed, a young father, finding himself alone for a few days with his five-year-old son due to his wife's business trip, will have to confront his deepest fear.

Prisoner and Jailer Libya

Director: **Muhannad Lamin**



"Prisoner and Jailer" tells the story of two contrasting Libyans: a key official in the former regime and one of the most prominent figures of the post-revolutionary period in Libya. Through these two characters, we discover the circumstances surrounding one of the most influential events in modern Libyan history: The Abu Salim Prison massacre.

Cinema Jurors

Adania Shibli has been writing novels, plays, short stories and narrative essays, which were published in various anthologies, art books, and literary and cultural magazines in different languages. She has twice been awarded the Qattan Young Writer's Award-Palestine: in 2001 for her novel Masaas (translated into English as Touch. Northampton: Clockroot, 2009), and in 2003 for her novel Kulluna Ba'id Bethat al Miqdar aan el-Hub (translated into English as We Are All Equally Far from Love. Northampton: Clockroot, 2012). Her latest novel is Tafsil Thanawi (Minor

Detail, Beirut: Al-Adab, 2017).

Amongst her non-fiction books are: Dispositions (Ramallah: Qattan, 2012), an art book exploring the element of movement in the works of contemporary Palestinian visual artists; and an edited collection of essays, A Journey of Ideas Across: In Dialog with Edward Said, (Berlin: HKW, 2014). Along her writing practice, Shibli is engaged in academic research and teaching. Since 2013, she has been visiting professor at the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, Birzeit University, Palestine.

Ahmed El Maanouni is a writer, director, cinematographer and producer born in Casablanca. He studied economics at Paris University Dauphine, cinema at INSAS Brussels and theater at the University of Theater des Nations in Paris. His works include one of the most emblematic titles of Moroccan cinema *ALYAM ALYAM* (1978), first Moroccan film selected in Cannes Film Festival and receiving the Grand Prize at Mannheim film festival. He caught international attention with *TRANCES* (Al Hal) restored and presented by Martin Scorsese at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival—Cannes Classics. *ALYAM ALYAM* and *TRANCES* were restored by The Cinema Foundation Project and have entered prestigious collections such as The Criterion Collection and Eureka, The Masters of Cinema. His film *BURNED HEARTS* (2007) won the Grand Prix at the National Film Festival in Morocco and was awarded numerous international prizes. His latest feature *FADMA* (2017) was awarded the Best Director's Prize at the National Film Festival in Tangiers 2017.

Moreover, his play, *ECHO ALPHA*, won the Young Theater Competition. He directs study groups and educational programs in Morocco and throughout the world. In 2007, he was honored with the title of Officer of the Ordre des Arts et Lettres in France.

Adnen Jdey is a researcher at the University of Tunis. He teaches film history at the Higher Institute of Humanities and Languages in Tunisia. For years, he has been working on the records of the Contemporary Western Philosophy and Aesthetics. He is the author and editor of numerous books, including: *Archi-Cinema Theory: Deconstruction and Film* (Paris, 2019); *The Method of Scene: Conversations with Jacques Rancière* (Paris, 2018); *Image Policies* (Brussels, 2014); *Deleuze' Styles: Between Aesthetics and Philosophy* (2011, Brussels); *Derrida and Arts: Aesthetics in Deconstruction* (2011 Paris). He serves as the art critic for *Nawaat.org*.

Research on the Arts Program

Projects Descriptions

Digital Arabs: A Brief History of Digitally – Conceived Architecture in the Arab World During the 1990s

Egypt

Researcher: **Adham Selim**



During the early heydays of personal computing, digital models and images produced by acclaimed architects of Arab origin, such as Zaha Hadid and Hani Rashid, mysteriously found their way back home on hard-disks and pirated e-books, to become the agitprops of a brief, yet fervent, digital architecture movement among young Arab architects. This movement was soon mostly forgotten or wholly dismissed as a lesser grade or immature emulation of what was happening back then in the 'West'. Apart from several ephemeral structures, the few realized projects that came out

of this movement were considered, at best, still-births. They were torn down or abandoned to their fate as probably the first ruins of digitally conceived architecture. This project seeks to revisit the legacies of the digital in Arab architecture produced in the 1990s with the aim of constructing an alternative, regionally nuanced and more faceted history of the digital. It pushes the archaeology of the digital into different time zones and extends it beyond the Western world.

While the leitmotif in the currently prevailing academic narratives tends to limit the advent of the digital in architecture to specific academic geographies and temporalities — namely Northwestern Europe and the West Coast of the United States during the late 1980s — the 1990s witnessed several architects based in Cairo and Beirut (probably along with many other places in the world) who were among the first to tap the potential of digital tooling in architecture. Using resourceful software combinations, they managed, with varying degrees of originality and success, to produce fairly complex built forms that were otherwise impossible to conceive of.

Multiple Spaces, Continued Mobilizations: Conceptual and Stylistic Transformations in Visual and Spatial Arts in Sudan 1980–2010

Sudan

Researcher: **Shama Babiker**



This research addresses the political, social and geographical implications of the political movements of Central Sudan region from 1980 to 2010 in the fields of visual arts and architecture, both conceptually and stylistically. It also aims at rethinking the interpretation of the course of modern art's development in Sudan. The prevailing view tries to understand modern art in Sudan based on the idea of multiple modernities of the West, thus restricting it to mere reflection of the western modern art experience.

The research aims to understand the artistic practice in Sudan from the perspective of local histories, considering Western modernity as one of the many

historical moments that should not be perceived as a distinction among all the nations' histories. The study also examines the political and social transformations in Sudan in the 1980s that coincided with the adoption of neo-liberal policies common in the world at that time.

With the dismantling of the public sector and the demobilization of large numbers of workers, Sudanese cities, which included the public sector's factories and institutions, have deteriorated, and large waves of migration have begun to the capital Khartoum. The first losers in those circumstances were the young artists and intellectuals, as the cultural and artistic institutions were the first sectors to be abandoned by the state.

As a result, multiple political movements have emerged, and the 1980s alone witnessed four successive political regimes. These conditions produced diverse social and spatial movements that had a great influence on the reconstruction of the visible spaces. Khartoum was transformed into a city of many visual appearances, a fact that was clearly reflected in visual and spatial arts.

This research attempts to draw links between these transformations and the transformations of methods and concepts in the field of art, and to clarify the connection between the practice of visual arts in Sudan and the different social contexts, as well as the artists' contribution to the movement of cultural change, given the role of the artist as a producer of symbols and collective imagination, able to provide the community with tools to understand the reality and change it.

The Muleteer in the Lebanese Novel: Social Transformation in the Era of Global Capital

Lebanon

Researcher: **Joan Chaker**



This study revolves around Lebanese

novels that feature, among their principal characters, a mule driver – that obscure peasant who, rather than work the land, makes his livelihood in the transport of goods and persons on mule-back.

After tracing the imprint left by the Lebanese muleteer in collective consciousness as a Robin Hood-like social bandit defending the peasantry against state taxation and capitalist extraction, this research questions the significance of that character's repeated appearances in the burgeoning literary genre of the novel.

The novel in itself was the result of a tension between the traditional and the modern. In the global South, it was also the product of the encounter with the West. Where the new literary form reflected a desire to modernize, resort to heritage could be understood as a defense against dissolution in a globalizing world – both on the part of the author and his readers, all members of an evolving middle class. In the eloquent words of Walter Benjamin: "The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual." Which is why the literary genre recurrently assigns pride of place to the muleteer who, attuned to the basic rhythms of rural life, experienced firsthand the dissolution of community.

Drawing parallels between Lebanon and contemporaneous contexts across the rural global South, this study makes a case for the novel centered on the customary rural transport worker as a coherent sub-genre that cuts across cultural contexts to express the visceral angst that pervades rural communities on their transition into liberal capitalism.

A Genealogy of Palestinian Museums and Renegade Objects

Palestine

Researcher: **Lara Khaldi**



Over the past few years, there has been a proliferation of museum buildings in Palestine. While a few institutions have managed to open, others are still struggling to do so. These projects are paradoxical; they assume the existence

of an autonomous Palestinian State, yet the struggle for emancipation is ongoing. The aim of this project will be to write a critical genealogy of museums in Palestine, as well as to contextualize and theorize these efforts in museum and exhibition history and theory; to add them to these debates as exceptional but also integral and more broadly relevant case studies.

Particular attention will be paid to what is included in these museums, and what gets lost or displaced. Although Palestinian conceptions of museums and actual institutions have changed throughout the Palestinian struggle, many actual objects have slipped out of these museums and collections. A study will be undertaken of these museums through the objects which are removed, forgotten and disappeared, or which are held captive outside the museum. Are there museums in Palestine more emancipatory than others? What do renegade objects outside the institution tell us about those museums? Could museums in Palestine help us understand the institution of the museum as such? And its relationship to the Nation State, specifically given the lack of one? Lara Khaldi will attempt to collect and investigate this genealogy in relation to changing forms of the struggle for emancipation. Using a Foucauldian perspective on genealogy, as well as the power structures underlying Palestinian museum-building, she will ask: how do these museums, artworks and objects relate to the various quests for either a two-state-based solution: a Palestinian nation state, or a one-state solution, or forms of internationalism.

We Felt Again That Everything is New

Lebanon

Researcher: **Mary Jirmanus**



What was the nature of the relation between leftist and progressive cinematic production and social movement activity emerging from 1970s and 80s Lebanon? How did cinema serve simultaneously as a mirror or a critique of leftist political project? Similarly, what were the horizons

of distribution and circulation for the cinematic works, and to what extent did these contribute to a critical local dialogue on movement practice from the grassroots. The proposed monograph is an analytic-artist study of Arab militant cinema of the 1970s and 80s in relation to the social movements in Lebanon and beyond with which they interacted. The book actively maps a constellation of films, filmmakers, workers, organizations, affinities, ideas and practices that together comprised a distinct moment of political possibility. Taking an ethnographic-historical approach, combined with close-reading of films, and direct written interventions by the study's participants, the text aspires to be useful for artists, scholars and activists alike.

Sayed Darwish and Contemporary Youth Musical Practices in Egypt Jordan

Principal Researcher: **Widad Adas**
Co-Investigator: **Hazem Chahine**



Sayed Darwish was present around 100 years ago in the Egyptian music scene, and had presented through his songs and compositions a special and distinctive artistic project, especially during his last six years (1917-1923). There is no dispute or controversy over the renewal and modernization Darwish was able to achieve in the Egyptian song at that time. There is also no doubt about his success in creating a song characterized by its Egyptian identity, whether artistically, socially or politically.

The music of Sayed Darwish reached large numbers of people and gained a huge popularity during his days. His art succeeded in forming a common space of meanings, feelings and ideas shared by the Egyptian people who listened to his songs as an expression to their feelings, emotions, complaints and concerns, and most importantly, a symbol of their own voice, the one they heard and loved for the first time.

It has also become clear that Darwish's music occupied an important space in contemporary youth practices, whether

by performing his musical repertoire by a number of successful young music bands who work within the frame of alternative art, or through recalling it by the youth in revolutionary moments highly expressive in their ideas, energies and concepts.

Therefore, and by taking the music of Sayed Darwish as a model, the study will embark on a deep analysis and examination of music as a latent force practiced creatively by the Egyptian post-millennium generation. The study will also aim at giving sociological and artistic interpretations for the success of Darwish's music, regarding its continuous formation of meanings and collective representations, and the creation of influential social and artistic interactions across generations until our day.

Music Sociology in Morocco: Music Learning in Secondary Education as a Model Morocco

Researcher: **Hassan El Bakkari**



This research addresses the issue of the impact of musical education on youth and learners in respect of shaping individuals endowed with high artistic and aesthetic characteristics, and able to take positive actions in the development and improvement of the society. Based on the premise that music is the foundation that reflects the aesthetic, cultural and civilizational attributes of a society, it reflects the awareness of both individuals and groups, as well as the nature of their social relations and the level of their artistic taste in general and musical taste in particular.

In this context, we take as a starting point the multiple factors that prevent the positive influence of music in the individual's educational construction within the Arab family. Are they factors related to the cultural composition of the human being in the Arab society and to his or her social affiliation? Or is it related to religious, cultural and historical heritage, regarding, specifically, the sullying and foreboding of music? And how can the schools be able to enhance the musical education towards

a better formation of children and youth generation in Moroccan society?

This will lead us to the assumption that the cultural heritage of the family has an influence on the artistic and aesthetic taste of the learner, and on the formation of a balanced and effective personality in the society, given that music has a close connection with the social factor. Starting from this idea we can talk about the relationship between what is music and what is social.

These questions will lead us to research the process of integrating musical education in the educational system in Morocco, and to investigate its condition as well as the qualifications of teachers and assimilation of third year preparatory students whether in public or private Moroccan schools. In addition to this, we will study the level of student's interaction with the modules and the acquisition of singing skills (solfeccio), and the ability of adjusting to different rhythmic forms.

The level of skills will answer the question of the relationship between social belonging and cultural heritage and their impact on the youth's musical taste of. The importance of the study lies in highlighting the most important difficulties that prevent the achievement of competencies expected in the private and public education sector, by identifying the objective reasons that hinder the development of the learners' performance, in order to enhance their musical taste and develop their abilities and personalities to become active citizens who contribute to the development of art and society.

A Healthy Distrust Palestine

Principal Researcher: **Reema Fadda**
Co-Investigators: **Nadim Mishlawi and Rachel Dedman**



A Healthy Distrust is a research and

curatorial project that looks at disease as a generative metaphor and theoretical model for understanding contemporary exigencies in the Arab world. Taking the Arab city as a starting point, and using artistic and interdisciplinary practices as tools, Nadim Mishlawi and Rachel Dedman seek to highlight the paradigmatic complexity of disease to understand how notions of health and sickness are tied to regimes of governance. In the examination of the shifting articulations of disease and their consequences in urban environments, their research considers the spatial construction of the city and its role in ordering publics, as well as its physiological, psychological and bio-cultural impact on (post/settler) colonial and trans-regional contexts. By looking at histories of sanitation, infection and illness as urgent concerns of regional conflict, the project addresses structures of power through the lens of the body and its health.

A Healthy Distrust offers an intimate, interdisciplinary framework to map alternative, spatio-social cartographies that unseat geographical borders as the limits of city and nation state. Nadim Mishlawi and Rachel Dedman trace how the Arab socio-political body has been designated as 'diseased' or 'sick', setting up a paradigm for its control or exclusion from the geopolitical arena. In reorienting and rearticulating metaphors of disease, they seek to think in general terms about the boundaries between people, by drawing attention to the fact that, on a molecular and biological level, humans are fundamentally porous. Such an approach aims to challenge current political speech that articulates migration from conflicts in the Arab region as a form of infection spreading to the West, threatening the integrity of the European national 'body'. Instead, they argue, biology teams up with transcendence and shift, offering countless models for movement that ignore political difference in gender, race, age and class. What might we learn or enact from such structures? How might we rehabilitate the biological operation of 'infection' from something considered dangerous, to something generative and productive? Working in collaboration with artists, filmmakers, curators, and theorists as bodies of knowledge (visual, creative, critical), Nadim Mishlawi and Rachel Dedman seek to uncover the peripheral and invisible in such histories.

Research on the Arts Program Jurors

Ismail Nashef is an associate professor at the anthropology and sociology program, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. He held academic positions in different universities in the Arab World and beyond. In addition to his academic career, he is a literary and art critic, and curator. He has been part of different cultural and academic initiatives and projects in the academia and elsewhere.

His research focus is on materiality, language, and ideology. He explores these notions as they are expressed in literature and plastic art. His current research is on art and literature in the colonial contexts, with special attention to the Arab Islamic societies, generally, and the Palestinian one in particular.

His latest publications include: Arabic: A story of a colonial mask (2017); June's Childhood: Dar al Fata al Arabi and the genres of tragedy (2016); Images of the Palestinian Death (2015); On Palestinian Abstraction: Zohdy Qadry and the Geometrical Melody of Late Modernism (2014).

Omar Fertat is a theater researcher and a Faculty member and lecturer at Bordeaux-Montaigne University. He currently lectures on Arab cinema and theater in the Arab Studies department and the Performing Arts department. He also supervises the scientific program "L'Autre et ses representations dans la culture arabo-musulmane" at the TELEM research center in the university. Several international conferences were organized as part of this program, in which numerous university researchers, writers and artists took part.

His research interests include modern literature and performing arts in the Arab world.

Omar Fertat manages the French theater magazine "Horizons/Théâtre", which addresses world performing arts news and is issued twice a year. He also co-directs the collection "Monde Arabe/Monde Musulman".

His latest publications include "L'Autre et ses representations dans la culture arabo-musulmane" (2016), and "Le théâtre marocain à l'épreuve du texte étranger: traduction, adaptation nouvelle dramaturgie" (2018).

Walid Sadek is an artist and writer living in Beirut. He is Professor and currently chair of the department of Fine Arts and Art History at the American University of Beirut.

Maya Issam Kesrouany, is an assistant professor of Modern Arabic Literature at New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD). Her book manuscript Prophetic Translation: The Making of Modern Egyptian Literature is forthcoming with Edinburgh University Press (December 2018). Her current project investigates cultural production in the Levant as a form of civil mobility. Her research interests include nationalism and political imaginaries; civil society formations and the public sphere; critical translation theory; the politics of language, literary form and genre. She has taught at New York University (New York), Emory University (Atlanta, GA), the American University of Beirut (Beirut, Lebanon) and the American University of Sharjah (Sharjah, UAE).

Alia Mossallam is interested in songs that tell stories, and stories that tell of lesser known struggles behind better known events that mark World History. Her PhD dissertation explored a popular history of Nasserist Egypt through stories told and songs sung by people who contributed to milestone events of the 1952 revolution (the building of the

Aswan High Dam, and the 1956 and 1967 wars in the Canal area). She has taught at the American University in Cairo (AUC), the Cairo Institute for Liberal Arts and Sciences (CILAS), Freie Universität Berlin (FU) and held a series of history workshops 'Ihky ya Tarikh' with students, activists and artists in governorates all over Egypt, as an experiment in history-telling. She has also explored playwriting with Laila Soliman and Hassan El-Gerety as attempts to bring stories (and songs) of historical struggle unto the stage.

Her publications include an article on youth activism in the volume Democratic Transition in the Middle East, a workers' history of the Aswan High dam in the Journal of Water History, and an article on history workshops in Egypt in the History Workshop Journal. She has also written for Mada Masr, Jadaliyya and Ma'azif. In 2017 and 2018, Mossallam is a EUME-FU Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, where she is working on a book on a popular history of the building of the Aswan High Dam, and starting a new project on the experience of the Egyptian Labour corps in World War I – mainly through songs, theatrics and cultural articulations of their experience on the home and war fronts.

Music

Projects Descriptions

Widad Mjama

Morocco

N3RDISTAN



Between rock, hip hop, electro, oriental-

beat with world influences, this quartet mixes with ease digital power and ancestral Arabic poetry. N3rdistan is producing its first album, which is on the border between Oriental beat and electro-urban, using ethnic musical notes on personal texts and famous poets (Gibran Khalil, Nizar Qabbani, Al Maari ...). N3rdistan incites the discovery of new musical horizons.

Aicha Chighaly

Mauritania

ARDENNES FESTIVAL



The Festival is an annual artistic event that presents the audience with a traditional musical instrument that is not available outside the Mauritanian cultural musical scene: the "Ardenne". This instrument is characterized by the fact that it is only played by women. The festival will introduce the audience to the history of the instrument and its musical power. It also represents an opportunity to present the special role and status of the woman artist in a traditional desert and Bedouin community.

Sami Hawat

Lebanon

TIME HAS CHANGED



The project unites Sami Hawat with a number of young musicians who got to know him and his social and political ideals during their childhood in the times of the Lebanese civil war.

Today, Sami Hawat, who belongs to a generation that saw its dreams and thoughts get shattered, meets with these young musicians in a project that addresses the new reality in a sarcastic way.

Asma Ghanem

Palestine

DAMAGED BRAINS MUSIC



Experimental music album and art-book, the project is an auto-fictional study on damaged brains cases from all refugee camps in Palestine (12 camps). How can we explain the condition of a damaged brain case by producing experimental music pieces made by 12 female musicians from Asia and the Middle East? The scientific research will get transformed into an auto-fiction musicology.

Feras Charestan

Syria

SOUND FROM THE NORTH (NORTH OF SYRIA)

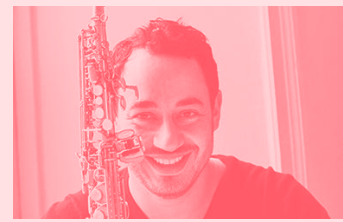


"Sound from the North" is a project based on new compositions for the instrument Qanun. These pieces aim at showcasing the possibilities of this instrument and presenting it in a non-traditional manner through the accompaniment of a string quartet, in addition to the rhythm section and a group of traditional popular instruments such as Nyckelharpa (popular Swedish instrument), taking into account the (Oriental) quarter tone and the use of appropriate harmony.

Yacine Boulares

Tunisia

IFRIQIYA



IFRIQIYA is a musical exploration of the West African roots of Tunisian music with an ensemble mixing a Jazz quartet and Tunisian percussion ensembles. In a collection of all original material, Tunisian rhythmic traditions will be bridged to the language of modern jazz, connecting Tunisian music and its sub-Saharan African roots via the Jazz idiom as an attempt to reinvent an Afro-Tunisian musical identity.

Donna Khalife

Lebanon

HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS



"Hope is the Thing with Feathers" is Donna Khalife's second album with a tribute to hope, this inherent power, always present, requiring no maintenance and helping us overcome what life throws our way. This project will bring together different poets and musicians who draw inspiration from beauty, nature, and humility.

Imed Alibi

Tunisia

FRIGYA



Frigya means "Africa" in old Tunisian dialect.

This project will be the culmination of several years of research and creation. Frigya is a comeback to the sounds of Africa and the Tunisian rhythms linking the African Arab worlds with percussions and voice.

Jasser Haj Youssef

Tunisia

MEMORIES



The project works on a disc that is unusual in terms of the very high quality of the sound, and the focus on Viola d'amore which was used chiefly in the baroque period. The project will involve Buddhist priest singer Lama Gyurme and a Rhodes piano artist, and will address symbolic texts in Aramaic and Arabic. Moreover, modern techniques as well as live voices will be used, in cooperation with international professionals.

Two or the Dragon

Lebanon

THE PROSECUTION OF MUSTAPHA AL-AGHA

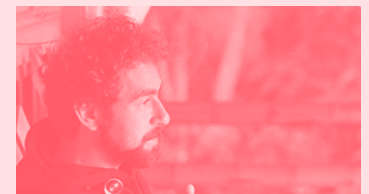


The project consists of a musical album by the duo "Two or the Dragon" of Abed Kobeissy and Ali Hout, springing from Nahda music (1798-1939 according to Albert Hourani) as an art based on the sound identity of the cities of the Levant at the time. The study also stems from the importance of identifying oriental musical accents that adopt the current sound identity of Levant cities as local aesthetics, and expressing them artistically without causing a rift with the roots of Arabic poetic music.

Adham Zidan

Egypt

BASKOT LEL BALTAGEYYA



Baskot Lel Baltageyya is an audio-visual music project with a strong live-performance aspect that playfully attempts to bridge the gap between experimental music and the pop music landscape. The final outcome of this project includes a series of shows across Egypt, a series of music videos, and an album that will be produced and released in various formats.

Natik Awayez

Iraq

MANBARANI



The project brings together Natik Awayez as composer and singer with 9 Arab independent musicians. Their mission is to produce an album that addresses the state of "Oriental Takht" and goes beyond it to reach a contemporary music audience and trigger debate around contemporariness. The project aims to launch the album as a modest addition to this key debate, and documents a musical journey stretching across multiple musical spaces.

Rafik Rezine

Algeria

ELECTRO ZEBALA



"Electro Zebala" consists of the recording

of an open source musical album in Luxor (Egypt) using musical instruments made out of material recycled from garbage, and based on the sounds of Luxor city and suburbs (Luxor "identity") as well as on the popular artistic heritage of Upper Egypt. Shadi Rabab will produce the recycled instruments and use them to perform. Rafik will record and distribute the album electronically.

Safana Bakleh
Syria

WOMEN WHO ADORED GOD



The project aims to gather poems by Sufi poetesses who did not receive their worth of criticism and documentation throughout history, and transform those poems into songs composed and distributed for a female choir accompanied by a number of musical instruments. The material will then be recorded in studio and produced as an album that will be launched in Damascus.

Basel Rajoub
Syria

THE RIVER OF LIGHTS



The project aims to produce a musical album entitled "The River of Lights" in cooperation with the Austrian musician Matthias Loibner. The album comprises 9 pieces of instrumental music composed by Basel Rajoub and written for saxophone and "Hurdy Gurdy". The latter is a 14th century instrument from Andalusia which was first used in ancient Iberian music, and afterwards in classical music where Mozart and Hayden composed some works for it.

Samir Ferjani
Tunisia

SHÉHÉRAZADE OPÉRA



The book "One Thousand and One Nights" represents a great challenge for any creator across artistic fields. Despite its strong presence in theater, music and drama and across the world, it remains a fascinating subject for the researchers and artists. Based on a profound study of this work of literature and an analysis of numerous artistic works inspired by Shéhérazade stories, the project will produce a contemporary Arabic opera piece.

Raed Yassin
Lebanon

ARCHEOPHONY



The project is a new turntable solo album created from live mixes of rare recordings of ethnic music from around the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) region, sampled alongside drum machines, synthesizers and electronics. The work acts as an archeological document of sound, as well as a new experimental conductor of musical history.

Suad Bushnaq
Jordan

ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACKS FROM INDEPENDENT ARAB CINEMA



The project is a recording of a soundtrack album based on Suad Bushnaq's original compositions for award-winning independent Arab films that explore issues of migration, identity, war, loss, home, family, and diaspora. The compositions blend Middle-Eastern maqam and rhythms with diverse musical genres and harmonic colors, in cinematic orchestrations that reflect the stories being told on screen and the universal human emotions connected to them.

Mohamed Zouari
Tunisia

ELECTRO BTAIHI



Electro Btaihi is a project halfway between traditional Tunisian music and underground music. It is born out of the need to explore new sonorities able to express oral tradition in Tunisia.

The artist develops for this aim a contemporary language conveyed by the desire to put Tunisian rhythms at the service of Indian or Jazz polyrhythm.

Abdul Hadi Hashem
Palestine

ASIFEH - AL-HIFFEH



Al-Hiffeh will be an album created by Asifeh, featuring artists from Ramallah and abroad. Al-Hiffeh builds on the sound aesthetics of the last album "Datura", with a minimal approach and vocals about topics related to life under occupation and life as a foreigner abroad, and how these experiences have shaped us and taught us about the future of humanity.

Muriel Kahwagi
Lebanon

ZAJAL: BETWEEN IMPROVISATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION



"Zajal: Between Improvisation and Institutionalization" is a bilingual publication that explores the social production of Zajal - a form of Levantine strophic poetry that is half-sung and half-improvised - as well as the impact of its professionalization on both the form itself and its dissemination. The publication is accompanied by a CD featuring 5-6 remastered excerpts of previously unreleased private Zajal performances.

Festival Arabesques
Morocco/ France

FESTIVAL ARABESQUES



"Festival Arabesques" aims to encourage the visibility of the Arab artists and to promote dialogue and cultural diversity in Europe. It presents an opportunity to explore the Arab cultural diversity through music, from its traditional heritage to contemporary creations. Arabesques aspires to become a platform for emerging Arab musicians and to create a professional encounter.

Hannibal Saad
Syria

GLOBAL WEEK FOR SYRIA



Global Week for Syria is an annual live and online event aimed at raising awareness, creating platforms and stimulating artistic co-creations between Syrian, Arab, and local/international musicians in their host communities. The event includes over 340 Syrian and international musicians in over 50 locations, with a music festival, conferences, and workshops in Lebanon and the Netherlands.

Al Balad Theatre
Jordan

AL BALAD MUSIC FESTIVAL - 6TH EDITION



"Al Balad Music Festival" is a platform for independent music projects from the Arab world presented in Amman. It is organized biannually over one week in one of Amman's most ancient sites, the Roman Amphitheater in downtown Amman.

MahraJazz
Palestine

MAHRAJAZZ - ALTERNATIVE JAZZ FESTIVAL



MahraJazz is an annual alternative jazz festival, the first-ever Palestinian music festival to take place in Haifa (Palestine). It aims to break geographical and mental borders through diverse music and conversations. Organized and formed in 2017 by an independent group of young individuals working in various fields of culture, production, and social change/activism, it plays a role in contributing to and pushing the efforts further at reclaiming Haifa as a center for cultural production.

The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music

Palestine

THE PALESTINE NATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION



The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music is organizing the Palestine National Music Competition 2019, within its 25th anniversary festivities. The competition will consist of 3 parts: solo (piano, guitar, string section, brass, Arabic music); singing (choirs and band performances); and the Marcel Khalifeh competition for young musical composers. The event will witness the participation of approximately 1,000 music students and young musicians from Palestine and the Golan Heights, who will be evaluated by an independent jury of Palestinian, Arab and Western musicians.

Beirut & Beyond

Lebanon

BEIRUT & BEYOND INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL 2018



The 6th edition of Beirut & Beyond International Music Festival will take place from 6 to 9 December in different venues in Beirut. During the 4 days, an eclectic program of concerts will be presented to the audience and international professionals, along with a full program of workshops, round tables and residencies accessible for professionals and musicians.

Music Jurors

Rima Khcheich, one of the talented Lebanese singers of the uprising generation, is well known for having given rebirth to the Andalusian form Muwashah, as well as to the traditional Arabic repertoire of the 19th and 20th Century that she both teaches and explores. A graduate of the Lebanese American University in Beirut and the National Conservatory of Music where she taught for twelve years, Khcheich has performed live throughout the Middle East, Europe and the USA specializing in Arabic traditional vocal repertoires. She released 6 albums so far: “Orient Express” (2001), “Yalalalli” (2006), “Falak” (2008), “Min Sihr Ouyounak” (2012),

“Hawa” (2013), and “Washwishni” (2016). She is currently working on a new album that will be released in January 2019.

Hamdi Makhoulf is a Tunisian musician, composer, lutenist and singer. He holds a PhD in music and musicology from Sorbonne University. He is a lecturer at the Higher Institute of Music (ISM) at the University of Tunis and was the director of the JMC (Carthage Music Days) from 2015 to 2017. He lived in Paris from 2003 to 2010, where he discovered a great musical diversity that enabled him to study ethnic music and to be influenced by many genres and styles. He has also performed in many international concerts and has long worked with various artists from several countries. He recorded his single, “Nocturnal Pages”, at EMI Music which was released in 2008. He was also invited by the artist Gad El-Maleh to record the oud parts of the music of his film “Coco”. Moreover, he has recorded many albums of musicians from Tunisia, France, Hungary and others. Makhoulf released an experimental style album “7 + 1” with the American artist Kevin Blechdom. This music

was played and remixed by many musicians from different countries. He participated in a number of conferences about musical and cultural issues and coordinated the publication of some scientific books on music. Several of his works were published in France, Lebanon and Tunisia.

Maan Abu Taleb is a Jordanian novelist, essayist and cultural editor. He is the founding editor of Ma3azef, the Arab world’s leading online music magazine. He holds a Master’s degree in philosophy and contemporary critical theory.

His debut novel, “All the Battles”, was released to critical and popular praise in 2016.

Training and Regional Events

Projects Descriptions

Mokhtar Eldenary

Egypt

WORKSHOPS - THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED



The 2018 graduates of Nahda Arts School (NAS) for social theater strive to take a workshop about the Theater of the Oppressed techniques, with special emphasis on the Forum Theater techniques. This workshop would enhance their experience in street performances, in view of presenting social issues that concern diverse sections of society within Egypt.

Waguih El Laqany

Egypt

DEAF FILM LAB



The project consists of a professional workshop for deaf youth on the different stages of short film production. The workshop will result in a number of short films. The work will start from the development of the idea to the script-writing, production, filming and editing, etc.

Toufik Douib

Algeria

DIGI-DZ



DIGI-DZ is a two-week festival dedicated to digital arts from the Maghreb. The first of its kind to be held in Algeria, it highlights results of the mapping research platform that Toufik Douib developed with Egyptian co-curator Elham Khattab, DIGI-MENA. DIGI-MENA aims to list and liaise between digital artists and creative minds, either local or in diaspora of the Arab world.

Shareef Sarhan

Palestine

WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS ON SCULPTURE TECHNIQUES



This project is one of the activities within the training and development program

at Studio Shababik in Gaza, designed to train artists on the use of sculpture as a contemporary art tool to address their artistic projects and daily issues. This training also aims at encouraging artists to use sculpture in artistic works in the public realm, so as to facelift cities in the long-term, thereby uplifting citizens' morale through arts.

Hashem Adnan

Lebanon

OH TO END



“Oh to End” is a multidisciplinary event that reflects on five short works by Samuel Beckett through several angles: performance, visual art, sound and translation. The project will bring together the work of theatre makers, visual artists, sound artists, scenographers and translators for four days in one of the iconic apocalyptic post-war spaces of Beirut.

Zaid Atta

Iraq

HACKING UP BAGHDAD



“Hacking Up Baghdad” is a series of workshops offered by the German design and research studio THE CONSTITUTE to bring new technologies like 3D printing, CNC machining, Virtual Reality and Coding to young Iraqi artists and designers to broaden their work scope. The first workshop in 3D printing is a kick-off to set up an art and technology center in Bait Tarkib.

Dar Alkalima University College of Arts and Culture

Palestine

BETHLEHEM STUDENTS FILM FESTIVAL



Bethlehem Students Film Festival is the first international cinema festival in Palestine specialized in films produced by cinema students around the world.

Echos Electrik

France/Tunisia

NO LOGO



A vagabond, mobile and ephemeral project, No Logo interferes with spaces lacking cultural equity. Two axes guide our approach, the transmission of skills and collaboration with the vital forces of the territories visited. These two axes invite us to co-construct in common and in the direction of the beneficiaries, the actions of exploration and experimentation that constitute the contents of the project.

**Dar Yusuf Nasri Jacir
for Art and Research**
Palestine

**CULTIVATING COMMUNITY
OWNERSHIP OF ART AND
SPACE**



Dar Yusuf Nasri Jacir for Art and Research was inaugurated in 2018. The 127-year old building was restored according to traditional preservation methods while transforming it into a modern space for today's arts. The project will work in collaboration with local artisans to finalize the remaining spaces in order to be fully set up for exhibitions and artistic events.

Sareyyet Ramallah
Palestine

**RAMALLAH
CONTEMPORARY DANCE
FESTIVAL (RCDF)**



The Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival (RCDF), launched in 2006, aims at enhancing discourse and cultural exchange among nations, and introducing the Palestinian audience to contemporary dance, in addition to developing the skills of those working in the field of dance. RCDF succeeded in establishing contemporary dance in Palestine, where approximately 200 dancers operate in the field. Dance performances were produced, and opportunities were offered for dancers to participate in international troupe shows and in workshops and delegations abroad.

YAZAN
Lebanon

**YAZAN PROFESSIONAL
ACTORS TRAINING**



An intensive acting training program tailored to professional and amateur actors, YPAT offers acting techniques based on classic and contemporary theater texts and their dramaturgical analysis. With international professional artists as trainers, the training consists of three independent cycles, each given in one language: Arabic, English and French.

**The Cultural Association
for Film and Audio-Visual
Production Beirut DC**
Lebanon

**THE 10TH EDITION OF
BEIRUT CINEMA DAYS**



The 10th edition of Beirut Cinema Days will run throughout 2019 in Beirut and other regions in Lebanon. As the ultimate meeting place for independent Arab cinema, this edition will feature a diverse program of Arab contemporary films, African films, LGBT films, retrospectives, and off-festival activities, all aiming to build new audiences through partnerships with organizations from all over Lebanon.

**Dawar for Arts and
Development**
Egypt

**ARTS RISE! PROMOTING
COMMUNITY CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN EZBET
KHAIRALLAH**



A team of artists will work with children, youth and adults to promote understanding and connection between people of varied social, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. Stories of personal and communal significance will be gathered and documented using applied theatre, communal song, visual art and street murals. The project will be based in Ezbet Khairallah, one of Cairo's largest informal settlements.

Editions Snoubar Bayrout
Lebanon

**FORTY YEARS OF
CREATION IN ARABIC
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**



The project revolves around the Arabization of "Le Poussin N'Est Pas Un Chien", by French writer Mathilde Chèvre, which addresses the contemporary launch of Arabic children's literature, describes it and archives it. The book release will be accompanied by educational children activities, namely an exhibition of the drawings from the book and training workshops on writing and reading for children.

Collectif Kahraba
Lebanon

**US, THE MOON
AND THE NEIGHBORS**



Nehna Wel Amar Wel Jiran (Us, the Moon and the Neighbors) is a free outdoor festival, in its 6th edition, that creates an international collaborative platform utilizing theatre, dance, puppetry, circus, visual installations and music as a gateway to reconnect with our multiple identities and our heritage, connect communities, audiences, artists and professionals and encourage intergenerational collaborations and encounters.

**CLUSTER-Cairo Lab for
Urban Studies, Training and
Environmental Research**
Egypt

**PUBLIC INTER-LIBRARY
ONLINE TECHNOLOGY-
PILOT**



This project expands CLUSTER's regional library project, PILOT, a bilingual (Arabic/ English) platform that allows art, culture and architecture and related organizations to manage and provide free public access to their collections. The project expands trainings on the PILOT system to new organizations and cities in the MENA region, in tandem with translation workshops developing a regional critical Arabic lexicon for related subjects in architecture, urbanism, art and design.

**Haifa Independent Film
Festival - HIFF**
Palestine

**HAIFA INDEPENDENT FILM
FESTIVAL – 2019**



Haifa Independent Film Festival (HIFF) is a festival aiming to present films from Palestine and the Arab world and to encourage the film industry in Palestine. The purpose is to create a festival that would bring all people together and represent culture from the entire Arab world, thereby making Haifa celebratory for a week involving Palestinian venues and small businesses.

**Contemporary Image
Collective - CIC**
Egypt

POPULAR NARRATIVES



The project proposes different forms of public cultural engagements with two key configurations from which the possibility of another society was imagined in Egypt in the 1960s: the construction of the Aswan High Dam and the Office for African Liberation Movements in Cairo. Taking libraries and personal collections as a point of departure, the project intends to inquire what we can learn from those histories today.

**Hewar Company for
Independent Theater and
Performing Arts**
Egypt

**THEATER IS A MUST
FORUM 2019 6TH EDITION
"CROSSING OVER"**



Theater Is a Must Independent International Theater Forum in Alexandria, Egypt, is an annual platform for contemporary political and socio-political local, regional, and international theater and performing arts productions. The forum also organizes music concerts, artistic workshops, and public discussions about cultural policies, international collaboration and co-production, and the current contemporary theater scene in Europe and the Arab region.

**Aria
(artist residency in Algiers)**
Algeria

MADRASSA #3



Madrasa, in its third cycle, offers alternative education and residencies in curatorial research and practices in contemporary art. It challenges existing dominant models of production and the dynamics of the global art world. The first of its kind in North Africa, Madrasa is now adopting the model of roaming training program in order to continue building a community of young Arab arts professionals.

Romooz Foundation for the Arts and Cultural Development

Yemen

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP FOR YEMENI YOUNG WRITERS



Through a 2-week training workshop, 10 young Yemeni writers will improve their writing techniques and personal voices. A publication will be launched at the end of the workshop, gathering the short stories written by the participants. Male and female participants from all over Yemen will learn and develop together, discuss and cooperate to produce a joint collection of short stories.

Seen Films

Egypt

FIRST FILM FORUM



The First Film Forum is a training program and a development platform for feature films by first- or second-time filmmakers. The program will choose authentic works by innovative filmmakers, and involve them in a creative discussion and development process that ultimately aims to elevate the quality and uniqueness of Egyptian independent film, promote original film voices, and increase their visibility.

Aflam France

6ÈMES RENCONTRES D'AFLAM



For its 6th edition, «Les Rencontres d'Aflam» continues to promote the cinema from the MENA area. The program will be screened in Marseille and its suburbs and will be accompanied by panel discussions, masterclasses and workshops organized in partnership with local institutions.

Omnes vzw Belgium

ARAB CARTOON FESTIVAL WORKSHOP PROGRAM



The project comprises a series of satellite workshops that span over a period of one year, in alignment with the Omnes flagship initiative, The Arab Cartoon Festival. Artists from the Arab world will work very closely with international artists to unfold ways through which artistic forms of expression can challenge the existing perceived lack of cultural identity.

Shubbak: A Window on Contemporary Arab Culture

United Kingdom

SHUBBAK FESTIVAL 2019



Shubbak is the UK's largest festival of contemporary Arab culture. Taking place

on a biennial basis, the upcoming festival will take place in London and across the UK in July 2019. An ambitious multi-art form program will showcase some of the best work by Arab artists, including premieres, new commissions, free public realm events and community engaged collaborations.

Training and Regional Events Jurors

Maria Daïf was born in 1972 in Casablanca. She graduated in French literature and in psychoanalysis applied to the literature. She spent more than 15 years in Moroccan Medias as a journalist and chief editor, specialized in feminism, art and culture.

Eager for innovative adventures, she began in 2005 to accompany artistic projects in council and press relations. She was a member for more than 5 years of Young Arab Theater Fund's selection committee as well as of the Art Moves Africa's selection committee.

Her professional adventures have a common engine: the conviction that the access to art and culture is a human right. From December 2015 to November 2018, she brilliantly was the Head Manager of the Touria and Abdelaziz Tazi Foundation, a private fund dedicated to support art and culture in Morocco and its multidisciplinary cultural space L'Uzine, in Casablanca, Morocco. The two institutions are now considered among the most important cultural operators in the country. Maria is one of the most respected and loved cultural operators in Morocco.

Rowaida Al Khulaidi Currently the British Council's Country Manager in Yemen, Rowaida leads the operation in the country at one of its most difficult times, building relationships and engaging with networks of Yemenis.

Prior to her current post, and as a Project Manager, Rowaida led on the planning, development

and delivery of various successful Arts projects and events to build the capacity of Yemeni artists and cultural organizations connecting them to regional and international networks through traditional and creative platforms and encouraging and contributing to local cultural institutions and individual to use the web to reach audiences. In addition to arts, she led on youth and women programs encouraging the use of arts as a mean of social development.

Currently living in Yemen, Rowaida's passion in the arts and social development has led to the establishment and continuity of successful life-changing projects that benefit Yemeni artists, youth and women alike and cultivating art at times of conflict to share untold stories and show Yemen that most people do not know, in contrast to the one appearing in news headlines.

Rim Naguib holds a PhD in Sociology from Northwestern University (Illinois, USA), and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS). As an academic, she is interested in analyzing the mechanisms of cultural hegemony and the roots of nationalist imaginations, but also tracing exceptional and counter-nationalist trajectories.

Beside academic research, she has a passion for comics, and has co-translated two graphic novels into Arabic (Zahra's Paradise and Les Meilleurs Ennemis). She has also contributed in a forthcoming collection of graphic interpretations of four women's experiences in the Egyptian uprising of 2011. Wishing to combine socio-historical research with her love of visual literature, she is now in the process of producing her own graphic novel about counter-nationalist trajectories in interwar Alexandria.

Rim has taught in various initiatives

aiming to take the critical social sciences outside the closed and conventional academic institutions, such as Mobtadaa, a project targeting high school students in Egypt, and the Cairo Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CILAS).

As an alumnus of the United World Colleges (UWC) and a believer in its educational mission, she has been heading the Egyptian UWC National Committee for nine years, conducting yearly selections of Egyptian high school students to receive scholarships and enroll in the schools of this global educational movement.

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship

Institutions Descriptions

Damascus Theatre Lab Syria

Field of Work: **Performing Arts**
Management team: **Oussama Ghanam and Dima Abazah**



Damascus Theater Lab (DTL) is an independent artistic entity that was founded in 2010. Its objective is to work towards establishing a theater that is based on creative and artistic research into the modern trends in theater production, the relation between dramaturgy and acting, and the current relationship that links theater to social reality. It organizes workshops with theater and cinema professionals in Syria and motivates young people to produce their own shows.

Nowhere Online Music Platform

Egypt

Field of Work: **Music**
Management team: **Emad Mabrouk and Yahia Abou-Shousha**



Established in 2014, Nowhere Online Music Platform aims to overcome the usual obstacles in art and cultural events that are determined by limited spatial, temporal and material dimensions. Platform works on organizing cultural and artistic events through the Internet, inviting musicians from Egypt and the Arab world, along with a number of countries participating in Platform events, to present their art works, and organize lectures online, thus allowing for their archiving online.

Photopia

Egypt

Field of Work: **Photography**
Management team: **Marwa Abou Leila and Reham El Sheimy**



PHOTOPIA is an independent full-fledged school for photographers operating since 2012 in Cairo (Korba, Heliopolis). Photopia is founded on the basis of bridging young talents in photography with more established ones. Its objectives are to offer unmatched photography education by photography masters in each genre; to raise the standard of photography in the region; to expose local photographers to regional and global markets; and to publish photo books that document powerful photography on a non-digital form.

Minwal Theatre Company Lebanon

Field of Work: **Performing Arts**
Management team: **Jad Hakawati**
and **Roaa Bzeih**



Minwal Theatre Company was founded in Beirut in 2014 as a result of the need to combine efforts in strengthening, researching and developing frameworks for theatre productions and programs. It aims to contribute to an increase in Lebanese theatrical productions that has high artistic quality; to create artistic opportunities and practice that activate the role of local youth to defend their social and cultural rights; and to create a platform for private and public schools in different regions in Lebanon. For Minwal theatre is the typical space to exercise democracy. Contributing to the Lebanese theatrical scene reinforces theatre as a profession, and Minwal's work also tackles identity and memory.

Zawya Cinema and Distribution Egypt

Field of Work: **Cinema**
Management team: **Youssef Shazli**
and **Ahmed Sobky**



Misr International Films (MIF) launched Zawya in March 2014 as one of Egypt's first art-house cinemas, located in Downtown's Cinema Odeon in Cairo. Zawya's mission is to provide an alternative to the commercial film experience in Egypt and to celebrate and promote the artistic elements of the medium, thus catering to an increasing demand for local and international art-house films. It provides a platform for emerging

local and Arab filmmakers with a focus on local independent films to encourage. Having organized screenings in multiple venues outside of Cairo, Zaywa aims to eventually grow into a series of cinema screens spread out across the country.

Beirut Art Residency Lebanon

Field of Work: **Visual Arts**
Management team: **Amar Zahr and**
Nathalie Ackawi



Founded in 2015, the Beirut Art Residency (BAR) is a non-profit association that is committed to creating opportunities for international and local artists through residencies, local exhibitions, and public interventions. By collaborating with like-minded cultural institutions, BAR continues to pursue the stimulation of the country's intellectual and cultural stance. With a core focus on the professional growth of artists from all disciplines, the residency encourages artists to venture beyond their usual practice and to create links with local residents of Beirut to engage on a wider international discourse surrounding contemporary art.

Atelier Kissaria Morocco

Field of Work: **Visual Arts**
Management team: **Hicham Bouzid**
and **Amina Mourid**



Established in 2016 by a collective of young cultural practitioners, Atelier Kissaria is a space dedicated to visual art production. It aims to be active in the cultural development of Tangier and views arts and culture as the keys to a prosperous social and economic development; allowing for social cohesion and territorial integration. It offers a space for experimentation, a laboratory through which artists, artisans, and researchers meet, exchange and produce new experimental practices related to printed image and objects.

SJ Productions Palestine

Field of Work: **Music**
Management team: **Samer Jaradat**
and **Ehab Haniyah**



Established in 2012, SJ Productions began as a music production company and eventually became one of the longest and only standing entities that is specialized in music production in Palestine. They believe that independent music is one of the most important means of liberation, independence and respect for others; a tool that can bring people together and uplift communities. In addition to developing a new system for selling albums and products of bands, artists are accompanied by a dedicated media campaign. SJ Productions has more than 30 sale points distributed throughout the West Bank, the 1948 territory (Occupied lands) and Gaza Strip.

Arts and Culture Entrepreneurship Jurors

Ahmed El Attar, is an 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) and the Arab Arts Focus. 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) and is a Chevening scholar and a Clore Leadership Programme alumnus (UK- 2009), a CEC Artslink resident (USA – 2013) and a National Arts Strategies (NAS), Executive

directors program alumnus (USA- 2014/15). His theatre work includes: Life is beautiful or waiting for my uncle from America (2000), Mother I want to be a millionaire (2004), F**k Darwin or how I have learned to love socialism (2007) and On the importance of being an Arab (2009), The Last Supper (2014) 'Before the Revolution' (2017), and 'Mama (2018) and has been performed in the most prestigious theatres and festivals around the world: Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Sweden, Portugal, Germany, Belgium, Holland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Croatia, Montenegro, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Russia and the UAE.

Khadija El Bennaoui is a cultural practitioner and consultant working at the intersection of artistic practice, cultural policy and civil society with focus on the global south. She collaborated with international development agencies in Africa, the Arab world and Cuba for which she implemented various missions in those regions. El Bennaoui played a major role in developing support for the mobility of cultural practitioners within Africa, as the director of Art Moves Africa (AMA) mobility fund. She was also consultant to the Young Arab Theatre Fund (YATF), convening and managing four successful and important symposia for members of independent arts and culture spaces in Middle East & North Africa (MENA). El Bennaoui is the author of the chapter "Surviving the paradoxes of mobility", commissioned as part of the 2018 Global Report monitoring the implementation of the 2005 UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Moukhtar Kocache is an independent advisor and consultant with expertise in curatorial practice, media, philanthropy and cultural and civil society development. His most recent partners and clients include Open Society Foundations,

International Media Support, Danish Center for Culture and Development, Salzburg Global Seminars, Philanthropy for Social Justice and Peace Network, Art Omi, Hivos, Sundance Institute, StoryCorps, A.M. Qattan Foundation and The Drosos Foundation. From 2004 to 2012 he was Program Officer at the Ford Foundation's regional office in Cairo. During his tenure he worked on the development and sustainability of arts and culture spaces, networks and service infrastructure. He also programmed and managed a cluster of grants that supported alternative and emerging media platforms and media reform initiatives, as well as grants that supported the development of local philanthropy in the MENA region. He led strategy designs and programming in support of Palestinian civil society and gender equity regionally. Towards the end of his term at Ford, he oversaw over \$15 million of investments in active grants to dozens of organizations in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Turkey, Europe and the United States. From 1998 to 2004 he was Director of Programs and Services at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council in New York, a leading arts council in the US where he developed residency programs, art in the public realm initiatives, exhibitions, publications, conferences and seminars as well as workshops and resources for individual artists and small arts organizations. During his tenure at LMCC, he directly supervised and nurtured the creative processes of hundreds of artists, media producers and organizations. He is the co-founder of Rawa: Creative Palestinian Communities Fund, a participatory initiative that supports Palestinian grassroots to creatively solve community development challenges. Moukhtar has served on the board of the Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement at the American University in Cairo since 2012 and has been a board member of the Open Society Foundation's Arab Regional Office

since 2017. In 2018, he joined the board of International Media Support. He is the author of Creation Out of Crisis, A Historic Moment to Leverage Arts & Culture's Contributions to Social Change in the Arab Region and several other reports on arts and culture and social justice philanthropy; he is also a regular lecturer and keynote speaker at educational institutions and arts and civil society fora. His current interests include the sustainability of independent creative platforms, cultural and social justice philanthropy, political philosophy and policy, alternative institutional structures, memory, film and material culture. He holds a BA in International Relations with a focus on diplomacy in the Eastern Mediterranean and an M.A. in Art History & Nonprofit Management.

2018 Jurors

Adania Shibli / Adnen Jdey / Ahmad El Attar / Ahmed El Maanouni / Alia Mossallam / Alya Sebti / Bashar Murkus / Carine Doumit / Diana El Jeiroudi / Hala Omran / Hamdi Makhoul / Hoor Al-Qasemi / Ismail Nashef / Khadija El Bennaoui / Khaled Amin / Kristen Lubben / Maan Abu Taleb / Maria Daif / Maya Issam Kesrouany / Mohamed Somji / Moukhtar Kocache / Najwa Ben Shatwan / Omar Fertat / Rana Elnemr / Reda Benjelloun / Rim Naguib / Rima Khcheich / Rowaida Al Khulaidi / Shukri Al Mabkhout / Tarek Abou El Fetouh / Walid Sadek / Zeina G. Halabi

2017–2018 Readers

Ahmed El Maanouni / Ali Adawy / Alice Kharoubi / Amanda Abi Khalil / Amer Shomali / Azza Chaabouni / Bachar Murkus / Basil Khalil / Bassam El-Barouni / Dounia Bensliman / Driss Ksseikis / Esra'a El Shafei / Fadi Abi Samra / Faten Farhat / Geith El-Amine / Hala Galal / Hassan Darsi / Ikbal Zalila / Jihan El Tahri / Khaled Hourani / Khaled Malas / Khaled Saghie / Khalid Abdallah / Kinan Idnawi / Lina Abyad / Mai Abou elDahab / Michele Tyan / Moez Mrabet / Mohamed El Hawajiri / Mohammed Lotfy / Mohammad Soueid / Nanda Mohamed / Nadjma Benchalabi / Nesreen Hussein / Nouha Ben Yebdri / Omar Abi Azar / Orwa Nyrabia / Ossama Mohamed / Peter Fares / Rabah Mezouane / Raed El Khazen / Saima Samoud / Suha Arraf / Tahar Chikhawi / Tamer El Said / Zied Zouari

AFAC Board of Trustees



AFAC is privileged to have an esteemed Board of Trustees made up of the following members:

Dr. Ghassan Salame, Dr. Nabil Qaddumi, Dr. Suzanne Wettenschwiler, Hani Kalouti, Sawsan Al-Fahoum Jafar, Abla Lahoud, Amr Ben Halim, Olfat Al-Mutlaq Juffali, Elias Khoury, Farouk Mardam Bey, Roxane Zand, and Oussami Rifahi

Convening twice per year, the Board has continued to offer guidance and support in promoting AFAC within their own networks and communities.

AFAC Team

AFAC's operational team is made up of eleven members, based in Beirut.



Rima Mismar
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rima was appointed Executive Director of AFAC in 2016 building on her extensive experience within AFAC as Deputy Director. Rima 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 produced by and broadcasted on Al-Arabiya channel. Rima has joined the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) in June 2011 as the Film Programs Manager and in 2015 was appointed Deputy Director.

Heba Hage-Felder
SENIOR PROGRAMS MANAGER

Heba joined AFAC end 2016 and is responsible for institutional development and overall management of new initiatives and programs. She has twenty years of experience in development and institutional capacity building. Heba worked with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs for ten years – first at headquarters in Bern between 2006 and 2011, supporting humanitarian aid and development efforts in the Middle East, and then as director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Lebanon (2011-2016). Her work experience between 1996 and 2006 covered initiatives in peace building, youth and community initiatives, production of knowledge resources, as well as eco-tourism. She worked with diverse local and international organisations such as Search for Common Ground in Washington DC and in Jordan, Save the Children in Lebanon, Arab Resource Collective in Lebanon, and UNOPS in Geneva supporting a peace building program in Rwanda, as well as being a co-founder and volunteer coordinator of Mada, a local NGO in Lebanon. She has conducted independent consultancy work with UN and international donor agencies. Heba has a Master's degree in International Conflict and Peace Studies (University of Notre Dame, Indiana), and a Bachelor's in International Affairs (Lebanese American University, Byblos). Heba was born in Ghana, raised in West Africa and has lived in several countries. She is fond of discovering diverse artistic works from the region and internationally and personally enjoys writing and visual storytelling.

Cathy Khattar

GRANTS MANAGER

Cathy joined AFAC in July 2012. She 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 to date has published 9 books. Cathy also animates creative writing workshops in Arabic for children.

Soleil Gharbieh

GRANTS MANAGER

Soleil graduated with a B.A. in French Literature (2008) from the Lebanese University. She joined AFAC as a Grants manager; before that she worked at CIEL, a book distribution company, from 2008 until 2014. As Ciel's Catalogue Manager and then Book Buyer, Soleil focused on promoting literature in Lebanon and at regional and international book fairs. She was especially focused on supporting the development of the literature scene in Lebanon by providing opportunities for new and upcoming Arab authors. In 2014, Soleil married and moved to Egypt where she became heavily involved in the local independent music scene there. As Programs Manager for the Cairo Jazz Club Agency (CJC Agency), she worked on developing and managing new programs to support the growth and development of young musicians. Her projects included the 15 Minutes of Fame showcase at the bi-weekly Fel Park, an event that fused family-centered picnics and live concerts, and Mawaweel, the annual Ramadan festival at Cairo's Darb 1718 which combined culture, music and handicraft arts. Through her role at CJC Agency, Soleil has also consulted on various music-related projects in Egypt. In 2016, she was accepted in Goethe's Kulturakademie and spent six weeks in a specialized training program aimed at connecting Arab cultural managers with arts scenes in Berlin, Leipzig and Hamburg.

Reda Elhouchaimi

GRANTS COORDINATOR

Reda is a filmmaker and a script writer. She collaborated with many script writing collectives in Syria and Lebanon. Reda holds a bachelor degree in Law and has a rich experience in both social and cultural fields. She was as a field coordinator at Intersos – an Italian NGO funded by UNHCR - where she followed-up the awareness and protection efforts targeting vulnerable children and gender based violence survivors. Most recently, Reda worked as a community manager at Sadeem competition for Arab influencers before joining AFAC as a grants coordinator in 2018.

Rachad Chamoun

CONTENT MANAGER

Rachad 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.

Rana Kobeissi

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Rana Kobeissi has joined AFAC as Communications Officer in July 2018. Armed with more than 15 years of experience in communication in the UAE, Belgium and Lebanon, Rana has managed the advertising campaigns and communication needs of iconic brands such as Nivea, Mercedes and Nescafé. Rana graduated from the American University of Beirut with a BA and an MA in Political Studies, before embarking on a career in marketing and advertising in 2003. She has occupied senior client servicing roles in major advertising agencies, such as Viola Communications, DRAFTFCB Belgium and Ogilvy Brussels. In 2014, she returned to Lebanon and joined GlobeMed Group as Communications Manager, managing the communication needs of GlobeMed's 12 operations in the MENA region until 2017.

Nada Bou Antoun

ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Nada joined AFAC as an Accounting Manager in August 2016. She is a Certified Public Accountant from the State of Colorado since 2010, with a BA in Accounting & Auditing from the Lebanese University. She has more than 10 years of experience in Accounting and Lebanese taxes. Before joining AFAC, Nada worked with a group of companies that specialized in trading commodities and agriculture, operating outside Lebanon.

Imad Roumi

FINANCE COORDINATOR

Imad joined AFAC in December 2018. He studied Business & Finance at La Sagesse University, and obtained a certification in Financial Accounting from the Institute of Management Accountants (USA) in 2014. Imad possesses more than 7 years of experience in the accounting/finance, including corporate, NGO and freelancing.

Maha Kays

PROGRAM MANAGER

Maha Kays is a Visual Artist and Associate Professor at the School of Visual Arts at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts ALBA. She obtained a national higher diploma in plastic arts from the Beaux-Arts School of Paris (2014), a Master's degree in cinema studies from the Saint-Joseph University of Beirut (2012) and participated in several courses on art preservation and restoration at the École du Louvre in Paris (2015). Her work has been exhibited at several institutions in Lebanon, France, Greece and Japan and her writings and work have been featured in numerous catalogues and publications. Before joining AFAC, Maha was the Associate Curator of a two-year cultural program in partnership with the Beaux-Arts School of Paris, the Higher National School of Architecture of Versailles, La Maréchalerie Contemporary Art Center in Versailles and several Lebanese institutions including the Matta Foundation and the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts ALBA. During her career, she has worked as a Researcher at Centre Pompidou Paris as well as Fund Manager at several cultural institutions in Lebanon and abroad. As Program Manager at AFAC, she is responsible for research and critical analysis.

Julie Terzian

OFFICE MANAGER

Julie joined AFAC in November 2015. She graduated with a Baccalureat Technique (BT) degree in Administration and Accounting at the Polyglot Technical institute in Beirut. She worked as an accountant at the Lebanese Embassy in Lagos, Nigeria, and then for several years, she worked mainly in the hospitality sector, focusing on administration and finance in addition to setting up three restaurants in Lagos and Yerevan.



AFAC ARAB FUND FOR
ARTS AND CULTURE
الصندوق العربي
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TO CONTACT US

Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
Sursock Street, Charles Aoun Building
Saint Nicolas Stairs
P.O.Box Beirut 13-5290
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 00 961 1 218901

Email: info@arabculturefund.org