Shifting Ground: The Underground Is Not the Past
Symposium, Performances and Artist Publications
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center and Al Masrah Al Baladi,
Ramallah and Khashabi Theatre, Haifa

10 - 14 August, 2017

THURSDAY, 10 AUGUST

7:00 pm–8:00 pm
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center

Lawrence Abu Hamdan
Bird Watching
An audio essay on the acoustic investigation of Saydnaya prison in Syria.
The artist will present the performance live by phone from Berlin.
Simultaneous translation is provided
*seats are limited

8:00 pm
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center Garden

Book Launch Reception
Artist publications produced and commissioned for the SB13 Ramallah project will be disseminated. The publications are the work of Noor Abuarafeh, Benji Boyadgian, Inas Halabi, Ma'touq, Nicola Perugini, Samir Harb and Mimi Cabell, Yara Saqfalhait, Subversive Film (Reem Shilleh & Mohanad Yaqubi) and The Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind.*

FRIDAY, 11 AUGUST

10:30 am–4:00 pm
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center

Subterranean Sites
Large portions of the landscape in Palestine have been claimed by burial spaces and the matter that circulates through them or remains buried indefinitely within them. The sessions on this day explore places and acts of burial, the variety of actual and symbolic meanings constructed around them and their political, historical and folkloric agency.

10:30 am–11:00 am	**Opening Notes by Curator Lara Khaldi and Reem Shadid, Deputy Director, Sharjah Art Foundation**
11:00 am–11:30 am	**Abdul-Rahim Al-Shaikh** (Philosophy/ Cultural and Arab Studies) *I Die, Therefore I Am: The Palestinian Living Cemetery* Only in the vicinity of their living cemeteries are Palestinians capable of crossing the threshold of dying by *potentia* into dying by *energia*, returning, entirely and eternally, to land. Under ongoing Zionist settler colonialist rule, the Palestinian cemetery is not only a heterotopia, but also a heterochronia, which bears witness to a 'Subterranean Nakba' yet to be uncovered.

*An additional publication by artist Maria Thereza Alves and art students will be launched in late September after a workshop.

11:30 am–12:00 pm	**Suhad Daher Nashif** (Medical and Social Anthropology/ Gender Studies)
	Secret Cemeteries of Numbers: Imprisoning Palestinian Corpses in Buried Historical Archives
	This presentation tells the stories of Palestinian martyrs' bodies kept by the Israeli military forces since the late 1960s in death prisons known as the Secret Cemeteries of Numbers.
12:00 pm–1:00 pm	Respondent: **Rami Salameh** (Cultural and Critical Studies)
1:00 pm–2:00 pm	**Lunch break**
2:00 pm–2:30 pm	**Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbins** (Anthropology/ Middle Eastern Studies and Human Rights)
	Waste Underground
	This video presentation explores how waste infrastructure interacts with the underground in Palestine. By examining the physical features of waste infrastructure, it reveals the relationship between futurity and storage.
2:30 pm–3:00 pm	**Inas Halabi** (Visual Arts)
	Lions Warn of Futures Present
	Based on Halabi's research around chemical waste burial sites in the southern West Bank, this lecture performance attempts to capture and represent the ungraspable threat of radiation.
3:00 pm–3:30 pm	**Yara Saqfalhait** (History and Philosophy of Design)
	Subterranean Cavities
	This presentation takes the multiplying sinkholes dotting the landscape around the Dead Sea as a point of departure to investigate the relationships and gaps between systems of prediction (e.g. geophysical, economic and political) and the reality they help materialise.
3:30 pm–4:00 pm	**Benji Boyadgian** (Architecture/ Urban Sociology)
	Clogged
	This presentation is part of an installation, video and publication on the urban story of Jerusalem, its relationship with water and the long historical temporality of a 'thirsty city'. In the ruins of a clogged pipe we find a metaphor for Jerusalem.
	Moderator: **Shuruq Harb** (Visual Arts and Philosophy)

Simultaneous translation is provided for all presentations and performances

8:00 pm	**Al Baladi Theatre, Ramallah Municipality**
	Rabih Mroué presented by Asmaa' Azaizeh
	Make Me Stop Smoking (2006)
	A Non Academic Lecture (Arabic Only)

SATURDAY, 12 AUGUST

6:00 pm–8:45 pm
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center

On the Underground: Earth as Medium
While land has been a highly charged theme in anti-colonial struggles, this session focuses on earth as a substance that can function as a medium for opposition. Exploring earth as a means and a material for folk tales compels the question of whether the earth preserves the lore, or the story preserves the earth. The scientific study of soil itself becomes an epistemology that can shape an anti-colonial political consciousness.

6:00 pm–6:30 pm	**Keller Easterling** (Architectural Design and History/ Urbanism)
	Medium Earth
	This presentation is a contemplation of the word 'medium', which has historically referred to everything from elemental air, fire and water to milieu, magic, the growth medium of the environment, and contemporary technologies of communication.

6:30 pm–7:00 pm	**Filipa César** (Visual Arts/ Filmmaking)
	It matters what matters matter matters
	This presentation unearths Amílcar Cabral's double agency as a state soil scientist and a 'seeder' of African liberation movements. It considers how such duality may constitute a militant soil semantics for a proliferent liberation epistemology.

| 7:00 pm–7:45 pm | Respondent: **Lana Judeh** (Architecture/ Cultural Identity and Globalisation) |

8:00 pm–8:45 pm	**Jumana Emil Abboud** (Visual Arts)
	Out of the Shadows
	Out of the Shadows is a performance on water brides, ghouls and enchanted creatures who inhabit wells and springs. The stories are drawn both from Palestinian folktales and contemporary life-stories collected by the artist.
	With performer Salma Misyef.

Simultaneous translation is provided for all presentations and performances

SUNDAY, 13 AUGUST

10:00 am–6:00 pm
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center

Before the Museum
The museum has been commonly compared to a cemetery: a place where objects meet their death and where this death is exhibited. However, the graveyard and the museum are different. While one remains a mystical site of potential ghostly return, the other institutionalises radical, revolutionary violence as the irredeemably dead past by displaying its material corpse as evidence of the impossibility of resurgence. In this light, how can one read museums in Palestine? Palestinian material culture is either confiscated, destroyed or lies in colonial museums or secret military archives. Under current circumstances – an unrealised state, a people under military occupation – what is the function of the museum and how has the institution of the museum been affected by the specificity of the Palestinian context? Looking at historical case studies, archival documents and slightly unusual museums, the sessions on this day will address these questions and also examine why certain art objects are resurfacing now.

10:00 am–12:00 pm	**Fugitive Objects and their Return**
	Kristine Khouri (Art History) **and Rasha Salti** (Film Studies) **read by Hanan Toukan**
	Four Stories of Museums and Art Collections in Exile
	This presentation offers an introduction to four case studies of art museums in exile from the 1970s and 1980s. Focusing on Palestine, Chile, Nicaragua and South Africa, the presentation will reflect on the political need to build 'national' art collections and consider the international solidarity networks which enable them.
	Nasser Soumi (Visual Arts)
	Striving to Re-establish the International Exhibition for Palestine
	This presentation is an account of the research process instigated to locate and document missing artworks from the *International Exhibition for Palestine* (1978) and ways to preserve them until a Palestinian Museum of Contemporary Art can be established in a free Palestine.

Subversive Film (Reem Shilleh & Mohanad Yaqubi, Filmmaking and Visual Arts)
The Syllabus
The Syllabus is a research project and publication based on the archives of filmmaker and co-founder of Fatah's Palestine Film Unit, Hani Jawhariyyeh. This presentation explores the contemporary relevance of this archive as both educational tool for filmmakers and documentary account of the Palestinian revolution.

Moderator: **Hanan Toukan** (History of Art and Architecture)

12:00 pm–12:30 pm	**Samir Harb** (Human Geography)

Morbid Symptoms: Interregnum and Loops of Authority in the Muqata'as
This presentation reports on a research project tracing the literal and symbolic history of the Tegart forts in Palestine through multiple systems of design. The research project and publication is authored with Mimi Cabell and Nicola Perugini

12:30 pm–1:00 pm   Respondent: **Abdul-Rahim Al-Shaikh**

1:00 pm–2:00 pm   **Lunch break**

2:00 pm–2:30 pm   **Khaled Hourani** (Visual Arts)
Oil on Canvas: Searching for Jamal Al Mahamel
This lecture performance is based on Hourani's recent novel inspired by Jamal Al Mahamel, a painting by Palestinian artist Suleiman Mansour. Hourani investigates the unknown destiny after successive political events both in Libya and the Arab world.

2:30 pm–5:00 pm   **The Museum and the Illusion of the State**

Reluctant Archives
Rana Anani (Visual Art and Communication)
Throughout our tumultuous history, numerous art works, films and accounts disappeared from the public domain along with their records. Like ghosts, some of these archives resurface from their hiding places from time to time.

Chiara De Cesari (Anthropology & Cultural Studies)
Impossible Memories
This paper explores the peculiar history of museums in post-Oslo Palestine. It considers how the Palestinian quasi-state has tried, but failed thus far, to create such a key institution of national representation as a museum, and how artists and cultural practitioners have created alternative modes of national artistic institutions.

Doreen Mende (Visual Cultures)
The Struggle of Exhibition Making
Conceived with Baha Jubeh and Suhair Jubeh, this presentation will discuss notes from a workshop on the Abu Jihad Museum for Prisoner Movement in order to articulate a theory of curating from within the struggle.

Respondent: **Lara Khaldi** (Visual Arts)

5:00 pm–5:30 pm   **Coffee Break**

5:30 pm–6:00 pm   **Noor Abuarafeh** (Visual Art)
The Last Museum: Museum of all Museums
In this performance, the artist proposes that museums will become obsolete in the near future. The Museum of Museums will be the last standing monument dedicated to preserving and documenting the existence of museums.

Simultaneous translation is provided for all presentations and performances

8:30 pm **Al Baladi Theatre, Ramallah Municipality**

Rabih Mroué presented by Asmaa' Azaizeh
The Inhabitants of Images (2008)
A non-academic lecture (Arabic Only)

MONDAY, 14 AUGUST

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm **Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center**

The Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind Collection Draft Handbook
Closed workshop
Sharjah Biennial 13, off-site project in Ramallah, is collaborating with the Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind to edit a handbook on their collection. Respondents will present their notes to the editors, initiating a discussion on the first draft of the handbook.

8:00 pm **Al Baladi Theatre, Ramallah Municipality**

Rabih Mroué presented by Asmaa' Azaizeh
Pixelated Revolution (2012)
A non-academic lecture (With English subtitles)

FRIDAY, 18 AUGUST

8:00 pm **Khashabi Theatre, Haifa**
Art Publications Launch

Rabih Mroué presented by Asmaa' Azaizeh
Make Me Stop Smoking – Presentation of Ideas Under Study (2006)
A non-academic lecture

FRIDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER

8:00 pm **Khashabi Theatre, Haifa**

Rabih Mroué presented by Asmaa' Azaizeh
Pixelated Revolution (2012)
A non-academic lecture (Arabic Only)

FRIDAY, 6 OCTOBER

8:00 pm **Khashabi Theatre, Haifa**

Rabih Mroué presented by Asmaa' Azaizeh
The Inhabitants of Images (2008)
A non-academic lecture (Arabic Only)

The symposium programme is in collaboration with the Ramallah Municipality, Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center and Khashabi Theatre, Haifa