

# **b.** **annual report** **2017**

## index

03	introduction
12	program of exhibitions
50	parallel events
56	education and outreach
66	2018 exhibitions program
78	bac in figures
82	artist editions
84	our donors

Beirut Art Center is a laboratory that renders large questions into modest but strategic gestures, so that one can grasp them along different scales and different levels of listening. The program is built with artists who strive to reflect on today's world, and to radically interrogate the conditions of their art – the social context, the status of representations, and the forms and politics of their practice. BAC is therefore dedicated to experimenting and producing in equal measure, and we are proud of this year's accomplishments.

Beirut Art Center aims to produce and display works of art and exhibitions that speak many different languages – some of which are not listed yet. These ever-changing languages, which I will refer to as “forms,” are not created with the intent of targeting a majority; this would result in the language becoming uniform. On the contrary, they are addressed to anyone, in other words the most unexpected people with no predetermination whatsoever. Speaking a new language, drawing a new circle of references, this is what artists are doing with the building of forms and that is why these forms are meaningful, and why we are keen on showing many different media and practices.

Our aim is to facilitate the circulation of art, ideas and questions in and out of Lebanon and create a space where nationalism does not come into play, or even the notion of “belonging” to a place; rather, it is an open world where we accept our position as foreigners and therefore are able to learn and share with other foreigners. “The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land. The tender soul has fixed his love on one spot in the world; the strong man has extended his love to all places; the perfect man has extinguished his.” The previous citation is by Hugo of St. Victor, a monk from Saxony (c. 1096-1141), as cited by Eric Auerbach in *Philology and Weltliteratur* (1952).





This year has seen a dense program with six different exhibitions, gathering more than 24 artists. I curated a series of four solo shows, quite different in scale and process: Rana ElNemr, Tony Chakar, Marwa Arsianos and Allan Sekula. In addition to this, BAC extended two invitations to collaborate on specific events with regional institutions – these were *Both Sides of the Curtain* by Mophradat, and Act II of Christine Tohmé’s Sharjah Biennial, *An Unpredictable Expression of Human Potential*, an exhibition curated by Hisham Khalili.

The 2017 program was inaugurated by Tony Chakar and Rana ElNemr’s dual exhibition. Coming from different backgrounds and generations, their exhibitions dealt with similar topics, but using different strategies and methods. Both artists address the absurd urban situation of their respective countries, Lebanon and Egypt, as a result and a metaphor of their political situation. They criticize architecture as a way to impose on nature and human relationships, and stress the incompleteness of words and images. Chakar and ElNemr are especially interested in mechanical representation --photography and film, as well as social media --and the way these are highly dependent on information and knowledge. Faced with these artists’ work, one cannot ignore where these images are coming from, and the reality of their political context.

By hosting Tony Chakar’s *On Becoming Two*, BAC opened its space to an important figure of Beirut’s art scene, one who collaborated at length with the now-famous generation of artists that appeared during and after the Lebanese War, and defined Lebanon’s art scene since then. Chakar has no previous studio practice, preferring to work through texts, lectures, performances and publications. His first solo show, *On Becoming Two*, involved different types of media, and represented an important production for BAC. The artist conceived and staged seven different productions simultaneously. The result was a very strong exhibition, in addition to some powerful walks led by Chakar every week, which triggered meaningful conversations about the Beirut scene from the 90s onwards. In parallel, a talk by art critic Ghalya Saadawi (“*To Make Mountains Out Of Fields: One Rewriting Of Beirut’s Postwar Contemporary Art*”) served as commentary and questioned the status of art in war circumstances. This particular strand differs from the cosmetic sanctification, or spectacularization, of art related to war traumas, as is often encouraged by the art market. Chakar’s conscious decision to step away from this, as well as his reluctance up until now to produce “art objects,” has placed him in a particular





position. Simultaneously, Rana ElNemr's *A Chapter of Synonyms* on the upper floor was her first solo show in Beirut. Rana ElNemr is an important new figure of Cairo's art scene; even if photography is dominant in her practice, she confronts it with other media – her very consistent production of mechanical images is associated with writing, film, installation and sculpture. The show was articulated along two spaces, one lit and the other obscure, one that only displayed prints and the other shadows, projections, imprints, sound, plants and objects. The projection and games of shadows that ElNemr produces are tense and reinforce the fragmentary status of the images: for her, it is the incompleteness of a representation that provides meaning.

This reflection about photography effectively paved the way for further focus on this medium, with the monograph of Allan Sekula that took place during the summer. Sekula, who died prematurely in 2013, was internationally famous for having deeply transformed the status and history of photography with his seminal book *Photography Against the Grain* (1984). Through his exploration of the maritime world, Sekula also tackled the issue of globalization in depth. The exhibition's title, *Photography at Work*, was a way to address the capabilities of this medium, while insisting at the same time on the manner in which this artist consistently dealt, in his early pieces, with the subject of working conditions and their representations. These aspects were very present in what was effectively the first substantial survey of Sekula's work since his death, gathering more than 50 works. I adapted a project that I was working on with him since 2011, relying on loans from museums and collectors in Europe, to show how the political and social concerns deployed in the early pieces were still relevant in more recent ones, and how these concerns were highly accurate in today's world. In fact, the Californian segment of Sekula's works from the 70s brilliantly illustrate the shifts of capitalism up to the subprime crisis and resulting issues of globalization.

In order to stress this aspect, the exhibition contained three large documentation spaces, including books, videos, digital archives and graphs realized by AUB students, giving artistic, historical, social and economical elements of contextualization for each





series of Sekula’s work. In this manner, education was effectively introduced into the curatorial process, and provided a respite from the chronological display.

Beirut Art Center produced a catalog of the exhibition, in Arabic and English, now distributed by Les Presses du Réel. This exhibition was also an occasion to successfully challenge museum conditions in BAC, through a very strict policy on preservation with respect to light, humidity and temperature conditions.

At the same time, young Lebanese artist Marwa Arsianos’s exhibition *Falling is Not Collapsing, Falling is Extending* was shown on the first floor. This project examined the “crazy real estate processes that mark the neoliberal project born in the years immediately following the end of the Lebanese civil war,” and constituted the second phase of a collaboration that began at Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. A film, some large drawings and models made up an installation that represented Beirut’s sea landfills, “floating” in the exhibition space. In the same manner that the models in the exhibition space are out of scale and seemingly useless, these lands and projects are outrageous and toxic.

The first invitation hosted by BAC this year was an exhibition entitled *Both Sides of the Curtain*, which displayed works dealing with theatricality and performativity. The first four days of the exhibition consisted of some well-attended concerts, following which attendance diminished. The resulting challenge in this case consisted of gathering a public around performance, when performances were not taking place. Thanks to the education program, we were able to organize some workshops using the space of the show itself, which resulted in heightened attendance at several instances during the exhibition.

We ended the year with Hisham Khalili’s *An Unpredictable Expression of Human Potential*, featuring several young artists from Europe and North Africa. Khalili’s text and project saw him stepping into postcolonial discourses in order to interrogate contemporary youth culture in Europe, and examine its relationship with the social climate. Some artists established links with Beirut in their works. A beautiful brochure accompanied the exhibition and provided further elements of reflection on it.

We ended December with a five-day critical writing workshop for adults, led by author Fadi Tofeili. This project is very important to

us. We wish not only to encourage an open critical discussion about art in Beirut, but to facilitate the writing in Arabic about art. We are planning another similar session in 2018.

We are very proud of the growing attendance of the youth at BAC. This is not a fortuitous event: the program of exhibitions, events and workshops certainly plays its part. The emphasis placed on education is also important. Caline Matar and Louai Khakani, both students from two different universities in Beirut, are consolidating long-term partnerships with public and private schools, as well as with different groups of people living in and out of Beirut. The aim is for each group of people, consisting mostly of children and teenagers, to attend several exhibitions during the year, several years in a row, in order to build a familiar relationship with art and with BAC. We are keen to work with teachers, so they can appropriate knowledge from the exhibitions and use it in their own school syllabi. We have also reinforced our exchanges with different universities. We do not want to mix the position of the curatorial team and that of the teacher; it is important to incorporate different voices in the dialogues about art. By including the teacher in the conversation, we can enlarge the range of entries for pupils and students. Our main focus is the public of tomorrow.

This year’s program brings strong solos shows: Mexico-based artist Francis Alÿs; painter Danielle Genadri, a Beirut resident and teacher at AUB; artist Zineb Sedira, who lives between London and Algiers; and unique Danish artist Joachim Koestler.

A large-scale video installation by Naeem Mohaiemen, about the initiative of non-aligned countries, is shown at the same time as Alÿs’s exhibition. In April we will present *Space Edits (the trouble with language)*, a group show revolving around Guy de Cointet and other artists whose work connects text and poetry with space -- including Marcel Broodthaers, Vito Acconci and Richard Artschwager, as well as younger artists such as Nairy Baghramian, Baris Dogrusöz, Nesrine Khodr and Ieva Saudargaitė. There will be a performance by Trajall Harrell and a screening of Fernand Deligny’s films with an introduction by Catherine Perret, among other events.

January has seen the final launching of our beautiful new website, in both Arabic and English. In addition to being very user friendly and easy to process, it displays larger images and carries a massive archive. The identity from Vit-e and the graphic design by Benedikt Reichenbach provide more space for visual information and for linking



different entries and documentation.

2018 will be the year of many voices and travels. Francis Aljys' show *Knots'n Dust* will travel to Ikon, in Birmingham, in June. This is an important event, as it will further our reputation abroad, as well as generate some income for BAC. Zineb Sedira's solo show is devised in partnership with Sharjah Art Foundation, while Joachim Koester's exhibition is a collaboration with Camden Art Center in London.

We will also publish new Arabic translations, like a text by Stuart Hall, a book by Jacques Rancière, among others. Other projects are in the works, as I have invited Marwan Assaf to curate this new collection with me. Last year, I signed a partnership with Les Presses du Réel, which is a supplementary gesture for the circulation of BAC's endeavors; this distributor is extremely present in Europe and the USA, and wishes to release Arabic texts in the near future.

We are initiating a new series of talks and seminar revolving around the future of institutions, in parallel to our researches and discussions about Beirut Art Center's role in the evolution of Beirut today. This discussion will happen professionally, through workshops and subsequent public presentations. This is a very important transition for BAC, since the institution is preparing its big move in 2019.

BAC is going to find some new walls, and reconvene into a new institutional structure with a new direction; after five years in Beirut I will hand over the reins to a new director, with great pleasure and pride. BAC has always faced changes and questioned its role and mission. It will venture further along this path.

Marie Muracciole



Photo: Marco Pinarelli



exhibitions

On Becoming Two  
Tony Chakar

25 January - 26 March 2018

Tony Chakar is an architect, writer and artist who lives and works in beirut. Ever since his first intervention in a public space in 1999, his writings and public speeches have drawn a poetic and critical map of representations. Chakar is concerned with those new forms of symbolic resistance at work in the conflicts ravaging his corner of the world; he is interested in the survival of ideologies and myths involved in, or opposed to liberal thought. Of significant interest to him is the circulation of images and texts on social media, both vernacular and insurrectionary.

Marie Muracciole’s commission to Tony Chakar was to take over Beirut Art Center’s ground floor, and devise his own course in the space of the gallery. The aim of this stratagem is to play with and against a certain architecture and specific context, using as a starting point chakar’s relation to his different practices: architecture, text and language. Every moment of the exhibition represents the material mutation of a specific gesture in his work, from the pages of a book growing to the size of a wall, or a map spread substituting itself to the reconstruction of an event or performative gesture. The exhibition provides the specific framework for a singular voice, one that is embodied in Beirut; a context in which post-war antagonisms and divisions have resulted in complex artistic activity, which in turn gave way to a scene dependent on the requirements and standards of the art market.

*On Becoming Two* is a defense of dissociation, doubt and critical distance. Chakar cites the poet Hölderlin: this conversation that we are. Visitors will have access to a work begun twenty years ago, wherein the examination of beliefs that constitute modernity opens a poetic space, providing in the process a live quality to the sharing of knowledge.

أن تصير اثنين

ON BECOMING TWO

طوني شكر

him, tenderly... Then let

TONY CHAKAR

25.01.2017

26.03.2017

الافتتاح الأربعاء ٢٥ كانون الثاني ٢٠١٧، من الساعة ٦ إلى ٩ مساءً

Opening Wednesday 25 January 2017, 6-9pm

Tuesday • Thursday • Friday

الاثنين • الخميس • الجمعة

12pm to 8pm

١٢ ظهرًا حتى ٨ مساءً

Wednesday

الأربعاء

12pm to 10pm

١٢ ظهرًا حتى ١٠ مساءً

Saturday • Sunday

السبت • الأحد

11am to 6pm

١١ صباحًا حتى ٦ مساءً

BEIRUT ART CENTER

مركز بيروت للفن

1 Jir el Wati, Beirut

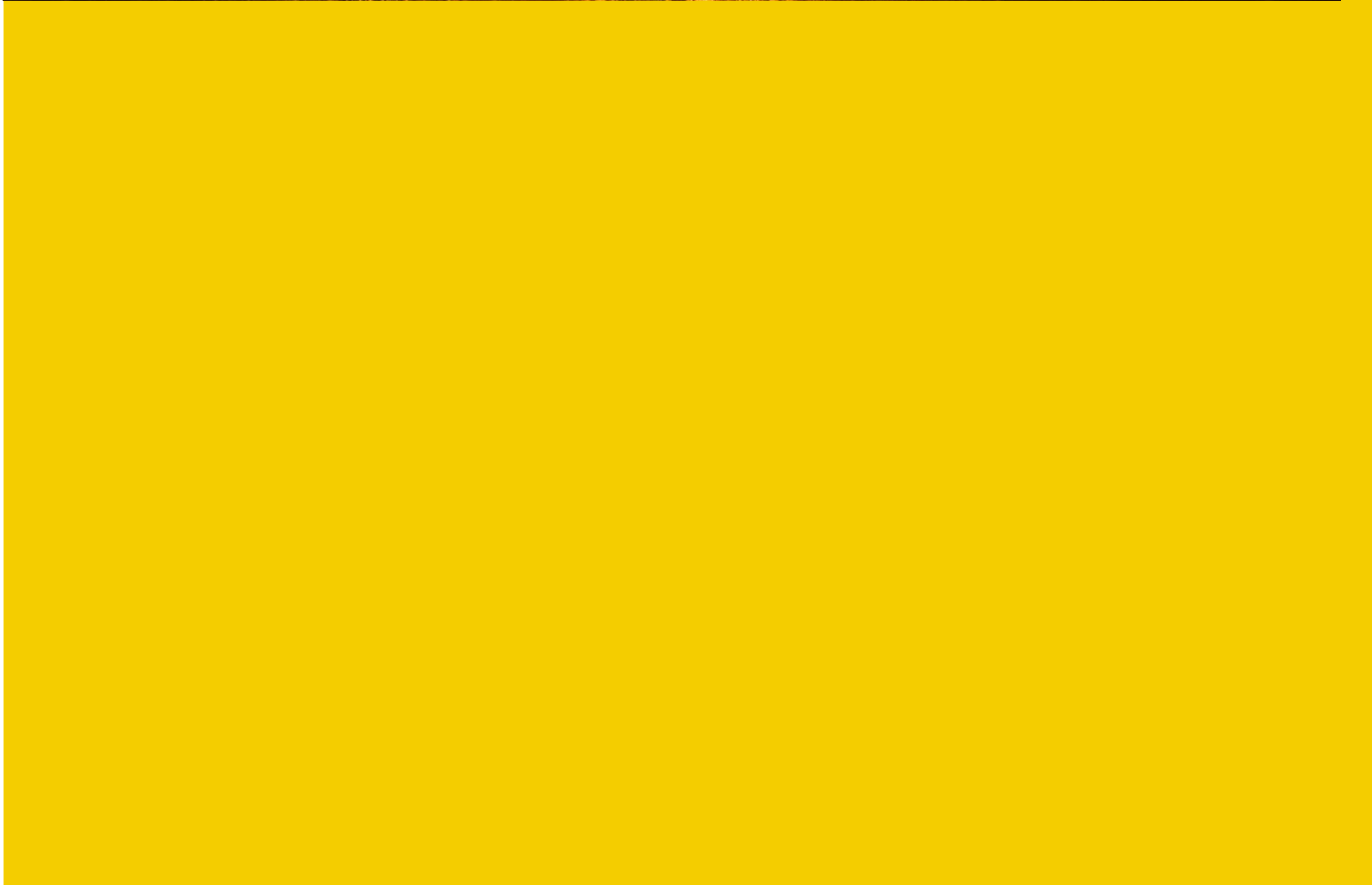
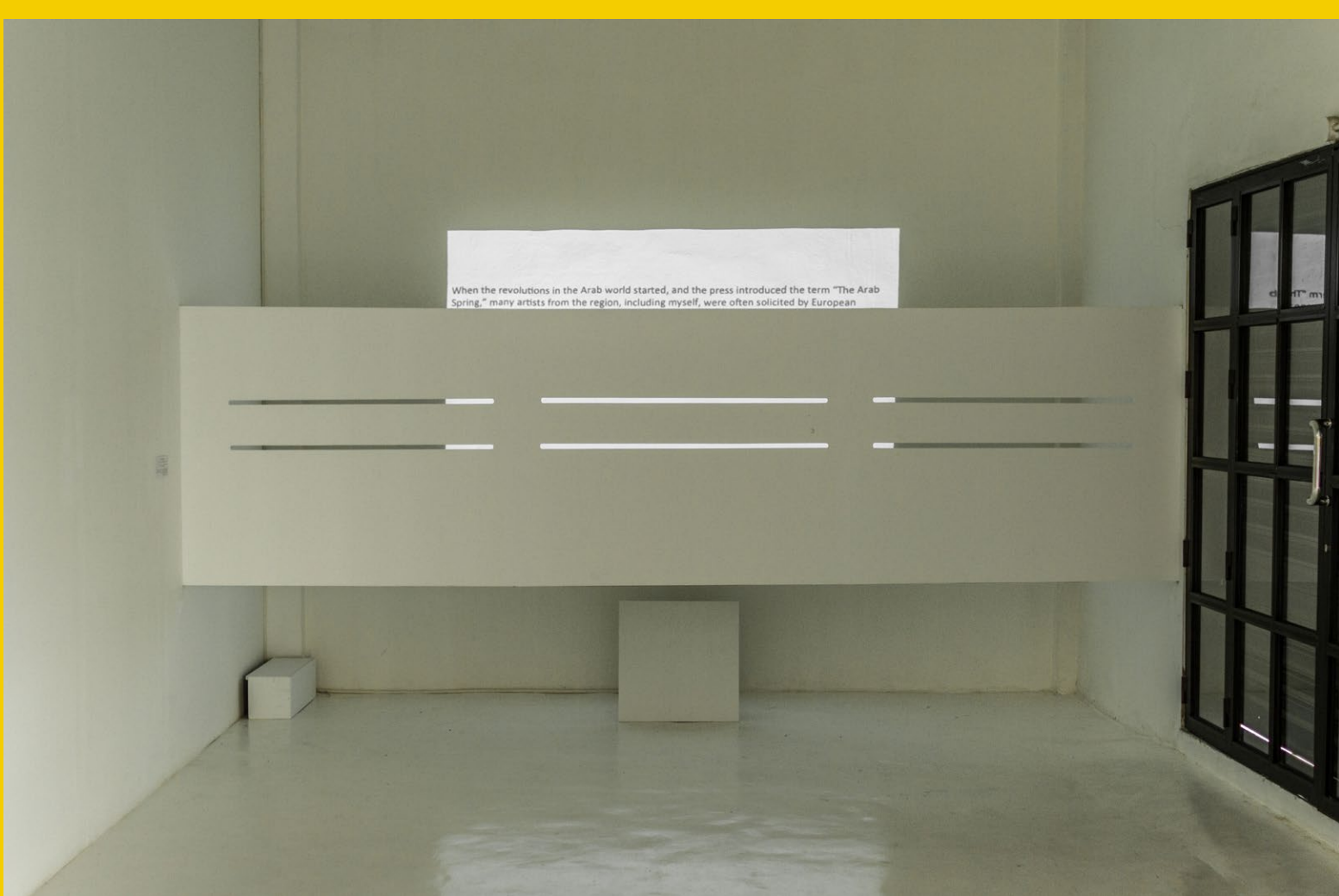
جسر الواطي، بيروت

+961 (0) 1357818 | beirutartcenter.org











*A Chapter of Synonyms*  
Rana ElNemr

25 January - 26 March 2018

Drawing from a series of photographs, videos and notes taken in Cairo, the city in which Rana ElNemr lives, this show connects some of the main urban changes of recent years with the idea of architecture as a double projection. Architecture represents a 'project' of building, but it is also a projection in the sense of an imaginary exchange: a dialogue between space and 'images'. Rana Elnemr notes that architectural photography often augments two-dimensionality, thereby increasing the space in which one is not able to live.

In this exhibition, the artist deals with this issue practically by associating photographs, films, and texts in a conversation between fragments where incompleteness resides and makes sense. The images and meanings that are commonly generated about constructed spaces are supposed to play the roles of 'synonyms', and Rana ElNemr works at disturbing these dynamics. Her images introduce deliberate pauses in the visual discourse on architecture: short observations, texts or anything that remind us that no image is visible without knowledge, be it information or memory. Other disruptions – like a sculpture or a shadow – can enlarge the exchanges between the visual and the knowledgeable, informing and contributing to the development of a project that had begun with assembled in streams of synonyms, a show held in Cairo's Sharjah Art gallery in 2014-15.

فصل من المرادفات  
**A Chapter of Synonyms**  
رنا النمر  
**Rana ElNemr**

**25.01.2017**  
**26.03.2017**

الافتتاح الأربعاء ٢٥ كانون الثاني ٢٠١٧، من الساعة ٦ إلى ٩ مساءً  
Opening Wednesday 25 January 2017, 6-9pm

Tuesday • Thursday • Friday  
الثلاثاء • الخميس • الجمعة  
12pm to 8pm  
١٢ ظهرًا حتى ٨ مساءً

Wednesday  
الأربعاء  
12pm to 10pm  
١٢ ظهرًا حتى ١٠ مساءً

Saturday • Sunday  
السبت • الأحد  
11am to 6pm  
١١ صباحًا حتى ٦ مساءً

**b. BEIRUT ART CENTER**  
**مركز بيروت للفن**  
Jisr el Wati, Beirut  
+961 (0) 1397018 | beirutartcenter.org

Rana ElNemr, Detail from The Ministry of Squares and Roundabouts, 2014 - 2016











## Mophradat · Meeting Points 8: *Both Sides of the Curtain*

12 April - 6 June 2017

The exhibition is the eighth edition of Meeting Points – a multidisciplinary contemporary arts project that takes place every two years in several cities in Europe and the Arab world. Meeting Points is a place to imagine and interrogate models for the production and presentation of contemporary arts, developed through research in the Arab world. Inspired by German artist Oskar Schlemmer's experiments with art at the Bauhaus in the 1920s, Meeting Points aims at inventing ways for new kinds of art to be created and shared between artists and publics. Many of Schlemmer's ideas at the school were developed through social events where costumes and choreographies were put to practical use and tested. It is this logic of considering art as a form of enthusiastic developing and sharing of ideas—an interaction that creates a community—that is shaping Meeting Points into an expedition through different sites and times. Both sides of the curtain began in Cairo last may, moved on to Brussels in december, and now arrives in Beirut for the spring.

A new publication will be launched in parallel to the exhibition titled these are the tools of the present including interviews with Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Doa Aly, Haig Aivazian, Mounira Al Solh, Andeel, Mirene Arsanios, Malak Helmy, Iman Issa, Mahmoud Khaled, Maurice Louca, Jasmina Metwaly, Joe Namy, Nile Sunset Annex, Roy Samaha, Sharif Sehnaoui and Rania Stephan. Edited by Mai Abu Eldahab, November Paynter, and Marnie Slater, designed by Julie Peeters, and published by Mophradat and Sternberg Press.

participating artists  
LAWRENCE ABU HAMDAN  
DOA ALY  
HAIG AIVAZIAN  
MOUNIRA AL SOLH  
ANDEEL  
MIRENE ARSANIOS  
MALAK HELMY  
IMAN ISSA  
MAHMOUD KHALED  
MAURICE LOUCA  
JASMINA METWALY  
JOE NAMY  
NILE SUNSET ANNEX  
ROY SAMAHA  
SHARIF SEHNAOUI  
RANIA STEPHAN

editors  
MAI ABU ELDAHAB  
NOVEMBER PAYNTER  
MARNIE SLATER

design  
JULIE PEETERS

publishers  
MOPHRADAT  
STERNBERG PRESS

MEETING POINTS 8:  
نقاط لقاء ٨:

BOTH SIDES OF THE CURTAIN  
جهتا الستار

مفردات  
Mophradat

من ١٢ نيسان/أبريل  
إلى ٤ حزيران/يونيو ٢٠١٧

أعمال لبسمة الشريف، جوس دي جرويتير  
وهارالد تيس، جان-باسكال فلافيان،  
جوديث هوبف، جولسون كارامصطفى،  
يواكيم كوستر، جو نعمي وملحق غروب  
على النيل

أفلام إخراج فاطمة بوشاك، دورا  
جارسيا، تمار جيماريس، جولسون  
كارامصطفى، يواكيم كوستر، باسم  
مجلي، وفريديريك موزير وفيليب  
شوينجر

عروض لأقزام شرق العجوة، جوزفين  
فوستر مع فيكتور هيريرو، جو نعمي مع  
وليد صادق، هانا كاترين جونز، ملحق  
غروب على النيل مع قنديل، مارني  
سلاتر وزين تايلور

جلسة إستماع مع طارق عطوي، ملك  
حلمي، هانا كاترين جونز، ريمونداس  
ملاشاوسكاس، لينا منذر وسام شلبي

للبرنامج الكامل، يرجى زيارة:  
[www.mophradat.org](http://www.mophradat.org)  
[www.beirutartcenter.org](http://www.beirutartcenter.org)

مركز بيروت للفن  
جسر الواطي، بيروت  
٧٠١٨ ١٣٩ ٩٦٦ (+)

12 April to 4 June 2017

Works by Basma Alsharif,  
Jos de Gruyter & Harald Thys,  
Jean-Pascal Flavien, Judith Hopf,  
Gülsün Karamustafa, Joachim  
Koester, Joe Namy, and Nile  
Sunset Annex

Films by Fatma Bucak,  
Dora Garcia, Tamar Guimarães,  
Gülsün Karamustafa, Joachim  
Koester, Basim Magdy, and  
Frédéric Moser & Philippe  
Schwinger

Performances by The Dwarfs  
of East Agouza, Josephine  
Foster with Victor Herrero,  
Hannah Catherine Jones, Joe  
Namy with Walid Sadek, Nile  
Sunset Annex with Andeel,  
Marnie Slater, and Zin Taylor

And a listening session with  
Tarek Atoui, Malak Helmy,  
Hannah Catherine Jones,  
Raimundas Malašauskas, Lina  
Mounzer, and Sam Shalabi

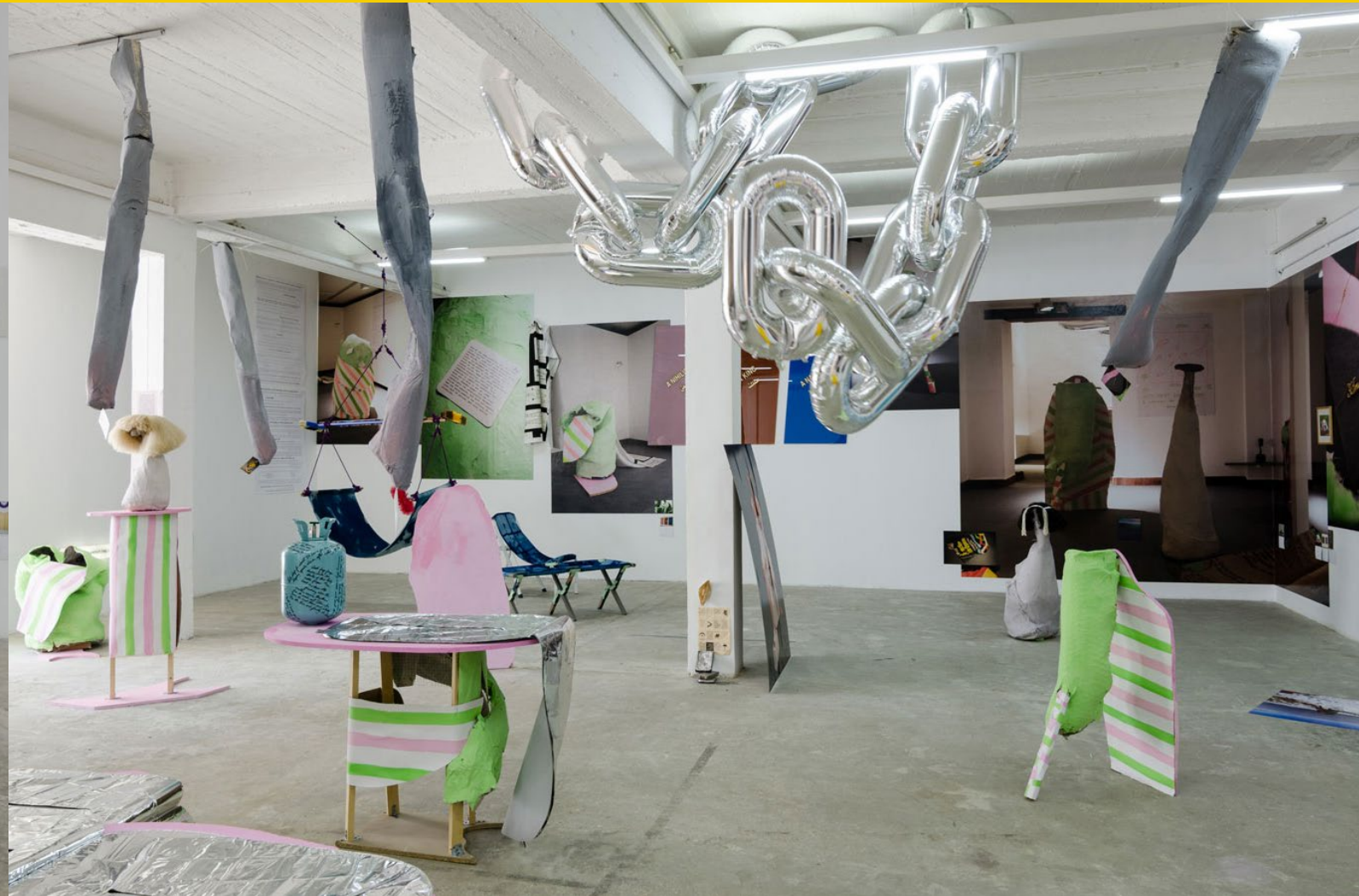
For the full program of events:  
[www.mophradat.org](http://www.mophradat.org)  
[www.beirutartcenter.org](http://www.beirutartcenter.org)

Beirut Art Center  
Jisr El Wati, Beirut  
+961 (0) 139 7018

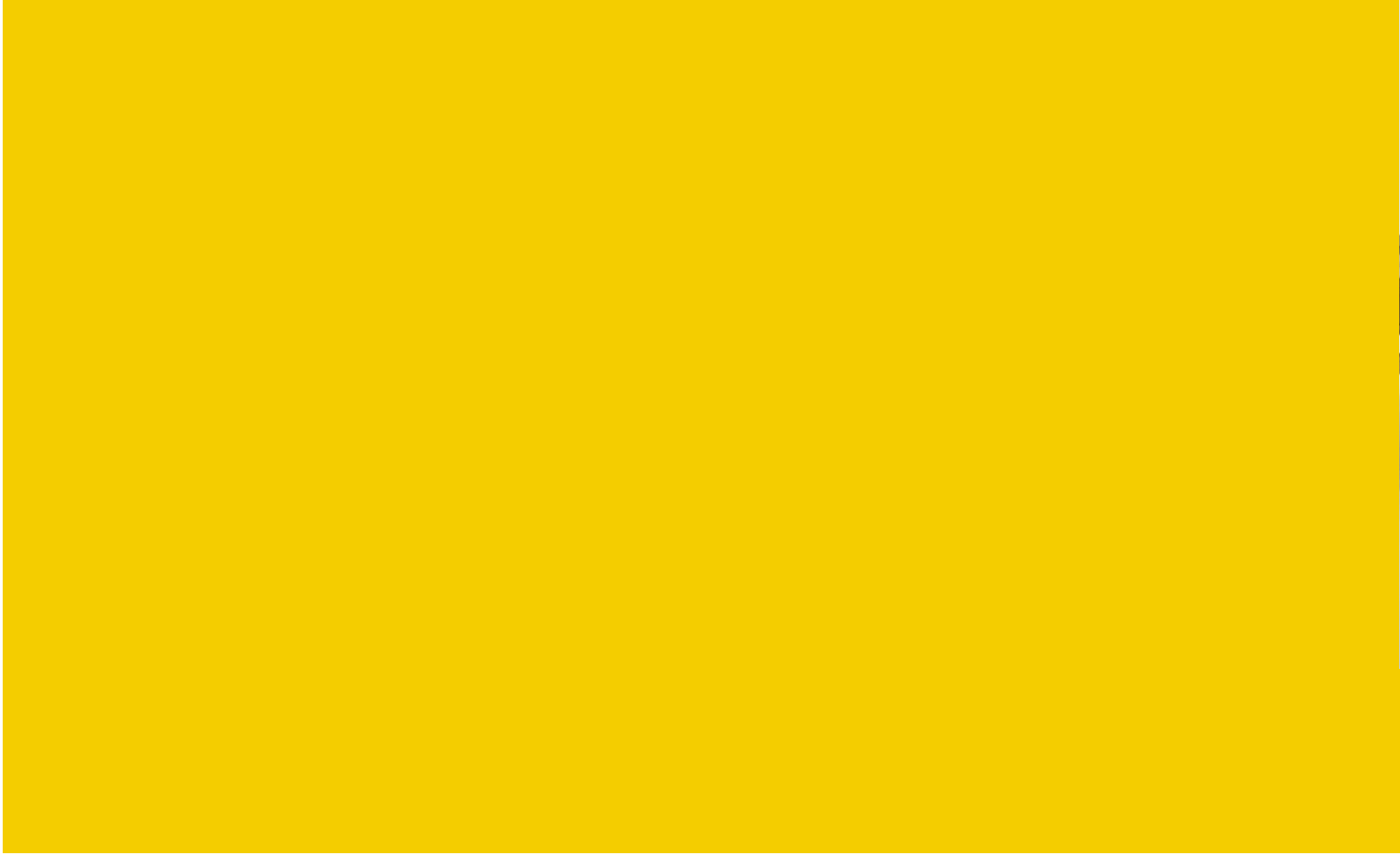
**b. BEIRUT ART CENTER**  
مركز بيروت للفن

بمسانع من / With the support of  
Allianz Kulturstiftung, Beirut Art Center, British  
Council Lebanon, Embassy of Spain in Beirut,  
Embassy of Switzerland in Beirut, Flemish  
Community, Ford Foundation, Institut Français,  
marra.tein, and Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council









Photography at Work  
Allan Sekula

28 June - 29 September 2017

*Photography at Work* shows the work of the late american artist allan sekula, an influential photographer, writer, filmmaker, theorist and critic who died in 2013. Sekula’s works have been a unique reference in debates and conversations about photography, art and politics for over 40 years.

*Photography at Work* will feature over fifty photographic works, slide shows and videos selected from the breadth of Allan Sekula’s artistic practice, and revisited through a set questions that has informed his work and that continue to be relevant today: what can photography do and what is at work with this specific medium? How does photography serve to legitimize and normalize existing power relationships? What havens and temporary escapes from the realm of necessity are provided by photographic means? What resistances are encouraged and strengthened? How is historical and social memory preserved, transformed, restricted and obliterated by photographs? What futures are promised; what futures are forgotten? As Sekula himself contended, these questions concern in the broadest sense “the ways in which photography constructs an imaginary economy.” (Sekula, a. (1983)

Sekula formulated these questions, amongst many others, in the earliest stages of his artistic life. Acknowledging the photographic medium as a tool for power in our contemporary context, Sekula reminds us that the photographic project has been identified from the beginning with “the establishment of global archives and repositories according to models provided by libraries, encyclopedias, zoological and botanical gardens, museums, police files and banks; and that those in their very archival purpose embody the power inherent in accumulation, collection and hoarding as well as the power inherent in the lexicon and rules of a language”.

This exhibition identifies echoes and genealogies within Sekula’s photographic, textual and filmic work in order to highlight the ways in which the long-term vision of his research and obsessions make his work highly pertinent today.



أَلان سِكولا  
الفوتوغرافيا في المعمل  
ALLAN SEKULA  
PHOTOGRAPHY AT WORK

28.06.17 | 29.09.17

b. BEIRUT ART CENTER  
مركز بيروت للفن

الثلاثاء، الخميس، الجمعة  
Tuesday . Thursday . Friday  
١٢ ظهراً حتى ٨ مساءً  
12pm to 8pm

الأربعاء  
Wednesday  
١٢ ظهراً حتى ١٠ مساءً  
12pm to 10pm

السبت، الأحد  
Saturday . Sunday  
١١ صباحاً حتى ٦ مساءً  
11am to 6pm

جسر الواطي، بيروت | Jisr el Wati, Beirut  
+961 (0)1 397 018 | beirutartcenter.org

بدعم من  
with the support of

Anonymous

Yola Noujaim

ASSOCIATION  
PHILIPPE  
JABRE

داعم إعلامي  
media partner

agenda  
culture

PIKASSO

ألان سِكولا، ٢٠١٨، صورة فوتوغرافية، بيان من مؤسسة سِكولا، أليان سِكولا، ٢٠١١، ١ photograph, Courtesy of the Allan Sekula Studio LLC and Galerie Michel Rein, Paris/Brussels.



# ألن يسكولا

## الفوتوغرافيا في المعمل

28.06.17 | 29.09.17

**ALLAN SEKULA** 28.06  
**PHOTOGRAPHY AT WORK**

Photography at Work identifies echoes and genealogies of Allan Sekula's work in photography, writing and film. An American photographer, filmmaker, writer and great traveler, Allan Sekula (1951 – 2013) has been for 40 years a unique reference in the study of photography, art and politics. With over fifty photographs, slide shows, and films, but also documentation and editions chosen from the expanse of Sekula's prolific artistic practice throughout his life time, this exhibition wishes to interlink and contextualize now and here one main question concerning photography: what can it do and what is it at work within this

[illegible]

أثارت مدرسة سكوفا القوتو نواقرية في باديا الأمر على توليق «مواقف» القعية من الحياة اليومية بتطهير فيها، بشكل واضح و مسترسل، ذات الصراع الدائر بين الصالحين والفساديين». وقد عين سكوفا معيشة الضيق الواسع على الساحل الغربي الأمريكي، مسجلا ومشككا في تقاعبه القية السائدة لرحمة الحالة المتأخرين انطلاقا من قرأته للحوالات وأبحاث التشكيل المعنوية تحت تأثير طرقيات الانقضاء العزوم.

[illegible]

تُخرج هذه السيرة بعضين من أواخر الأصداء لزوجها، والذي انتشر مؤخراً، هو حق انتظار العازب  
 (١٩٩٥ - ١٩٩٦) والذي يعالج مظاهر ازدواج ١٩٩٦ الخاصة بظلمة المرأة العازبة، والآن  
 (٢٠٠١) وهو عبارة عن صورة فوتوغرافية واحدة توجز لأحلام والكوابيس التي تلازم  
 عالم معزول محدود فيما أحاطه السياسة بوصفها.

[illegible][illegible]

شكرًا لـ سالي شيرن، ولـ إيلينا ستانكو، ولـ ميشال هيس  
شكرًا لـ جاكوب فان دير بوم  
Thank to Sally Shern, and to the Isacian and Michal Hess  
Special thanks to Burg Diefemaier

in Anselmi, Elise Percharat and Lutz Seewald



100













*Falling is not Collapsing,  
Falling is Extending*  
Marwa Arsanios

28 June - 29 September 2017

Drawing a parallel between two distinct narratives in Beirut’s recent history, Marwa Arsanios’s research looks at the aftermath of the neoliberal project that took shape at the beginning of the 1990s, in the years immediately following the end of the Lebanese Civil War. Starting from a situation that remains present in the recent visual and political memory during the garbage crisis that began in 2014, this exhibition addresses the threatening long-term transformations that are brought about the system of late capitalism, and the local reverberations of this system on Lebanon’s environmental and sociopolitical reality. The exhibition features a film projection, an installation and a series of drawings.

The installation takes the spaces of different garbage dumps around the city of Beirut to look at the accumulation of waste and its relation to strategic real estate development. It is made of different elements; sculptures and topographies, drawings and a film that come together in one spatial installation. The film takes as its starting point the destruction of the building where the artist herself grew up and moves into looking at how rubble is used as a material on garbage dumps, mixed with waste in order to build land extensions that are then turned into real estate havens. It has been one of the strategies used by real estate developers in order to gain land and privatize the seashore. It attempts to look at matter and material in its intrinsic relation to real estate and economy, and to look at the real estate economy from the perspective of matter with all its histories, but furthermore to deal with the viral side of history. The series of drawings of fauna and flora takes the ecosystem of the garbage dumps in order to map out the living beings around these spaces. The topographies also work as a mapping device for the different dumps, land extensions and plans for land extensions, bringing together in one space the different temporalities of these development projects.

# انحدار أفقي مروءة أرسانيوس

## MARWA ARSANIOS

### Falling is not Collapsing, Falling is Extending

28.06.17 | 29.09.17

**b. BEIRUT ART CENTER**  
مركز بيروت للفن

Tuesday . Thursday . Friday  
ظهرًا حتى 8 مساءً 12  
12pm to 8pm

الأربعاء  
Wednesday  
ظهرًا حتى 10 مساءً 12  
12pm to 10pm

السبت . الأحد  
Saturday . Sunday  
صباحًا حتى 6 مساءً 11  
11am to 6pm

جسر تلواطي، بيروت | Jisr el Wati, Beirut  
+961 (0)1 397 018 | beirutartcenter.org

مرءة أرسانيوس، أعشاب متكئة، 2016. رسومات.  
Marwa Arsanios, *Resilient Weeds*, 2016. Drawings.

مرءة أرسانيوس، أعشاب متكئة، 2016. رسومات.  
Marwa Arsanios, *Resilient Weeds*, 2016. Drawings.

**BANQUE LIBANO-FRANÇAISE**  
A partner for your ambitions











Sharjah Biennial 13 • Tamawuj:  
*An Unpredictable Expression  
of Human Potential*

14 October 2017 - 19 January 2018

Rather than asking for solutions and sketching utopias, *An Unpredictable Expression of Human Potential* seeks to respond to the present global moment, one in which a paradigmatic shift can be tasted in the air, where young people are frustrated and protesting against decisions imposed on them by older generations, to an inheritance they did not ask for and did not shape.

Act II is the concluding program of the Sharjah Biennial 13: Tamawuj, featuring exhibitions, performances, talks, films and publications taking place in Beirut between 14 and 22 October 2017.

Act II is co-organized by Sharjah Art Foundation and the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, Ashkal Alwan.

- PEDRO BARATEIRO  
QUINN LATIMER  
SABRINA BELOUAAR  
MOHAMED BOUROUISSA  
CJ CLARKE  
CHRISTOPHER IAN SMITH  
JESSE DARLING  
SARA VAN DER HEIDE  
LAURA HENNO  
RANDA MAROUFI  
RAYANE M'CIRDI  
DALA NASSER  
YOUNES RAHMOUN  
MOSTAFA SAIFI RAHMOUNI  
GAËLLE CHOISNE  
WENDELIN VAN OLDENBORGH  
ERIC VAN HOVE  
ERIC BAUDELAIRE

Sharjah Biennial 13:  
Tamawuj

Act II

October 16-22, 2017  
Beirut, Lebanon

Exhibitions, Talks,  
Publications, Film  
Screenings, Dance, Theatre  
and Lecture Performances

Program

October

2017

22

21

20

19

18

17

16

15

14

Sharjah Biennial 13:  
Off-site Project

Upon a  
Shifting  
Plate

October 14-15, 2017  
Beirut, Lebanon

Walks, Talks, Panels  
and Culinary Performances

SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

Ashkal Alwan











# parallel events program in 2017

## 1 March

Lecture: *One Rewriting of “Beirut’s Postwar Art”* with Ghalya Saadawi  
Archive, memory, trauma, postwar, postdocumentary, postorientalist, contemporary art were oft-repeated sets of ideas deployed to talk about visual artists working in Lebanon after the declared end of a long war. Yet the past’s future did not end up where it could have, in today’s present. Ghalya Saadawi returns there momentarily and theorizes some of the tactics, forms and content that were used to underscore the apparatus at artists’ disposal, in the hope that this counter-writing counteracts narratives that were sometimes descriptive, normative, or problematic, insofar as they were recuperative.

## 22 March

Tour: *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places* with Rana ElNemr  
Egyptian artist Rana ElNemr to speak with curator Marie Muracciole about her exhibition *A Chapter of Synonyms*, her first solo show in Beirut, currently showing at Beirut Art Center. The exhibition revolves around architecture, image making and imagination, from observation of contemporary city forms to the processes of creating space through the time-boundedness of the photographic medium.

The talk takes its title from one of the works in the exhibition, which in turn is inspired by the title of Alberto Manguel and Gianni Guadalupi’s book, originally published in 1980.

## 9, 10, 11, 12 June

Video Works 2017

Initiated by Ashkal Alwan in 2006 and supported by Robert A. Matta Foundation, Video Works is a grant and screening platform that supports the development, production and diffusion of new projects by artists and filmmakers residing in Lebanon.

## 10 June

*The Beirut Groove Collective All-Nighter*

The Beirut Groove Collective (BGC) brings the region’s oldest and only strictly vinyl funk and soul party to Beirut Art Center for a second edition of this rooftop vinyl party series.

The night featured rare and obscure 45 vinyls of Northern Soul, African Funk, 60s Garage, Deep Funk, Ethiopian Clappers and R&B

Stompers. Sets come from BGC co-founder and record digger, Ernesto Chahoud, with his 45 selections dug up from the dusty crates everywhere from Beirut to Addis Ababa; Beirut-based DJ and film director, Jackson Allers, with his deep fried southern soul and funk, who will also be MCing the night; Swiss reggae and soul head, DJ Yukah; and British DJ and editor, Natalie Shooter, with her sets of northern soul and R&B.

## 17 June

Audiovisual performance: *The Wedding Reception*

Collaboration between Hamed Sinno, Liliane Chlela and Mohamad Abdouni for BBIMF2017 Fundraiser.

## 12 July

Screening program: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak for Themselves*

First iteration of a film program consisting of several evenings of screenings throughout this summer that will run in parallel with the exhibition Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work*. A filmmaker himself, Sekula’s work is largely invested in social and economic critique, particularly regarding the politics of global commodity exchange and economic processes. The film program predominantly addresses the representation of labor, worker’s rights, and global industries. *Reagan Tape*, *Tsukiji* and *A Short Film on Laos* were screened consecutively.

## 19 July

Screening program: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak for Themselves*

Second set screenings of the film program (*The Battle of Orgreave* and *À Bientôt J’espère (Be Seeing You)*).

## 2 August

Screening program: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak for Themselves*

Re-screening of *Reagan Tape*, *Tsukiji* and *A Short Film on Laos*.

## 9 August

Screening program: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak*





for Themselves

Re-screening of *The Battle of Orgreave* and *À Bientôt J’espère (Be Seeing You)*.

23 August

Screening program: Maher Abi Samra’s *A Maid for Each* (2016)  
We are all familiar with the existence of maids in our daily lives as we are accustomed to the influence of their presence in our way of living. Zein is the owner of one of the many domestic workers agencies in Beirut. He opens his office to show us how he manages his business and how we come to him in order to choose a new maid or exchange another. We, men or women, youngsters or elderly, are his clients. We conceive and create solutions and alternatives for ‘our needs’, and meanwhile our government encourages us and pushes us to find our own solutions away from it.

6 September

Screening program: Robert Smithson’s *Spiral Jetty* (1970)  
The film *Spiral Jetty* is a “portrait” of Smithson’s monumental earthwork of the same name at Rozel Point in the Great Salt Lake, Utah. Completed in April 1970, *Spiral Jetty* is an iconic earthwork and Smithson’s most renowned piece. At 1500 feet long and 15 feet wide, Smithson’s spiral of basalt rocks, mud, and salt crystals juts out from the shore and coils dramatically into luminous red water. The film documents the making of this earthwork, which has attained mythic status as it has disappeared and then re-emerged from the lake over the past decades. A voiceover by Smithson illuminates the ideas and processes that informed the evolution of the work, with allusions to prehistoric relics and radical notions of space, scale and landscape. Poetic and oddly hypnotic, the film includes stunning aerial footage of Smithson running along the length of the glowing spiral in what seems like an ecstatic ritual.

11 September

Screening at Metropolis Sofil: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak for Themselves*  
A visual documentary, *The Forgotten Space* is based on Allan Sekula’s piece *Fish Story* (1989 – 1995). The film documents the lives of workers aboard giant cargo ships and examines the personal stories within



this global supply chain. The documentary takes the viewers to the harbors of Los Angeles, Bilbao, Rotterdam and Hong Kong. The global shipping trade is responsible for the exchange of 90% of the world’s goods, but since it occurs at sea, and is thus invisible to most of us, it constitutes a “forgotten space”.

13 September

Screening program: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak for Themselves*  
Re-screening of *The Battle of Orgreave* and *À Bientôt J’espère (Be Seeing You)* due to the public demand.

20 September

Screening program: Maher Abi Samra’s *A Maid for Each* (2016)  
Re-screening of *A Maid for Each* due to the public demand.

26 September

Screening program: Allan Sekula: *Photography at Work, Workers Speak for Themselves*  
Re-screening of Allan Sekula’s film *The Forgotten Space* at BAC due to the public demand.

27 September

Panel: *At Work With Allan Sekula*  
Sabine Breitwieser, Jurgen Bock, Pascal Beausse, and Heather O’Brien  
Panel of writers, curators and critics, most of whom have personally worked with the artist, for a discussion centered on the relationship between the artist’s work, and the ways his work has been exhibited, but also the specificity of his insights. The discussion will also deal with Sekula’s work processes, which often aim to reorder visual hierarchies and constitute an important effort to combine practices which are often considered as opposed: art criticism and visual art practice.

15 November to 6 December

Film screenings: *An Unpredictable Expression Of Human Potential*  
The films being shown in the exhibition *An Unpredictable Expression Of Human Potential* (SB 13 Act II) will be screened in evening ses-



sions: *Also Known as Jihadi* by Eric Baudelaire, *New Town Utopia* by Christopher Ian Smith, *From Left to Night* by Wendelien Van Oldenborgh and *Mahjoub* by Eric Van Hove.

**13 December**

Sceening series: *I Heard You Laughing*, organized by Myriam Ben Salah and Martha Kirszenbaum

*I Heard You Laughing* reflects on the importance of popular culture, the omnipresence of technologies and the role of music and dance, while tackling a form of vernacular ‘disorientalism’ and conveying a certain digital cosmopolitanism. It consists of selected music videos from iconic Middle-Eastern musicians of the 1950s,60s, and 70s, alongside video works by contemporary artists that reflect the complexities of this often oversimplified ‘East-West’ configuration. Participating artists include: Sarah Abu Abdallah, Sophia Al-Maria, Fatima Al Qadiri and Khalid Al Gharaballi, Meriem Benanni, Bendaly Family, Fairuz, and Googoosh.

**20 December**

Lecture: *Hallucinating Worlds of Paradoxes. A Dystopia?* with Sarah Zürcher

Talk hosted by curator, writer and documentarian Sarah Zürcher. The approach is to understand how Western societies function and how the paradoxes nurture, more than ever, neoliberal societies and how “post truth politics” embody virtual hopes, fake beliefs and new walls (virtual and real walls). The world has become an ocean or a desert to be capitalized, but are real values disappearing? Are we all imprisoned in a system? Are we facing a frightening society, a dystopia?

**27 December**

Lecture: *The Blue of Architecture* with Hashim Sarkis

The lecture covers several projects by Hashim Sarkis Studios (HSS) in Lebanon, the United States, Turkey, Jordan, and China. It discusses recurring themes in the projects such as geography, color, emptiness, and inscription, focusing on the aspiration to be at once context-making and context-transcendent. Hashim Sarkis is a Lebanese architect and writer. He established his own practice, Hashim Sarkis Studios, in 1998, with offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Beirut, Lebanon. Sarkis is also the dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).





# education and outreach

Throughout the year 2017, Anna-Maria Aoun, who assumed the position of Education and Outreach Manager at Beirut Art Center in October 2016, and Louai Kaakani, who succeeded her in June 2017, continued and expanded the ambitions of the prior year’s initiative to involve more people in the educational program. This was not only accomplished through the numerous visits and workshops, in which various schools, universities and educational institutions participated, but also through the direct participation of Beirut Art Center in the curricula of these establishments through in-class presentations, lectures and school/university visits. Collaborative works with different NGOs, such as Seenaryo and Junk Munkez, have led to the fostering of very positive relationships between BAC and the international and local non-profit sector, with which communication will be maintained and nurtured.

For all the exhibitions held in 2017, we compose the Teacher’s Documents to not only introduce the artists – their lives, practices and thematics – to teachers, educators and the rest of the pedagogical sphere, but to also incorporate art history, practice and criticism directly into their spaces. This was achieved through suggested exercises in workbooks, as well as providing readings and extracts that were directly based on the methodologies and subjects of each exhibited artist or group of artists. More importantly, the Teacher’s Documents never assume the reader’s inability to absorb information and instead address teachers in a tone equal to that of BAC. The documents, though based on the works and practices of exhibited artists, seek to address concepts and issues beyond the exhibitions, as well as those of other artists.

The year began with Tony Chakar’s *On Becoming Two* and Rana ElNemr’s *A Chapter of Synonyms*, which brought in 1748 visitors. Of that number, 356 were students brought in by the education department, including students from public schools like our neighboring Uruguay Primary School and university students from campuses such as the Lebanese University, AUB and LAU. Teachers and students comprised 20% of the total number, including students from private and public elementary schools. Throughout the exhibition, Tony Chakar himself hosted weekly tours of his exhibition that were received with massive success by audiences of various ages and social backgrounds; including university students and older generations.



Tony Chakar’s background and practice as an architect and urban thinker is very prominent in the Teacher’s Document composed for his exhibition. Investigating processes such as mapping and monument creation, the document became an extension of the exhibition’s exploration of the urban environment of Beirut as a social process and not a fixed form. The additional readings were rooted in Chakar’s theoretical and literary references from which his artistic practice takes form; branching out from Benjamin’s childhood memories gathered in a book and expanding to Panofsky’s perspective, Chakar constructs an understanding of the urban environment which simultaneously migrates between language, image, and space.

Rana El Nemr’s workbook similarly borrows heavily from the exhibition’s investigation of space and the exploration of two-dimensionality as a producer of new meaning; the imaginary being at its core. El Nemr’s use of still images, texts, films and sound aims to reveal architecture as a double projection, leading us to an awareness of space and its components. Therefore, the activities proposed in the workbook oscillate between multiple perceptions of space that can be produced or disfigured by adding elements to



them, such as the spaces proper to minimalist discourse, and the forging of new possible readings, when altering a two-dimensional space, be it a map or an image. The additional readings fall in the same realm, stressing on the idea of space, image and the production of meaning. A reading of Gordon Matta-Clark's *Anarchitecture* exposes us to the language of modernism, and the circulation of Architecture as an expression of a utopia, as Barthes would say, hence converting it into a tool of convenience. The politics of contemplation, and interview with Zeo Leonard about her *Camera Obscura*, reveals to the reader the uncovered aspects of time and space that are proper to each user exposed to the experience of a camera obscura.

*Let's Talk About Art* was held from May 2017 to December 2017. A recurrent number of schools and youth groups were invited to enable discussion through practical workshops that also introduce artistic production as a critical instrument for communication and critical thought.

In parallel with the *Meeting Points 8* exhibition by Mophradat in April 2017, Seenaryo, a locally based NGO targeting Syrian and Palestinian youth in Lebanon and empowering them through cultural and artistic initiatives, was commissioned to hold a movement and music workshop at BAC in May. *Meeting Points* was intended to facilitate "a place to imagine and interrogate models for the production and presentation of contemporary arts;" the workshop enabled participants to interact with and activate the exhibition space through performance and song. This was relevant to the exhibition, which focused on performance and the traces left behind by the act of performing. Running for four days, the workshop was designed to be held in one session and 8 student groups were invited to be paired for each day, including Seenaryo's youth choir group "Aswat Seenaryo". Participants were not only trained to perform and sing in unison, but were active in the initial brainstorming process for song and narrative writing, as well as choreography. Additionally, *Meeting Points 8* brought 334 student visitors from diverse universities, public and private schools. The exhibition benefited from the public presence which activated it as a scene, a theater, and a collection of projection devices.

The following exhibition, entitled *Photography at Work*, introduced the work of American photographer Allan Sekula whose practice began over forty years ago. His work called for a critical revisiting



of, and reflection on, the role of documentary photography in a globally interwoven system rendered invisible to the public. His exhibition, opening in parallel with Marwa Arsanios' *Falling is not Collapsing, Falling is Extending* on the upper floor, gathered 282 student visitors. The exhibition attracted students from a greater variety of university majors and fields, including Urban Planning and Media Studies, not only Fine Arts. Special tours were provided to teachers who brought their students to the exhibition.

A shared Teacher's Document was compiled for Allan Sekula's and Marwa Arsanios's joint exhibitions; the document was based on both artists' methodologies and critical investigations of representational meaning. On the one hand, it stresses the different ways a sequence of images can relate to narratives, texts, knowledge, and making visible social and political meaning, instead of denying it. The document proposes some exercises about this shift of focus from medium to process. On the other hand, it introduces the question of decay, be it a natural or social process. By discussing the notions of materiality and production, which are both intrinsic to understanding entropy in art practices, the fifth exercise in the workbook, which is inspired by Arsanios's exhibited installation, aims to open a discursive window into the Land Art movement, forming connections to be explored between Arsanios and the movement which preceded her practice.

The additional readings include artists and writers Martha Rosler and Robert Smithson, as well as art historian Rosalyn Deutsche. Their writings relate to Allan Sekula's and Marwa Arsanios's respective practices. Rosler and Deutsche's writings, correlate with Sekula's practice as a questioner of the role of art in society, and a critic of art institutionalization and marketization. Moreover, Smithson's writings and practice, which are more concerned with the production of art and its impact on the broader system (economical, ecological), would ally with Arsanio's discourse that is concerned with the transformations that arose as a response to the system of late capitalism which Lebanon's history has been undergoing since the 1990s.

In acknowledgement of the socio-political content of Sekula's work, Beirut Art Center commissioned Danish artist Stine Marie Jacobsen to plan and facilitate a workshop, culminating in *The Grammar of Film*. *The Grammar of Film* was a three-day workshop that invited students of different backgrounds to discuss how they interpreted representation, romanticization and





“truth” in photography and film. The groups worked together continually throughout the three days to design and build their own fictional cameras and draw/write storyboards that allowed them to showcase the fictional abilities of their new devices. The cameras and narratives they built together represented what they believed the camera, as a tool, and film, as a medium, had to address in our current context. The children worked with volunteer directors of photography to turn their narratives into actual film. This necessitated the participants’ active involvement in the video making process with the directors to give them first hand experience on the process of video and film production. The videos were screened to the children in early October 2017.

Drawing inspiration again from Allan Sekula’s work, the last workshop was held in September. Entitled *What’s Wrong with the Truth*, the workshop continued where *Grammar of Film* left off. While the earlier workshop discussed ethics and representational politics in film and photography, *What’s Wrong with the Truth* consisted of a presentation and practical workshop around the evolution of “truth” (its propagation and presentation) in photography and literature. The workshop was held in two days and participants were encouraged to write fictional narratives based on the “truths” they could discern and hypothesize from Allan Sekula’s photographs. Though the end results were fictional narratives in form, the stories produced provided a ethic address and were related to contemporary issues.

Expanding on Xavier Le Roy’s Retrospective in 2015, through which BAC brought in dance practice into the exhibition space, American dancer and choreographer Trajal Harrell was invited to facilitate a workshop in September. Another workshop invited local design initiative, Junk Munkez, and the year also marked, finally, our second session of critical writing with local author Fadi Tofeili.

Held for three days from September 1st to the 3rd, the seminar workshop with Trajal Harrell was conceived to “lead participants through the trajectory of his work using video, photographs, and texts to explore [...] topics in a lively dialogue driven by the aims and interests of the participants.” The seminar’s relaxed and dialogue-driven format succeeded in initiating a free flowing conversation between Trajal and the participants, relating the local Lebanese and Levantine context to Trajal’s experiences in performative research and his experience as a Western and queer choreographer.



Deriving inspiration from the Sharjah Biennial’s exhibition at Beirut Art Center, entitled *An Unpredictable Expression of Human Potential*, a collaboration was set in motion with Junk Munkez, a local initiative headed by Xavier Baghdadi and Lea Kirdikian to promote creative practical workshops using recyclable and found material. Lea and Xavier, connecting to the exhibition’s socio-political tone, initiated two workshop concepts that were held separately. The first, entitled *Soapboxes and Revolution*, appropriated the form of the soapbox, used in the past as a makeshift podium upon which people would address a public, and investigated its significance, simplicity and relationship to political discourse. Participants were invited to create their own physical communicative platform and to reinterpret formally and ideologically in their own ways new forms derived from the soapbox’s initial physicality. The second workshop, entitled *Materializing a Frustration*, critically reflected upon the history of “upcycling” and its current status and mutations in the neoliberal market (from artists’ humanitarian pitches to luxury designed commodities created from recycled materials). It allowed participants to create their own installations, goods and sculptural pieces from reused materials and asked them to place their works within a greater context. This was manifested in the form of “pitches” and proposals, that the participants would write as though addressing a larger body about a current issue.

The Sharjah Biennial’s workbook also picked up on the artist’s common theme of social address while acknowledging the artist’s diverse choices of representational mediums and processes. The readings and exercises chosen and conceived reflected on artistic production from a socially conscious, responsive and self-reflective lens. Writings from authors such as Joshua Rothman, Mary Bucholtz and Richard Dyer are also included so that readers not only question the meaning and propagation of culture, but also the weight and relevance of discourses on culture in regards to social studies, psychology and post-colonial rhetoric following the ongoing debate between pluralism and cultural puritanism in our contemporary context.

Finally, December 2017 marks Beirut Art Center’s second *Arabic Critical Writing Workshop* on art history, criticism and urban/ social issues. Facilitated by Fadi Tofeili, Lebanese poet, author and translator, the workshop is a month long process where young adults and professionals explore critical analysis, research





and writing in the Arabic language. The workshop is one in a series that the center initiated on a yearly basis to begin a discussion on the value of curating as well as art production, contextualizing it regionally and temporally with active access to knowledge and references in addition to proper vocabulary and terminology, be it in English or Arabic.





# workshops in 2017

**18, 19, 24, 26 May**

*Movement & Music Workshop*

Series of single-session children’s performance workshops with local non-profit Seenaryo.

**17, 21, 24 July**

*The Grammar of Film*

Three-day children’s workshop with Danish artist Stine Marie Jacobsen on video and photographic representation and ethics.

**1, 2, 3 September**

*Seminar-Workshop* with Trajal Harrell

Hybrid seminar-workshop on dance and performance by Trajal Harrell.

**28, 29 September**

*What’s Wrong with the Truth*

Single-session children’s writing workshops on the relationship of truth seeking to story telling facilitated by Louai Kaakani and Caline Mattar.

**18 December to Januaey 2018**

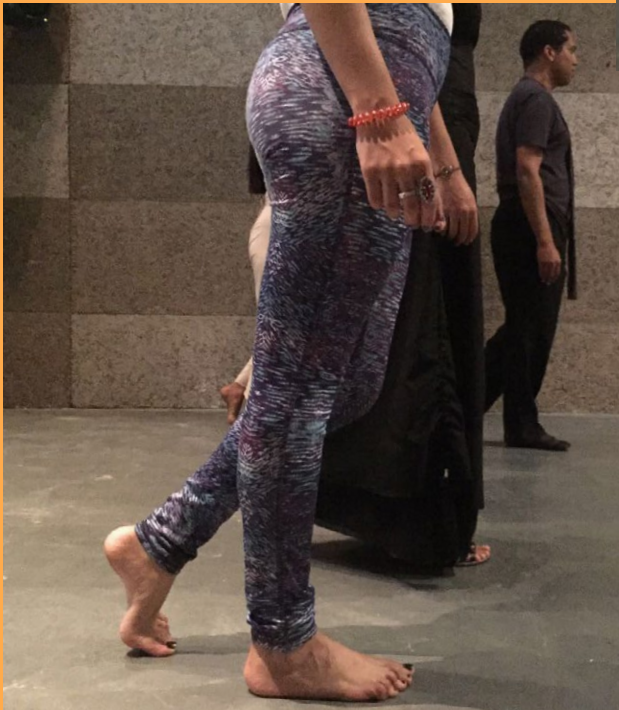
*Khotat: Arabic Critical Writing Workshop*

Series of lectures and seminars as well as a long-term writing workshop on critical writing about art and other subjects in Arabic. Facilitated by Fadi Tofeili.

**15, 22 December**

*Upcycling Workshop* with Junk Munkez

Two single session children’s workshop on the position of upcycling in history and now in both art history and the market. Facilitated by local upcycling initiative Junk Munkez.





# 2018 exhibition program

## *Knots'n Dust* Francis Alys

31 January - 9 April 2018



*Knots'n Dust* is Francis Alÿs' first solo show in Lebanon (and in the region), gathering the artist's early and recent works that explore themes of turbulence: the motions at the core and their outspread effects, ranging from the miniscule to the monumental. The show goes back and forth between the smallest element of unrest and instability to the most exaggerated form of disorder that this small unit can engender; from instability to total chaos, from meteorological phenomena to geopolitical manifestations, from a simple knot in the hair to an ascending spiral.

This project was two-years in the making with Marie Muracciole for Beirut Art Center, around a new animation film, *Exodus 3:14* (working title), that portrays a female character completing a benign and beautiful gesture that the loop transforms in a Sisyphean task. With this knot, a vortex opens itself; the hair infinitely undoes itself as in a gesture of self-absorption in which she appears both engaged and detached.

Knots represent links and bonds, as well as resistance and binding. They are the smallest unit in the making of a fabric yet they are its sine qua non mechanic condition: a continuous surface that can bring some opacity, some support for projection, inscription, hiding, drawing and building.

This exhibition gives focus to the preliminary, the intuitions, the rebounds, the traces or the result of the process of making, showing the course and the detours of the ideas, each element building links between apparently disparate works. Alÿs's work is characterized by fragments that borrow from one another, sometimes exchanging status, and encompassing videos, drawings, sketches and installation. Studies and sketches become paintings, and some paintings are also templates that can multiply. On display are six small canvases connecting tornados to hair, whilst they associate with the motion of sketching.

Between the traces and the oblivion of the country's wars and wounds, between memories of a faraway golden age and the never ending (re)construction of an increasingly globalized metropolis, Beirut seems to produce a space inside of the tornado, in its eye, with a vision of history frozen in monochrome. You can see it as a space for freedom or for alienation. You can build on it or drown in it. But it will not be the same for everyone nor will it be forever. As in many of Alÿs's work, every affirmation walks along with its opposite, any gesture comes with its own undoing. "Doubt, doubt again & doubt better". This poetic step invites the spectator to engage in larger issues throughout deceptively insignificant details.

The exhibition opening will be followed by a conversation between Marie Muracciole & Francis Alÿs, and a program of parallel events will take place throughout the exhibition period with figures such as Jean Rolin and Micheal Taussig.



# Two Meetings and a Funeral

Naeem Mohaiemen

31 January - 9 April 2018



In the mid-20th Century, forms of the “Third World” as seen in Movement for Afro-Asian Unity, pan Africanism, the Nonaligned Movement, and others, imagined transnational forums where the global South could reconfigure planetary leadership, ending Euro-American control. *Two Meetings and a Funeral* (2017), premiered at documenta 14, is a three-channel fragmentary history of 1973, a high point in this fever dream, but also the moment when it started coming apart from internal mistakes and external forces.

Pivoting around the 1973 Nonaligned Movement (NAM) meeting in Algiers, and its ideological opposite in the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) meeting at Lahore in 1974, the film travels through the many warring tentacles of the “new” cold war, and the contradictions of decolonization movements that neglected to liberate their own leadership. Sweeping over the residues of transnational architecture (Niemeyer, Moretti, Le Corbusier, and, finally, an anonymous Chinese company) in New York, Algiers, Dhaka, and in conversation with Vijay Prashad, Samia Zennadi, Atef Berredjem, Amirul Islam, and Zonayed Saki, the film explores the buried tensions between forces

vying for leadership of the “Third World.” It proposes that the utopian hope of the Third World project failed not only because of external enemies, but also the fatal mistake of a 1970s pivot from Socialism to Islamism (wrapped around pan Arabism) as unifying ideology. Naeem Mohaiemen combines films, installations, and essays to re-research failed left utopias, incomplete decolonizations, and tragic misrecognition of allies—framed by Third World Internationalism and World Socialism. The protagonists, inhabiting a doomed masculinity, are in “a revolutionary past meaningful in the sudden eruption of a revolutionary present” (Kaelen Wilson-Goldie, Bidoun). His work is currently on view in the solo show *There is No Last Man* at Museum of Modern Art (PS1) in New York.

Naeem first presented in Beirut as a member of Visible Collective (Disappeared in America) at Homeworks 3 (2005), followed by screenings at 98 Weeks, Mar Mkayel Nahr (2011), Mansion, Zoqaq el-Blatt (2015), Homeworks 7 (2015), and most recently at Tamawuj, Sharjah Biennial 13, Act II, Ashkal Alwan (2017). His research at Arab Image Foundation on Bangladeshi “volunteers” for the PLO resulted in the short film *Abu Ammar is Coming* (2016). His essays include *Islamic roots of Hip-Hop* (Sound Unbound, 2004), *Traitors, a Mutable Lexicon* (e-flux Supercommunity, 2015), *Anabasis of the Japanese Red Army* (e-flux journal, 2015), *Mohammed Ali’s Bangladesh Passport* (New Inquiry, 2016), and *Loneliness of the Long Distance Campaign* (Assuming Boycott/Walker Art Center, 2017).

*Two Meetings and a Funeral* was commissioned by documenta 14, co-commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation and Ford Foundation (Just Films), with additional support by Arts Council (UK). Courtesy of the artist and Experimenter (India).



## Space Edits (the trouble with language)

25 April - 29 June 2018



This exhibition will introduce four very seminal figures of the 20th century, some of them shown for the first time in Lebanon and in the region: Richard Arschwager, Vito Acconci, Marcel Broodthaers and Guy de Cointet.

Their work will be shown together with contemporary artists from Beirut, but also Egypt, Iran, India, France, Palestine... Taking as its core and articulation an historical installation by artist Guy de Cointet, Ethiopia, 1976, *Space Edits* is introducing a different way to look, to read, and to move into words, that may echo some elements of the recent solo show of Tony Chakar at Beirut Art Center. Works from artists will perform, represent or expand different interactions between text and space. From the idea of a score - a text or a book- that produces real space, be it the stage or the exhibition space, to the experience of the actual space we live in that can be modified, corrupted or enhanced by the equivalent of typo signs, the show will explore different ways for a work of art to “edit” or activate space as well as to “write” the body in the space. A performance of Raqs Media Collec-

tive will take place at the opening, gathering people from Beirut in a collective reading and some related verbal exchanges that a consistent practice of wine will enhance and contaminate.

In the delayed or belated relationship between France and the United States in the matter of the avant-garde and theory since World War II, Guy de Cointet (Paris 1934–Los Angeles 1983) has been an offbeat figure: a distant legend on the American West Coast; rarely exhibited in Europe. Thanks to Paul McCarthy, who introduced de Cointet to his home country with a show in 1996 at Le Magasin in Grenoble, the re-appearance of this œuvre is now largely celebrated. De Cointet produced a theatrical work of X pieces, that was just published by Paraguay Press, in which objects, props and elements of décor, was playing a part but also providing future installations and sculptures.

It is *Impressions d’Afrique* (1910), in which Raymond Roussel experimented with some of his elaborated wordplay, that raised de Cointet’s interest into the materiality and mechanics of language, and made him involve painting in the border of conceptual art – a legacy of Marcel Duchamp that begs a parallel with Ed Ruscha. The issue of de Cointet’s art is not to “understand”, but to read. As Jacques Lacan stated, mostly about his own practice and the way he was expressing himself, to understand is not always the issue, regarding some readings that are never to be achieved in a straightforward message. It also means that trying to understand is sometimes a more interesting way to deal with the mind and the real than any immediate knowledge, and that association is more important and alive than repetition. In the end, de Cointet’s work stands for interpretation, and construction of a (language) self.

The list of participating artists as of now includes Richard Arschwager, Vito Acconci, Nairy Baghramian, Marcel Broodthaers, Guy de Cointet, Claude Closky, Baris Dogrusöz, Jean-Pascal Flavien, Saba Innab, Iman Issa, Ali Meer, Raqs Media Collective, Nesrine Khodr, Natascha Sadr Haghighian, Nicolas Bussmann.



# Slow Light

Daniele Genadry

11 July - 30 September 2018

The work of Daniele Genadry addresses the interrelation between distance, movement and perception. This interrelation opens a reflection on the limits of seeing through the process of image making. Ranging from large scale paintings and intricate hand drawings, to screen-prints and light-based objects, the various images present/consider/examine different forms of light and sight. Often drawing from landscape imagery, the works, through different approaches to a singular theme, aim to reveal light as both a material and a saturating force. The exposure of light (as matter and force) occurs in the negation, blurring, disappearance, and the unstable recognition of the painted world.

Daniele was born in Baltimore in 1980 and is currently based in Beirut. She has participated in residencies at the Bronx Museum, Anderson Ranch Art Center, Lower East Side Printshop (USA), Frans Masereel Centrum (Belgium), Fondazione Ratti, Villa Lena, and The British School at Rome (Italy). Recent exhibitions include *Light Fall* (solo), Gypsum Gallery, Cairo; Tamawuj, Sharjah Biennial 13, UAE; *Poetics, Politics, Places* (Biennial Sur) National Museum, Tucuman; *Kindling* in FOTOPUB, Slovenia; *The Fall* (solo), Sursock Museum, Beirut; *Missing Real* (solo), Taymour Grahne Gallery, NYC; *This is the Time. This is the Record of the Time*, SMBA, Amsterdam; *Roman Remains*, Transition Gallery, London; *Hard Copy*, Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, Rome; and The 2nd Aim Biennial, The Bronx Museum, NYC. In 2015 she was the recipient of the Basil H. Alkazzi Award. She is an assistant professor at the American University of Beirut, and has a BA in studio art and mathematics from Dartmouth College, NH and an MFA in painting from the Slade School of Art, London.



Blind Light, 147x230, acryliq and oil on canvas, 2017.



# *In the Face of Overwhelming Forces* Joachim Koester

10 October 2018 - 9 January 2019



Danish artist Joachim Koester will produce an immersive installation comprising 16mm film projection, digital video, photography and audio works. Collectively, they span the last 12 years of his practice, revealing wide-ranging fascinations held together by a persistent enquiry into the boundaries of apparent reality and a quest to uncover hidden aspects of perception.

*In the Face of Overwhelming Forces* charts a physical journey between individual works and their distinctive narratives. Each one is a gateway into strange and unfamiliar territories, whether it's photographs and a film that revisit the occultist ideology of Aleister Crowley in the residue of a dilapidated Sicilian villa or a hypnotic audio meditation that invokes 'the place that time forgot', described by the artist Robert Smithson in his 1967 photographic essay *Monuments of Passaic*.

Many of Koester's films are anchored in the idea that histories can be found buried in our nervous and muscular systems as forgotten memories to be awakened through movement. By working intensively with performers to open the 'terra incognita' of the body, Koester uncovers traces of past events amassing an archive of movements that form the basis of his choreographies. This is evident in *The Place of Dead Roads*, 2013, a video installation that deconstructs the Western genre and its ritualised gestures. With the pacing, circling and gun-draw of the duel, four performers are engaged in a surreal encounter, their trance-like movements replete with the rugged rhetoric of the Wild West.

What makes this exhibition so relevant is that Koester brings the spirituality back to the body. This has a very special echo in Lebanon, where the spiritual is most often locked into religious rules and traditions.

The show is in partnership with Camden Art Center, London.

Joachim Koester (b.1962, Copenhagen) lives and works between New York and Copenhagen. He has exhibited widely, with solo shows at Turner Contemporary, Margate (2016); Forum Eugénio de Almeida, Evora, Portugal (2015); Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland (2014); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2013); MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA (2012); Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2012); Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2010); The Power Plant, Toronto (2010); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2007); Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol (2000) and PS1 (project space), New York (1999) among others. Selected group exhibitions include: *The Crime Was Almost Perfect*, Witte de With, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2014); *From the Collection*, S.M.A.K, Ghent (2014); *Prospectif Cinema*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2014); *Habitar el tiempo*, Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2014); and *ARKTIS*, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (2013). Koester's work has also been exhibited in numerous biennales including the Taipei Biennial (2012); Manifesta 7, Trento, Italy (2008); Sharjah Biennale (2007); the Venice Biennale, Slovenian and Danish Pavilions (2006, 2005 respectively) and Documenta 10 (1997).



# Motions

## Zineb Sedira

10 October 2018 - 9 January 2019



First solo show of the artist in Lebanon, *Motions* gives films a large place, together with photographs and part of a project about Algerian caricaturists.

Zineb Sedira made her first films in order to initiate a conversation whose terms were obstructed by the inconsistencies in unspoken history, of disconnectedness and awkward junctions connected to a plurality of viewpoints. Emotions, in their conception as a transfer from interior to exterior, find a constructive and processual dimension in her works. The result is different acts of ventriloquy, of intercessions through dialogue and exchanges, and that are underpinned by driving the meaning to circulate, and a constant reinvention of a subjective position. Cinema is a body in motion that embeds itself in us, and in Sedira's work it is used as a tool for self-exposure both for the one who activates it and for whoever identifies himself in the

work. Her practice is rooted in an enlarged family, a community where the outsider has a place. There is no universal language, but rather a number of vernaculars. Sedira uses film as a tool for merging these in order to then connect them not only to life itself, taking us with her in the process.

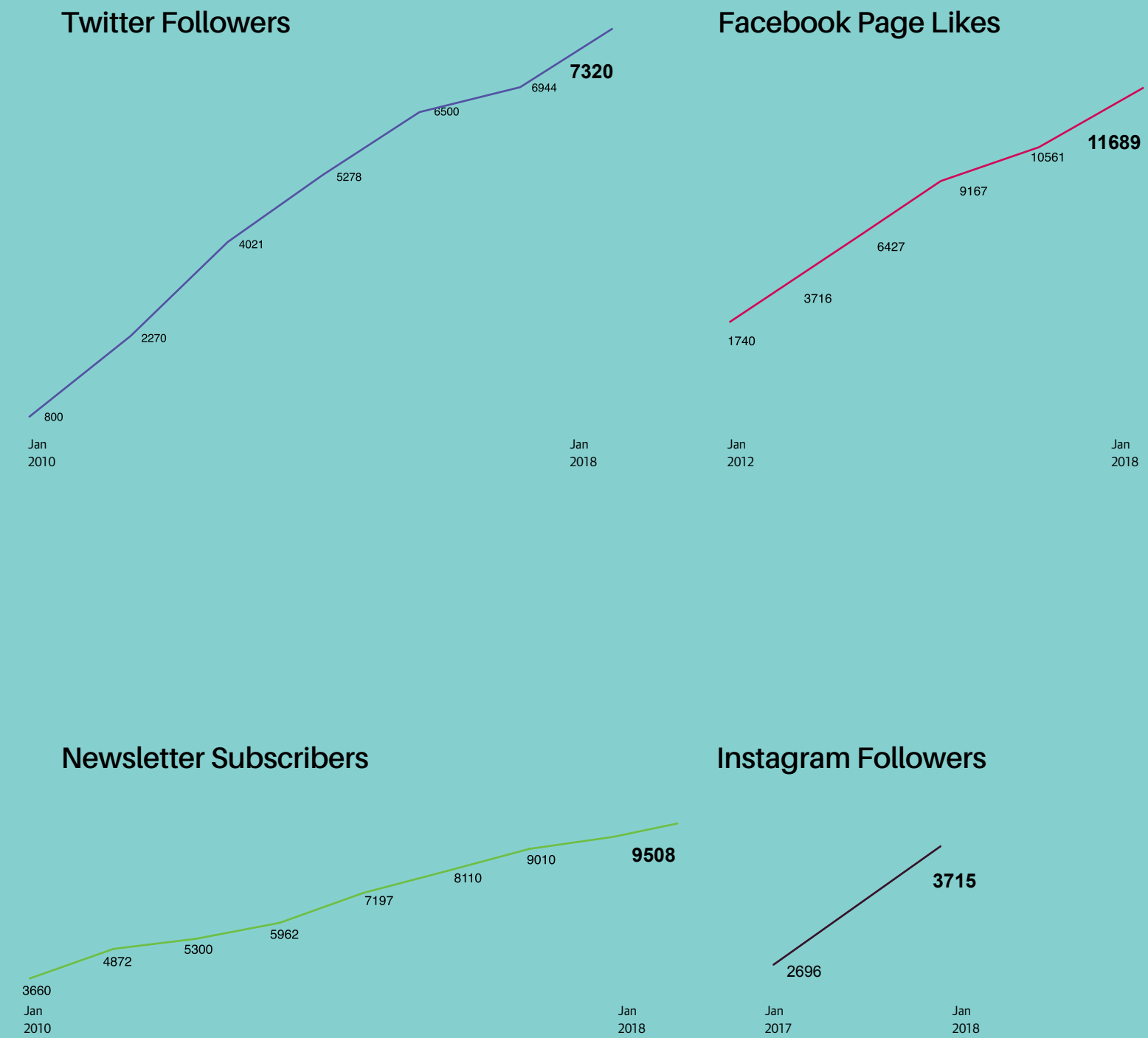
Zineb Sedira was born in Paris to Algerian parents in 1963. She studied at the Central St Martin's School of Art and the Slade School of Art, followed by research studies at the Royal College of Art. The artist's photographs and video installation use the perspective of her own experience to frame questions about language, transmission, memory and mobility. She lives between London and Algiers.

Zineb's work has been included in many solo exhibitions such as *Present Tense*, Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York, USA (2015); *Sands of Time*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2015); *Disenchanted Matters*, Plutschow & Felchlin, Zurich, Switzerland (2014); *Maritime Chronicles*, Galleria Riccardo Crespi, Milan, Italy (2014); *Geo-portrait/Geo-portail*, Galerie La Jette, J1 Grand Port Maritime, Marseille, France (2013); *Lighthouse in the Sea of Time*, Blaffer Art Museum, University of Houston, Houston, USA (2013); *Recits Maritimes: Entre Terre et Mer*, Selma Feriani Gallery, Tunis, Tunisia (2013); *The Voyage, or Three Years at Sea Part V: Zineb Sedira*, Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (2013).



# BAC in figures

Exhibition	Total visitors
<b>On Becoming Two/ Chapter of Synonyms</b> 25.01.2017 - 26.03.2017 12 weeks	<b>1748</b>
<b>Meeting Points 8</b> 12.04.2017 - 04.06.2017 7 weeks	<b>1521</b>
<b>Photography At Work / Falling is Not Collapsing, Falling is Extending</b> 26.06.2017 - 29.09.2017 12 weeks	<b>2794</b>
<b>Unpredictable Expression of Human Potential</b> 14.10.2017- 19.01.2018 11 weeks	<b>1586</b>





# financial report

## 2017

INCOMES	USD
Profit from 2016	39 000
Bank interest and administrative reimbursements	13 000
Public & Private institutions	60 000
Private Donors	139 000
Sponsors/ Financial Support	51 000
In kind support	9 000
Entrance fees for Events	2 000
Benefits from the Edition	7 000
Benefits from the Bookshop	5 000
Renting the Space	3 000
TOTAL REVENUES	328 000
EXPENSES	USD
OPERATING COSTS	
Municipality charges	4 000
Bank interest	800
Electronic Supplies	8 000
Other Space Fees (Electricity,Telephone Internet, Office Supplies, Repairs & Maintenance...)	48 000
Salaries & Services	170 000
Communication	3 900
Travel Fees	1 300
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	236 000
ACTIVITIES	
<i>On Becoming Two</i> by Tony Chakar	25 000
<i>A Chapter of Synonyms</i> by Rana Elnemer	10 000
<i>Photography at Work</i> by Alan Sekula	72 000
<i>Falling is Not Collapsing</i> by Marwa Arsanios	10 000
Fundraising Activities	5000
Outreach program and parallel events	37 000
TOTAL ACTIVITIES	159 000
TOTAL EXPENSES	395 000

# budget

## 2018

INCOMES	USD
Bank interest	2 000
Public & Private institutions (expected)	25 000
Public & Private institutions (confirmed)	28 000
Private Donors (expected)	47 000
Private Donors (confirmed)	89 000
Sponsors/ Financial Support	43 000
In kind support	9 000
To find	40 000
Entrance fees for Events	2 000
Benefits from editions	5 000
Benefits from the Bookshop	6 000
Renting the Space	4 000
Fundraising Auction	180 000
TOTAL REVENUES	480 000
EXPENSES	USD
OPERATING COSTS	
Loss from 2017	67 000
Municipality charges	4 500
Bank fees	1 000
Electronic Supplies	10 000
Other Space Fees (Electricity,Telephone Internet, Office Supplies, Repairs & Maintenance...)	44 500
Salaries & Services	170 000
Communication	4 000
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	301 000
ACTIVITIES	
<i>Knots’n Dust</i> by Francis Alys	40 000
<i>Two Meetings and a Funeral</i> by Naeem Mohaiemen	6 000
<i>Space Edits</i>	45 000
<i>Slow Light</i> by Daniele Genadry	10 000
<i>In The Face of Overwhelming Forces</i> by Joachim Koester	13 000
<i>Motions</i> by Zineb Sedira	15 000
Fundraising Activities	5 000
Outreach program & Parallel Events	30 000
TOTAL ACTIVITIES	164 000
Miscellaneous	15 000
TOTAL EXPENSES	480 000



# artist editions

Beirut Art Center launched in 2014 its first artists edition for encouraging young collectors and maintaining support for our program.

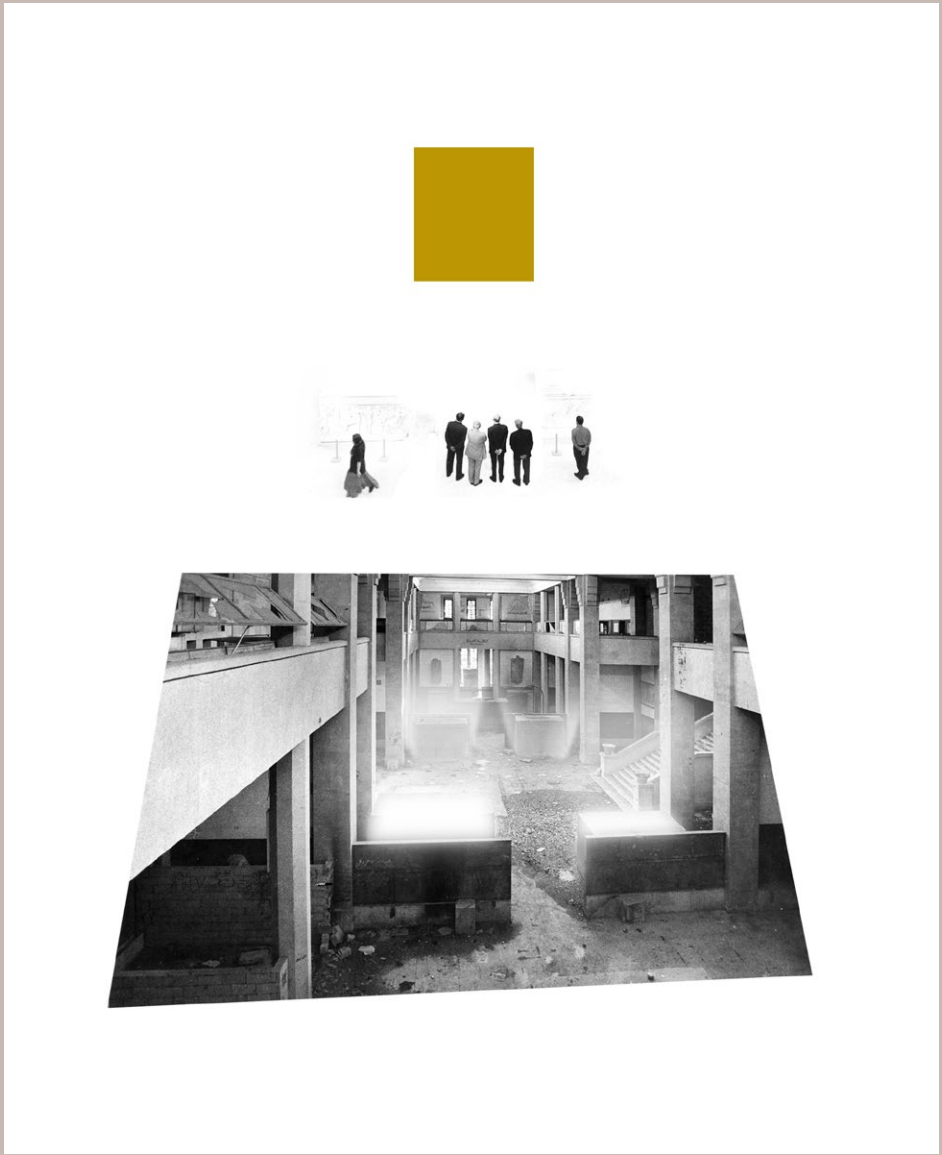
Two more have been launched in 2016, by Hassan Khan and Mounira Al Solh.

## Akram Zaatari’s *Reverse Archeology* (2017)

Zaatari has collaborated exclusively with BAC to produce these limited-edition prints. They are collector’s items and are available for purchase at the BAC bookshop.

The print hints at the speculative value of archeological items that were never intended to be exhibited but to be buried. In the case of the National Museum in Beirut, the objects have been re-buried during the civil war to protect them from pillaging. The photograph represents the National Museum hall at the end of the Civil War when all the sarcophagi were buried in concrete blocks. The sketch also includes elements from the first opening of the Museum upon the uncovering of the archeological objects.

For enquiries please email [bookshop@beirutartcenter.org](mailto:bookshop@beirutartcenter.org)



Akram Zaatari, *Reverse Archeology*, 2012.  
Photomontage print, 32 x 26 cm.  
30 editions + 5 ap.  
900 usd

# our donors

## 2017

### Patrons

Association Philippe Jabre  
Ford Foundation  
Marian Goodman  
Robert A. Matta  
Ousseimi Foundation

### Supporters

Fondation Boghossian  
Family of Abla Chammas  
Karen & Bertrand Fattal  
Taymour Grahne  
Liza Restaurant  
Anonymous

### Friends

Laura & Raed Abillama • Joumane Chahine  
Lina Chammaa & Namir Cortas • Michèle & Karim Chaya  
Carole & Georges Schoucair • Johnny & Cyn Farah  
Michèle & Nicolas Garzouzi • Velma Hermez  
Fondation Aimée & Charles Kettaneh • Karine & Lucien Jr Letayf  
Frank Luca • Mohammed Maktabi • Rana Al Masri  
Carole & Joe Nasnas • Barbara Polla • Cherine Sabbah  
Tessa & Tara Sakhi • Sultan Gallery • Galerie Tanit, Beyrouth  
Cherine & Ahmed Tayeb • Dany Touma • Anonymous

### Sponsors

Bank Audi  
Banque Libano-Française  
Libano-Suisse Insurance Company  
Mitsulift

### In Kind

Ixsir  
Libano-Suisse Insurance Company

## 2018

### Patrons

Association Philippe Jabre  
Robert A. Matta  
Ousseimi Foundation

### Supporters

Fondation Boghossian  
Karen & Bertrand Fattal  
Ana & Nabil Gholam  
Carol & Carlos Ghosn  
Yola Noujaim  
Sfeir-Semler Gallery  
Anonymous

### Friends

Galerie Analix Forever • Asma Andraos •  
Hoda & Elie Baroudi • Burgundy Restaurant •  
May Daouk • Joumane Chahine• Diala Ezzeddine & Hashim Sarkis •  
Wafa Saab • Joumana & Karam Attalah • Leila Shahid •  
Michèle & Karim Chaya • Carole & Youssef Kamel • Adele Khatib •  
Nicole Fayad • Cyn & Johnny farah • Randa Ali Ahmad •  
Carole & Joe Nasnas • Cherine Sabbah • Raya & Anthony Nahas •  
Liza Restaurant • Cherine & Ahmed Tayeb • Dany Touma •  
Sarah Trad • Anonymous

### Sponsors

Bank Audi  
Banque Libano-Française  
Libano-Suisse Insurance Company  
Mitsulift

### In Kind

Ixsir  
Libano-Suisse Insurance Company



