

SOMETHING TO GENERATE FROM

MADRASSA COLLECTIVE

SOMETHING TO GENERATE FROM

17.06.16 - 07.08.16

With

**Algerian Pavilion
L'Art Rue
Bandjoun Station
The Collective Museum
Fehras Publishing Practices
Invisible Borders
MASS Alexandria**

Curated by

Madrassa Collective

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MADRASSA COLLECTIVE

Madrassa (school in Arabic) is a collective of young curators and art practitioners based in Africa and the Middle East.

Envisioning exhibition making as a research and critical endeavour, Madrassa Collective aims at experimenting and investigating collective practices and transborder collaborations as a means to resist and confront the difficulties of art making in the regions the collective comes from. Madrassa Collective works on a variety of geographical and conceptual territories through exhibitions, publications, researches and mapping exercises.

Through its projects, the collective aims to:

- alter the dominant "Euro/Western-centrism" in modern and contemporary art thinking and writing, investigating and promoting the conditions for the birth and for the development of collective and independent artistic projects;
- rethink socially engaged practices in art, by focusing particularly on processes of institution building and their normative configurations, and as an experimental curatorial body itself testing the very processes of collective making and the making of a collective.

Members of Madrassa are Nadine Atallah, Nouha Ben Yebdri, Victoria Dabdoub, Francesca Masoero, Aude Christel Mgba, Rim Mejdí, Léa Morin and Marc Mouarkech.



Kunsthall Aarhus' programme for 2015-2016 explores the theme of Collective Making. The curatorial underpinning involves engaging the idea of collective processes of art production, which have increasingly become a focus in contemporary art. Although there is a long history of artist collectives, including artist associations linked to art centers (like Kunsthall Aarhus), contemporary art has remained - for the most part - dominated by individualized practices.

Last year Madrassa Collective responded to Kunsthall Aarhus' International Open Call with their proposal *Something to Generate From* which was selected as the winning proposal by an international jury composed of: Alia Rayyan (Curator and Artistic Director of Al Hoash Gallery - the Palestinian Art Court, Jerusalem, Palestine), Bisi Silva (Artistic Director, Center for Contemporary Art, Lagos), Jacob Fabricius (Artistic Director, Kunsthall Aarhus) and Sarah Rifky (Curator and Co-director of Beirut art space in Cairo, Egypt).

The jury selected *Something to Generate From* unanimously because of the relevance and topicality of Madrassa Collective's approach and interest in writing/rewriting, thinking/ rethinking, discussing and creating a discourse and common voice for institution building in North Africa, Central Africa and the Middle East. This has translated into a collective looking at other collectives, other collective ideas, collective practises and ways of making and building institutions. We believe that the importance of Madrassa Collective's perspective and research into their own region and history will echo into the future and create a base for understanding, discussing and practicing collective makings, institutions and new collective movements and spaces.

Alia Rayyan, Bisi Silva, Jacob Fabricius and Sarah Rifky

The Line of life - Laaroussa
© Abdellatif Snoussi - L'Art Rue



SOMETHING TO GENERATE FROM

“Useful Art is a way of working with aesthetic experiences that focus on the implementation of art in society where art’s function is no longer to be a space for ‘signaling’ problems, but the place from which to create the proposal and implementation of possible solutions. We should go back to the times when art was not something to look at in awe, but something to generate from. If it is political art, it deals with the consequences, if it deals with the consequences, I think it has to be useful art.”

Tania Bruguera, Introduction on Useful Art, 2011

Something to Generate From proposes an investigation into the practice of institution building as an artwork, by presenting a number of artist-led initiatives and collectives that have emerged throughout the last decades from specific geo-political contexts: the Middle East and Africa.

The project is firstly an ongoing research, which, while not pretending to be exhaustive, hopes to shed light on the transformative dynamics of power and resistance as engaged by artistic collective practices. Secondly, and consequently, *Something to Generate From* is also an intellectual and material effort to reposition art as a key endeavour in the making of subjectivity and social history in general, and in the specific territories in which the Madrassa Collective operates in particular. Notwithstanding their diversity, in fact, a common thread unites the exhibited projects. Operating in geographies in which governmental authorities are at best retreating from their public responsibilities, all the exhibited initiatives share a commitment to fill in gaps in the writing of local (art) histories and to unveil and resist the hegemony of the Western-centred capitalist systems of production of food and goods, of knowledge and art and ultimately of life opportunities. By collectively making up for something that is missing, they stand as alternatives to the individualism of the globalised (art) world, proposing a radical reconsideration of the notion of authorship, while rewriting

official narratives and fostering sustainable transformations in the districts, cities, societies in which they are embedded.

As such, we posit that these projects and institutions, may be considered as artworks per se, fruitful creations which rather than being secondary activities artists engage with, are key contributions to the history of art as embodying the capacity for art to be something to generate from, as notably argued by Tania Bruguera.

We term them “institutions” – or “alternative institutions” – as they do not only incarnate a form of aesthetic critique of the dominant structures shaping the global world-space, but also enact a praxis of affirmation, empowerment and transformation. In fact, “institutions” are not only sets of formal, constitutional rules, but also informal norms and shared understandings. Which means that while shaping individuals and communities, they are shaped by these very same collective interactions. Institutions are never fixed, they are locally embedded embodiments of intrinsically dynamic and transformative systems of social relations that do not only (re)produce the prevailing rules of the game, but also attempt to alter existing normative orders.

The curatorial decision to invite and expose institutions rather than more conventional artworks sets out a number of theoretical and practical, spatial and temporal challenges vis à vis the modalities of their display. How to account for, and display within an enclosed and ephemeral exhibition space (art)works that are statutorily relational, whose power lies in the persistence of their commitment and whose relevancy is fundamentally contextual? Both the methodology adopted and the final shape of the exhibition stand for a proposed answer. Being itself a group of individuals reflecting and acting together for a common purpose, the Madrassa Collective envisions exhibition making as a research and critical endeavour, while investigating and experimenting collective practices and transborder collaborations. Therefore, the Madrassa Collective puts, in its very structure, collective practices to the test through a correlative experience of collective making and the making of a collective. As a result, *Something to Generate From*, beyond proposing a survey of collaborative pulses from the MENA and African regions, represents an ongoing, participatory and experimental cartography, which actively engages the invited institutions to shape the exhibition space. Thus, the conception and production of the exhibition embodied a process that even before implementing collective making, emphasized its initial step: collective thinking.

ALGERIAN PAVILION

Algiers, Algeria

The Algerian Pavilion refers to nomadic and mutating forms of featuring colonialism and architecture in Algeria. It was founded by architect and doctoral fellow Samia Henni in 2014 in the aftermath of the approval followed by a refusal of an Algerian governmental institution to exhibit certain episodes of colonial architecture at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition, Venice Biennale. The refusal was primarily motivated by the ambiguity of some aspects of the history of Algeria under French colonial rule (1830–1962). The Algerian Pavilion aims at unfolding these ambiguities on a long-term basis.

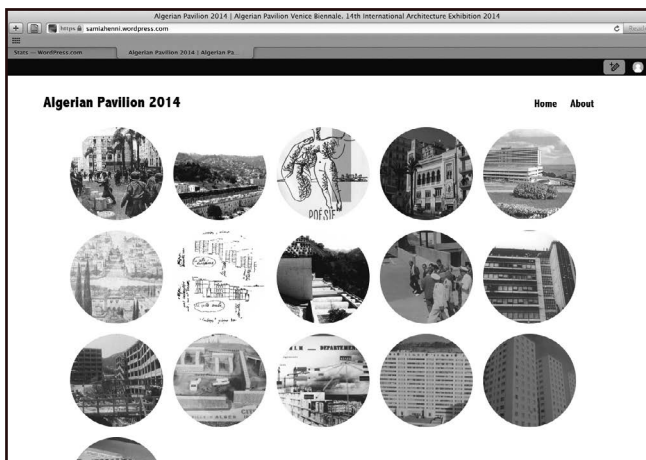
www.algerian-pavilion.org

(Website running only from June 17 to August 7, 2016)

A proposition by Samia Henni

With the special engagement of:

Selma Hellal, Sofiane Hadjadj, Yasmina Reggad, Pascal Schwaighofer and Nadine Atallah



Homepage of the online collective Algerian Pavilion 2014
© Samia Henri

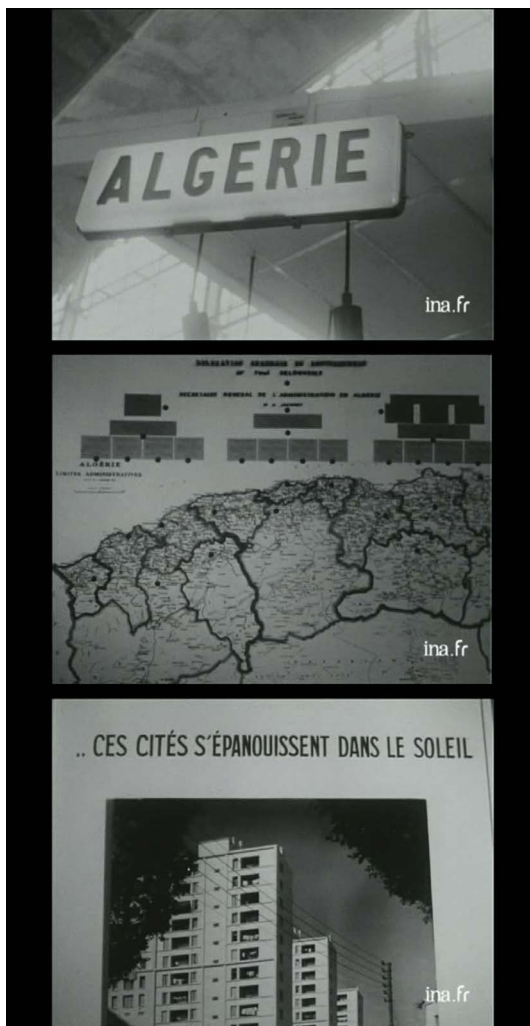
Algerian Pavilion

Since its inception, the Algerian Pavilion has unfolded through the collection, production, and diffusion of textual and visual materials on colonialism and architecture. Its first form, following the refusal of an Algerian governmental institution to exhibit certain episodes of Algeria's colonial architecture at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition, Venice Biennale in 2014, was a full-page newspaper article written by the founder of the Pavilion and released in the Algerian independent newspaper *El Watan*. The article entitled "J'écris au nom de l'ambiguïté" ("I Write in the Name of Ambiguity") questioned the role of institutions, the access to historical information, the authorship of historiography and history, and the duration of engineered disregards and imposed amnesia. The article provoked the interest of a number of people in Algeria and elsewhere that led to the prolongation of the Algerian Pavilion.

The second form of the Algerian Pavilion consisted in representing the absence of Algeria at the Venice Biennale. Wearing an unofficial badge that read "Algeria," the founder of the pavilion attended the official opening and the first days of the international exhibition, voiced the presence of Algeria, started rumours about the Algerian Pavilion, spread information about Algeria's architectural history, and distributed leaflets about an online Algerian Pavilion. The latter was a worldwide internet platform (www.algerian-pavilion.org) that gathered and exposed the history of architecture in colonial Algeria, written by various international historians and scholars who had kindly accepted to offer their research and support the initiative. The online collective Algerian Pavilion of 2014 ran in parallel to the Venice exhibition, thus becoming part of the institutional manifestation only through a temporal analogy. The platform was widely visited and it resulted in further collaborations and discussions.

For the exhibition *Something to Generate From*, the Algerian Pavilion sets up a stage for the enactment of a micro history of French colonial architectural production in Algeria during the Algerian Revolution (1954–1962). It voices a few ambiguities around a historical and symbolic moment: when General Charles de Gaulle, the President of France between 1958 and 1968, announced the construction of housing units for 1,000,000 people in Algeria under French rule in October 1958. The Algerian Pavilion accommodates the juxtaposition of events that preceded and followed de Gaulle's declaration of the construction of mass housing projects. It houses the formation of possible relations, legacies, and intersections between territorial planning, architecture making, economic interests, military operations, and political intentions. The aim is not to write a history of the apartment buildings that resulted from de Gaulle's strategic attempt, but rather to feature the complexities and ambiguities of such constructions and expand the field of architecture to political objectives and military measures. Such extension includes the exploitation of oil in the Algerian Sahara, the Battle of Algiers, the United Nations' recognition of Algeria's right to independence, and the detonation of France's first nuclear bomb in the Algerian Sahara.

The Algerian Pavilion does so by drawing a timeline around de Gaulle's announcement of October 1958, which features these events, and displays the major headlines in one common wall at the Kunsthall Aarhus. Visual materials that portray these chronological chronicles are compiled and made available for the visitors. In particular, they are printed in a temporary newspaper entitled: "Algerian Pavilion: News From The Past," which can be consulted on site. In addition to this platform, the webpages of



Video stills from French television news of March 1960 that broadcasted the Algerian session of the Exhibition Expomat in Paris. The stills show the construction market and housing projects in the three northern French departments of Algeria during the Algerian War of Independence. The last still reads: "these cities blossom under the sun." The movie is accessible online: <https://www.ina.fr/video/CAF91052154/expomat-section-algerie-video.html>

the Algerian Pavilion (www.algerian-pavilion.org) are reactivated during the run of the exhibition in order to incite the dissemination of this and other micro histories, comparisons, and dialogues that involve imperialism, colonialism and spatial operations.

The Algerian Pavilion 2016 is an exercise in and an invitation for re-telling stories and re-writing histories of space and power. The history of Algeria under French colonial regime is only a paradigm, i.e. an example, or *Something to Generate From*, which may echo other geographies and communities today.



Video stills from *Képi Bleu* (Blue Cap), a French propaganda movie produced by the Cinematographic Service of the Armed Forces in 1957. The *Képi Bleu* was a nickname given to French military officers of the Special Administrative Sections because, unlike other officers, they wore blue hats. The film displays the French officer managing the site and Algerian men at work, building (as the narrator notes) their own new homes. Part of the movie is available online: <http://www.ecpad.fr/kepi-bleu-12/>

L'ART RUE

Tunis, Tunisia

L'Art Rue is a cultural and artistic non-profit organization born in 2006 at the initiative of Selma and Sofiane Ouissi, dancers and choreographers, with a desire to democratise contemporary art and offer it to the widest possible audience. The street, a public space of friction and constant negotiations, was willingly chosen by L'Art Rue to sow urban as well as rural spaces with artistic proposals created in proximity with the populations. L'Art Rue association is composed of a team of passionate people stemming from different disciplines. L'Art Rue believes that complementarity and the pluralistic approaches of its team makes up its strength and versatility.

www.lartrue.com

A proposition by Selma Ouissi and Sofiane Ouissi

With the special engagement of:

Saloua Ben Salah, Béatrice Dunoyer, Aulde Cazorla, Dhouha Bokri, Meriem Hadj Salem, Saoussen Ben Youssef, Khaoula Baya, Zina Hedhili, Yacine Blaiech , Nicolas Sburlati, Pierre Dejon, Mongi Aouinet, Cecil Thuillier, Abdellatif Snoussi, Jonathan le Fourn, The Museum of Norway: Stiftelsen Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, Rim Mejdj, along with the women potters of Sejnane, the invited artists and many volunteers



Laaroussa Project

Implementing the world, creating new artistic operating systems, working on intensive bodies preying knowledge and sensitivity, producing an aesthetic of social relations, defying all dictatorship, radicalization, boundary and marginalization: these are the ambitious and at times utopian objectives of L'Art Rue's practice.

We operate in a world where implicit barriers, categories and hierarchies are distributed by the ruling regimes and based on their politics. Although resources, whether human, economic, natural and social, abound from far and wide, willing to be considered, without their images getting stigmatized or represented in a phantasmagorical way. These circumstances are ignored.

L'Art Rue moves from this acknowledgement and the desire to creatively alter this paradigm by engaging with communities that carry alternative and rich knowledge systems and are bound by powerful identities while enacting systems of social existence strongly anchored in their local environment.

Since its creation in 2006, all the activities carried out by the

association have therefore aimed to work with and unleash the potentials of the territories the artists invested, as demonstrated by projects such as Dream City, Z.A.T. Magazine and "Change your classroom". Each of these initiatives, furthermore, has the objective to place the right to participate in the hands of those to whom the results will be most relevant. As a methodological consequence, each project is developed by trying to answer the following questions: what are the possibilities and potentials of a considered territory? To what, and to whom these may be directed?

These questions crystallize also the key objects as well as the vision nourishing the practice of intervention of L'Art Rue, in which the social role of art as well as its locality, engaged in its cultural, political-economic, architectonic and geographical dimensions, play an essential role. How can artists reactivate and redirect the creative processes at the heart of everyday life in order to foster emancipating outcomes for the systematically excluded? Which place the artist has and how can he/she enforce an aesthetic relationship that is socially meaningful for the encountered populations and invested territories?



Laaroussa Project 2011 - 2013 © L'Art Rue

For Something to Generate From L'Art Rue presents Laaroussa project, chosen because it encapsulates the modalities and ambitions of the association and in particular its objective to invent and enact utopic societies.

The collective, interdisciplinary and transversal approach is, in fact, a constant thread in L'Art Rue's activities. In Laaroussa's case, artists from origins as diverse as Tunisian, Beninese and French joined alliance with a community of women potters from Sejnane, all invited to rethink and enact a newly built space-time of socio-creative relations of production, to somehow create a collective artistic factory. From this cross-cultural encounter, the Collective Laaroussa emerged. Exploiting the transformative and empowering potential unleashed by collective action, the group successfully created a craft's cooperative in the region of Sejnane (Tunisia) in February 2011. The redemptive effects of the project may be better understood by putting into context the conditions of these women. Before the workshop they all lived isolated and constrained within the social relations of symbolic and material domination characterising contemporary rural Tunisian areas. The artistic intervention successfully put in place by L'Art Rue, subtly and poetically circumvented the dominant political and cultural repression, allowing sixty women potters to see reaffirmed the value of an ancestral and feminine know-how. The project made visible the underestimated and ignored economical potential of the women practice, while redeeming it from understanding it as mere local folklore. Furthermore, it created an opportunity for them to meet on a daily basis, re-establishing lost linkages and the power to think and work collectively. The project exploited collective action and sharing to rethink the notions of the common while inscribing public artistic practices into the social and political space, a deprived and "marginal" Tunisian territory, in the case of Sejnane. It unleashed the creative potential of all individuals involved, both artists and artisans, through creative research and knowledge sharing. Practices as working the land, making clay dolls, dancing, filmmaking, drawing, sewing, embroidering and looking after children, as well as daily-basis gestures such as preparing food, making tea and singing, all concurred in building a cooperative and creative spirit, enforcing or re-enforcing relationships between the members of both the brand new collective and of the existing society. While proposing workshops, artwork presentations and informal moments of social interaction, the project aims to invent new aesthetic relations between individuals and territories, with an experimental approach to art.



Laaroussa Project 2011 - 2013 © L'Art Rue

BANDJOUN STATION

Bandjoun, Cameroon

Situated on the high plateaux of Western Cameroon, Bandjoun Station was founded by artist Barthélémy Toguo in 2008. A contemporary art museum, it is first and foremost a place of creation which makes a stand against the lack of art spaces in Cameroon by constituting a collection of contemporary art, organizing exhibitions and gathering artists in residence. On top of that, it offers a programme of shows, screenings and lectures, as well as a reading room. The activities of Bandjoun Station are held in two separate buildings: a three storeys art centre and a living space on four floors, both more than twenty meters high. In order to protect the wall from rainwater damages, they are covered with mosaics, designed after images characteristic of Barthélémy Toguo's artistic universe. In addition to these spaces, three hectares of land are dedicated to an important agricultural project involving the cultivation of coffee plantations.

www.bandjounstation.com

A proposition by Barthélémy Toguo

With the special engagement of:

Germain Noubi, Bandjoun Station's coffee farmers, Roger Tassé Fogue, Nadine Atallah, Aude Christel Mgba, Léa Morin, Victor Guégan, and the team of performers. With the help of Nathalie Bergehe-Compoin and the Galerie Lelong, Paris



Bandjoun Station © Barthélémy Toguo

The Mobile Cafeteria

"It is essential that we, African people, find our own solutions in all areas, whether agriculture, healthcare, economy, culture, politics, education or sport. In order to do so, our African countries must set up a large number of vibrant and innovative structures in order to stimulate creativity and the desire for culture, as well as to develop the practical side and bring projects to fruition. [...]"

By combining both environmental issues and social experimentation, Bandjoun Station sets an example for the local youth; it demonstrates the central importance of agriculture in our quest to become self-sufficient in food production. It is a strong political statement; our artistic breeding ground will in turn give birth to a coffee plantation, a critical act which magnifies the artistic gesture and powerfully critiques what Léopold Sédar Senghor has called: 'the deterioration of the terms of exchange, in other words the lowering of prices for export imposed by the West which punishes and impoverishes the farmers of the South'."

-Barthélémy Toguo

Driven by a vision of art as a growth factor, Bandjoun Station's agricultural project critiques the unfairness of North-South trade and condemns the fact that, most of the time, the price of farm products such as coffee is set by Western companies regardless of the real value of the African farmers' work, thus severely impoverishing them. In order, not only to denounce this economic disparity and its serious consequences, but also to impulse changes and start reversing the trend, Bandjoun Station engaged in an important coffee plantation which employs local farmers since 2010. The coffee has been roasted for the first time in 2016, and has never been commercialized before.

Madrassa Collective invited Bandjoun Station to set up a mobile cafeteria at Kunsthall Aarhus, on the model of the "tournedos cafés" in Cameroon, in which the guests seat turning their back on the street. Launching a new and major step of the agricultural project, this cafeteria offers the visitors the unique opportunity to taste, in exclusivity, the coffee produced in the plantations of Bandjoun. Coffee cups and pouches have been especially created; their design refers to Barthélémy Toguo's artistic practice based on handicraft, while recalling – in order to challenge them – the aesthetics of industrial productions by multinational coffee companies and coffee house chains. Produced in a limited edition, these are available for sale at a price defined by Bandjoun Station. This price is based on the responsibility to pay the farmers fair wages while allowing the visitors to purchase affordable artworks, by resorting to the production of artist's multiples. Fruits of collaboration between the artist, the farmers, and a chain of multiple operators, the coffee, as well as the cups and the pouches, are in fact artworks. They synthesize the crossed reflexion on value which constitutes the very heart of Bandjoun Station's agricultural project: its main endeavour is indeed to get round and mitigate the abuses of global coffee trade via a detour by the art market. This operation is not only symbolic; it concretely allows a rebalancing of the pricing and asserts the effectivity of art's agency in social and economic interactions.

The political dimension of the project also meets Barthélémy Toguo's interest in performance and in what art critique Nicolas Bourriaud has called "relational aesthetics", i.e. art practices theoretically and practically based on the whole of human relations and their social context. Therefore, the cafeteria has been conceived as a convivial place where visitors can meet, have a rest, and enjoy their coffee while watching a video showing the environment in which the coffee is planted, harvested and transformed in Bandjoun. A team of performers manages the cafeteria and welcomes the visitors. Their presence and their



performative gestures – pouring the coffee, and numbering by hand each cup or pouch before serving the visitors – embody the many stakes and expectations of the project.

As suggested by its designation, the mobile cafeteria is intended to travel around the world, and Kunsthal Aarhus is only the first stage of a lasting and sustainable experience, which aims at redefining the notions of commercial and artistic values while reinventing the rules of the agri-food and the art markets.

PRICE LIST:

- 1 cup of coffee numbered and personalized with handwritten date and place: 40 DKK
- 1 coffee pouch (250g, 100% Arabica): 200 DKK

All the money goes to Bandjoun Station.



THE COLLECTIVE MUSEUM

Casablanca, Morocco

The Collective Museum is a project dedicated to the collective memory of cities, initiated by the Moroccan artist Mohamed Fariji in his hometown, Casablanca. It takes the form of a moving participative museum, that with each installation echoes the different surroundings in which it finds itself. The Collective Museum welcomes and is particularly interested in recovered objects and documents soon to disappear from view, that recount a story of what might have otherwise no longer existed in any form.

Fariji's conceptual works go hand in hand with civil action initiatives and grassroots environmentalism, which evolve over the course of his workshops, performances, or during the creation of participative site-specific works in the public space. In 2011, Fariji created with Léa Morin The Observatory, located in the countryside near Casablanca, where he continues to develop participative projects there, designed as a staging ground to foster and guide contemporary creation.

www.atelierobservatoire.com/musee-collectif

A proposition by Mohamad Fariji

With the special engagement of:

Léa Morin, Said Ramî, Abdessamad El Montassir, Sarah Morris, Abdelmajid Kellou, Juliette Déjoué, Lucie Deschamps, Wiame Haddad, Said Rais, Salma Lahlou, Yasmina Reggad and Nouha Ben Yebdri



For a collective memory

The Collective Museum consists of a series of acts of recovery and collection of documents, photographs, objects, films, and memories from family and intimate life in cities, and from abandoned or former public spaces linked to daily family life (the aquarium, amusement parks, schools, libraries, etc.) and currently facing demolition. The Collective Museum is presented in rural, suburban and urban public spaces, through ephemeral “exhibition-actions”. This participative act is characterized by a will and desire for the creation of a collective memory. It is conceived as an alternative way of writing history, as an alternative to an “official history”, through a focus on collective and individual stories.

It is through such ephemeral “exhibition-actions” that The Collective Museum, whose collection continues to grow progressively richer, takes its place in public arenas, in streets, in fields, in public squares, and particularly in the form of mobile containers transformed into museum spaces. It is regularly nourished by further collecting, salvaging and research, carried out through workshops, and by the artist, his collaborators and all

those wishing to entrust their “memory-objects” or propose acts of collection (in their areas, in schools, communities, families, etc), in Casablanca and in other cities of the North African region.

In Morocco, one of The Collective Museum’s first actions was to intervene during the demolition of the Ibnou Abbad primary school in Casablanca. The undercover operation recovered objects, class photos, furniture, maps, books and other “memories”, testimonies from across the lifespan of a public space that saw thousands of Casablanican school children pass through its doors. These objects, on the point of being buried by bulldozers already in action, formed the Collective Museum’s first display case. It was presented to the public in October 2015 at Thinkart, Casablanca.

In another instance, Yasmina amusement park in central Casablanca had been abandoned for over fifteen years when, following numerous work meetings and awareness raising efforts with the city’s public authorities, Fariji was able to recover a portion of what was set to be destroyed (carousels, games, pedalos, cash registers, frescoes, paintings and light fixtures) in



Park Yasmina's carousel planes exhibited in a rural space. April 2016
© Atelier de l'Observatoire

order to incorporate them into The Collective Museum. In May 2016, a carousel from Park Yasmina was installed in the public space in Hay Mohammadi, a district in the east of Casablanca.

A forthcoming workshop, in partnership with l'Uzine, will be held with residents of the nearby district of Ain Sebaa, and will seek to continue and expand the collective recovery actions.

Internationally, The Collective Museum project took its first steps outside Morocco in early 2016. As artist-in-residence at a.r.i.a art residency in Algiers, Algeria, Fariji lead a workshop with residents of Algiers, leading to the creation of a new display case for The Collective Museum. Fariji will organise a similar action in Sharjah, UAE, in October 2016, thanks to a production grant from the Sharjah Art Foundation.

As The Collective Museum's collection continues to grow and more cities become implicated, an exhibition will be prepared, bringing together the different display cases from cities across the world.

For the exhibition *Something to Generate From*, The Collective Museum will draw on the collective memory of Park Yasmina (Casablanca, Morocco). Mohamed Fariji recreates the amusement park within Kunsthall Aarhus with the installation of Hully Gully (2015), a set of letters forming the signage for one of Park Yasmina's legendary old carousels, as well as photographs of the carousels and a display case of objects found in the park during 2015 (including photographs, tickets, ID cards of the employees, etc.). A film documenting the interventions, performances and processes will also be shown.

The Collective Museum as part of *Something to Generate From* explores the notion of "collective making" in relation to memory. In this work, collective memory is the source from which an institution can be generated. The Collective Museum is presented as a collaborative work in progress, with the view to becoming a museum in the near future, dedicated to the memory of Casablanca and to be housed in the city's former aquarium, a site of significant historical and architectural interest. The project is carried out in the spirit of "collective making" through its openness to the participation of other artists, through its workshops, and by inviting to citizens to make voluntary donations. The building of this museum is the collective work of citizens, thinkers, artists, and students.



Park Yasmina carousel, May 2016 © Wlame Haddad

FEHRAS PUBLISHING PRACTICES

Syria/Germany

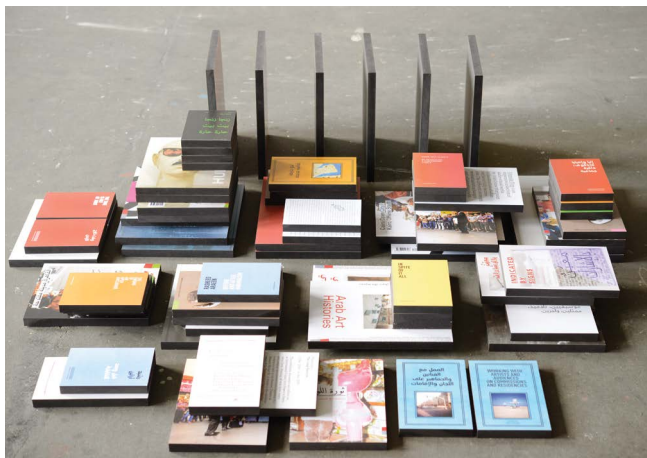
Fehras Publishing Practices (Kenan Darwich, Omar Nicolas, and Sami Rustom) is a publisher and space established in Berlin in 2015. It was founded as a response to mounting questions concerning the history and the presence of publishing in the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and the diaspora.

The mission of Fehras is to research the issue of “publishing” as a subject matter through observing and experimenting with its forms. Fehras works on publishing projects in which alternative forms are tested, attempting to extend this term and create a new culture of critical engagement.

www.fehraspublishingpractices.org

A proposition by Kenan Darwich, Omar Nicolas and Sami Rustom

With the special engagement of:
Léa Morin



Bilingual Art Publications issued by Arabic cultural institutions © Fehras Publishing Practices 2016

Mirroring Language, Extended Dictionaries

The project deals with the shifting of the Arabic cultural language inside the cultural field. It concerns with the appearance of the phenomena / language within art publications issued by Arabic institutions that emerged in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa in the last decades. Therefore the project is researching the relationship between institutions and cultural production and how this relationship affects the production of language and strategies of publishing. The emphasis is on four points: bilingualism and institutions, translation and dictionaries making.

A few months ago, we at Fehras Publishing Practices, have begun studying a phenomenon we have decided to call "changing of the Arabic cultural language" as part of the series "Institutional Terms". Our motivation stems from an interest in the Arabic language as well as in art books published by Arabic cultural institutions.

One may be able to observe the changes within the cultural institutions from the 1990s across the Eastern Mediterranean and

North Africa, specifically pointing to cities such as Cairo, Beirut, Marrakesh, and several cities in the Gulf region. Since this period, new artistic practices have emerged within the Arabic cultural context introducing new concepts and ideas. Moreover, many Arabic cultural institutions with specific policies and interests have raised in this period working under globalized conditions. Yet, it should also be underlined that the discovery of “modern Arabic culture” as an important sector for investment by private capital and governments alike has additionally contributed to a rise of cultural institutions. Through invitations, residencies, and funded projects, artists and cultural producers were given the chance to move more easily in the global context and to therefore play a greater role abroad.

While collecting and sorting through these art publications, the symmetrical bilingual use of language caught our eyes in particular. Flipping through an entire open-faced book, one can see Arabic positioned identically opposite of the other language, printed in similar sizes and occupying almost the same amount of space. This ratio can apply to the whole content of the publication. Prefaces, interviews, biographies and researches inside these publications deal with contemporary art and its recent discourses. While expressing modern artistic concepts, the texts of these books present new terms which seem unfamiliar in the Arabic cultural context. Subsequently, they present terms with new significations and meanings.

Following this strategy that on one hand is experimenting with the linguistic structures and on the other hand is inventing new terms around emerged modern discourses, we started as a first step to select terms and formulations that seem unfamiliar to us by underlining them in Arabic essays and the equivalent English texts. We began to collect these terms and formulations from art publications by ordering them under the discourses that they related to such as the discourse on the body, globalization, public space, gender, feminism, etc.

Using the strategy of bilingualism in art publications raises questions about the purposes of translation. An important aspect that has greatly influenced our research was our encounter with two historic linguistic references, namely “Index of Terms” (Kashaf Mustalahi) created by the Syrian author, translator and poet Kamal Abu-Deeb for the Arabic translation of “Orientalism” by Edward W. Said 1981 and for his translation of Said’s work “Culture and Imperialism” 1997. The “Index of Terms” is a list of English terminology chosen by the translator of Said’s original text, aiming to create Arabic synonyms for the fitting terms by using specific rules attached. The translator considers his two indices as an

adventure and an experiment within the structures of language. His Kashafs not only aims to represent the English discourse on Said's by simplifying it and fitting it into the constraints of the English language, rather, it is a strategy to extend and enrich this language, aiming to make it more flexible which, according to Abu-Deeb, is an essential condition for its development.

The appearance of new terms and formulations and its new usage within the Arabic cultural language as well as the emergence of this language out of the need of expressing modern concepts and the conditions of globalization and cultural institutions, brought the research back to the history of Arabic dictionaries making in the cultural field, their process of production and aims. The past of dictionaries making in the cultural field in the region led to question the role that Arabic dictionaries play in enhancement writings and critics on art and how do the production of cultural dictionaries influence the linguistic production on culture and the knowledge about it.

Body		الجسد	
Gendered Bodies	أجساد متجانسة	Decorated Body	الجسم المزين
Modern Body	الجسم المعاصر	Virtual Sex	الجنس الافتراضي
Contemporary Body	الجسم المعاصر	Personal Body	الجسم الشخصي
The Marginalisation of the Senses	تهميش الحواس	Skin Mutilated	التعطيل بالجسد
Modern Body	الجسم الحديث	Scenes of Scratching	مشاهد الحكاك
Suggested Body	الجسم المقترح	Physical Sensation	الإحساس الجسدي

The observations, methodology and process that Fehras used for its research on produced language in art publications and on historical experiences of Arabic cultural dictionaries making, will be presented as a proposal for a dictionary on art writing and critics prepared by Fehras Publishing Practices. This proposal follows specific methodology and collecting various lists that explore unfamiliar terms and formulations in Arabic which were researched and selected out of the same publications with their English equivalents and arranged by their discourses.

Through its work and research on, with and about archives, Fehras Publishing Practices presents at the exhibition *Something to Generate From* a rereading, a reorganization and a repositioning of discourses on knowledge and power and that on reality and fiction. The work is a poetical and historical journey through identity, language and art history of the eastern and western world whose complexed relationship is closely interweaved with the colonial history.

INVISIBLE BORDERS

Lagos, Nigeria

Invisible Borders Trans-African Photographers Organisation is an artist-led initiative founded and registered as a not-for-profit organisation in Nigeria. The organisation works with artists and individuals in contributing to the patching of numerous gaps and misconceptions posed by frontiers within the 54 countries of Africa through art and photography. Beyond that the organisation hopes to expand its activities beyond issues that relate to geographic borders and other forms of discriminating parameters in photography and arts. It is a platform that also stands as a symbol of exchange of ideas between cultures and people.

www.invisible-borders.com

A proposition by Emeka Okereke and Emmanuel Iduma

With the special engagement of:

Ala Kheir, Jide Odukoya, Tom Saater, Novo Isioro, Ray Daniels Okeugo, Lucy Azubuike, Zaynab, O. Odunsi, Yagazie Emezi, Eloghosa Osunde, Yinka Elujoba, Uche Okonkwo, Francesca Masoero and Marc Mouarkech



A Trans-African Worldspace

What happens when traveling artists take up the customary and habitual as a space for intervention? A trans-African world emerges. “Trans,” a going-across, a traversal, also suggests movement, transience, and a space-time continuum. The artists who inhabit this continuum take up temporary residence in migrant routes and in the cities and towns where fellow Africans take up permanent residence. While traveling, the artists interact as intimate strangers. They befriend their hosts, eat whatever is offered, attend dance parties, and become familiar with quotidian occurrences. Out of this abrupt familiarity emerge images, essays, and films.

Since 2009, Invisible Borders has organized road trips across African cities and borders, and recently European cities. Taking off from Lagos, their destinations have included: Bamako, Dakar, Addis Ababa, Libreville, and Sarajevo. The journey has taken them through cities and towns known only to the wayfarer and vagrant —Diema, Ekok, Mamfe, Ferkessedougou, Bitam, Maiduguri, Kousseri, Gamboru-Ngala, Kidira, Ekok, Kayes, for instance — and

through ordeals faced by illegal migrants. An “invisible border” has not, in the course of the project, suggested the absence of borders, bureaucratic bottlenecks, or corrupt officials. But it has suggested an experiment in the blurring of border-lines through movement: the rolling of tyres, the trudging of feet, the body of artists’ in constant motion.

Imagine digging through mud that reaches up to your ankle, sleeping in mud-coated feet and dress, joined by the residents of a border town in Cameroon, uncertain of tomorrow. Imagine being arrested by policemen in N’djamena for taking photographs in the Grand Marche, spending six hours without knowing your fate. Imagine crossing through Gamboru-Ngala, a town in the wake of a Boko Haram attack. Imagine stopping in the middle of the night to realize bandits on an Ethiopian highway have placed a roadblock in front of your car.

A trans-African artist, as proposed by Invisible Borders, aims to map the continent’s cities by outdistancing them. Works of art bring close what has been kept afar. In attempting to draw close, the process is not distinct from the outcome; what the head imagines is consequential to what the hand does.

Is there any value in reflecting on habitual occurrences? These occurrences, some might argue, is the result of a redoubtable colonial legacy, the bustling attempts at survival in chaotic metropolises, or perhaps the characteristic underdevelopment that gives Africa its peculiar narrative. The work of Invisible Borders since inception has appropriated ordinariness quite differently. Artists and writers who have traveled as part of the project have not insisted on showing everyday spaces—like markets, streets, restaurants, roads, and malls—as places in need of repair or development. But as places where life occurs without judgment, with mirth, theatricality, and beauty. This approach has not lessened the severity of the continent’s paradoxes. It has proposed a subtler, more graceful look.

A Trans-African Worldspace is inceptioned at the moment the experience of travel across African borders intersects with an idiosyncratic interpretation of it. Artists who have been invited to participate in the road trips are not inclined to work according to fixed worldviews and propaganda: if there is any manifesto it is one defined by their curiosities and proclivities. Hence the Worldspace is formed by the immediacy with which the traveling artists realize that the diversity of the continent is like a sea of endless encounters, productive happenstances, and valuable collaborations.

There's a trans-African highway network under construction by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Union, which is planned to consist of nine highways, a total of 56,683 kilometers. While this highway network is being built to facilitate trade (also called a "trade corridor"), the work of Invisible Borders seems to be an attempt to trifle with its worth as a commoditized route. Trans-Africanism, an intellectual kin to pan-Africanism, focuses less on the possible ideological unity of African culture, but on the willingness to saunter within the bracket that is Africanness—the bracketed diversity.

Something about moving within a bracket allows for the dismantling of assumptions. A bracket, in mathematical terms, is used in the process of factorization—resolving polynomial expressions. Consider the content of the bracket as x , a value constantly being sought out. Thus movement wouldn't be toward a fixed destination: it will always be considered in terms of what happens within, the journeying and not the destination.

How then to focus on a journey, and not a destination? For Invisible Borders, the process and value of journeying is in the everyday—laying bare the subtleties and dynamism and even candor of what is always glossed over in the quest for news headlines. The product of the journey, of traveling in a van for weeks and making stops in big cities and small villages, and making detours to insignificant towns, is the Everyday held up for view. It's the movement into the point where poignancy meets mundaneness. It's finding rhythm in the strides of people on the street and freezing it, yet preserving the act of movement without pretense, as though motion is the activity that imbues stasis with significance (of course it is).

In the late Ray Daniels Okeugo's photographs, for instance, the response is to consider the humorous balance of things and people as only an entertained visitor would. If Okeugo is mirthful, the photographs of Emeka Okereke—the group's founder—show a balance in fleeting moments, as though when things whirl apart they are inherently stationary. And in Nouakchott, Mauritania, Okereke's collaboration with Emmanuel Iduma shows how self-absorption can be a thing of value, a way for a stranger to appear intimate. Other idiosyncratic interpretations are offered: the portraits by Jumoke Sanwo and Jide Odukoya close up gaps between visitor and resident, affirming the individuality of Nigerians in the African diaspora and the peculiarity of each features. Tom Saater, a documentary photographer, records, as if without pause, his disquietude in the controversial custom of bullfights in Malaga; but Ala Kheir is slower, looking at abstractions in unfinished buildings and evidences of the passage of time in Khartoum and Addis Ababa.

Invisible Borders has been invested in the question of movement. Asking this entails grasping at the nature of the everyday, an everyday in flight. How else do you hit the nerve of representation in a continent whose act of being has often taken on several interpretations and meanings? In certain cases, as in this, form has to take the shape of content. A road trip across borders—where the complexities of living and surviving in Africa become glaring each kilometer covered—is the form that has taken the shape of the content. Seconds of crossing are equal to layers and layers of meaning. In this way movement becomes something other than merely moving from place to place, as though each artist that participates in the road trip is constantly being held to the neck by giant metaphors.

In a photograph by Emeka Okereke, *Cruising*, lines blur into lines. Blurs constitute an effect of intransigence, the stubborn refusal to accept the lines and demarcations that have been given by consensual narrative realities of life in African countries. Traversal begins with blurs—not as a matter of being blinded to the existence of lines, but finding ways in which the lines become less obvious, less stringent.



© Invisible Border 2012

In 2016, Invisible Borders will bring together seven Nigeria artists to travel within Nigeria, across over a dozen cities and towns. It is said that history never returns to a lost state. There is certainly no artistic intervention that can hope to reveal a Nigeria that could have existed without the British. What seems possible, however, is to illuminate the multiple histories that continue to exist in a post-colony, through a mishmash of voices: ethnicities, religions, and visions of modernity.

A market environment interaction, Cameroon © Lilian Novo Isioro, Invisible Border 2012



MASS ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria, Egypt

MASS Alexandria is a non-profit space dedicated to contemporary art practices, research, production and art education. Founded in 2010 by artist Wael Shawky, it hosts an intensive studio and study programme to supplement the state-run, official art education in Egypt.

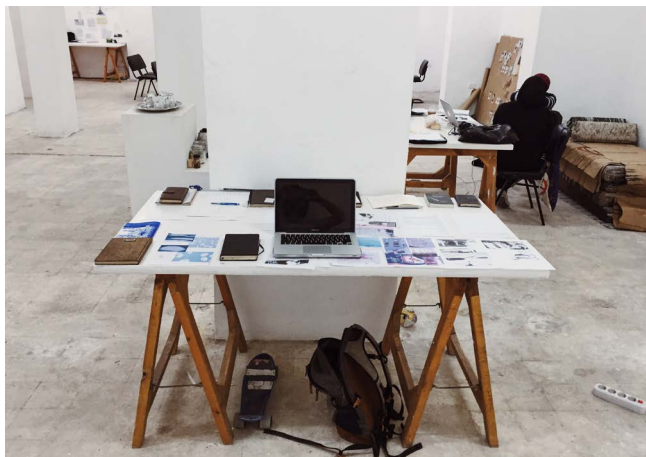
www.facebook.com/mass.alexandria

A proposition by the artists of MASS Alexandria:

Alaa Hikal, Ash Moniz, Asmaa Abdelhafez, Assem A. Hendawi, Chitra Sangtani, Fathi Hawas, Ghidaa Ashraf, Hadia El Masry, Hala Salah, Hanaa Safwat, Maha Emad, Mohammed Atalla, Mohamed Monaiseer, Marianne Fahmy, Nadia Mounier, Omar Senada, Omar Adel, Pancé Ahmed, Passant El Deeb, Sara Hamdy, Sara Moustafa, Asmaa Barakat, Seba Ali Mahmoud, Takwa Sabry, Yasmine El-Meleegy

With the special engagement of:

Berit Schuck, Nadine Atallah and Marc Mouarkech



Making Things Public

Founded in 2010 by artist Wael Shawky, MASS Alexandria has always been both a space for artists that want to experiment with new theoretical and practical ideas and create new work, and an experimental art school that bridges local and international discourses. From its first year, MASS Alexandria has deliberately worked with and in the city of Alexandria, which means it responded to the weak infrastructure of the city, the lack of studio and exhibition space, whilst offering a programme that allowed young artists to discuss new forms of knowledge and the forming of knowledge against the backdrop of an academic environment where art and art education often means to focus on learning how to make a drawing, painting or sculpture.¹

The first edition of MASS Alexandria's studio and study programme drafted and co-directed by Wael Shawky and Sarah Rifki found possible answers to the challenges of the environment and was an immediate success. It did not only attract a group of twenty young artists, it offered the first programme in contemporary art

in Egypt that corresponded perfectly with the more progressive, independent Alexandrian art scene of those times.

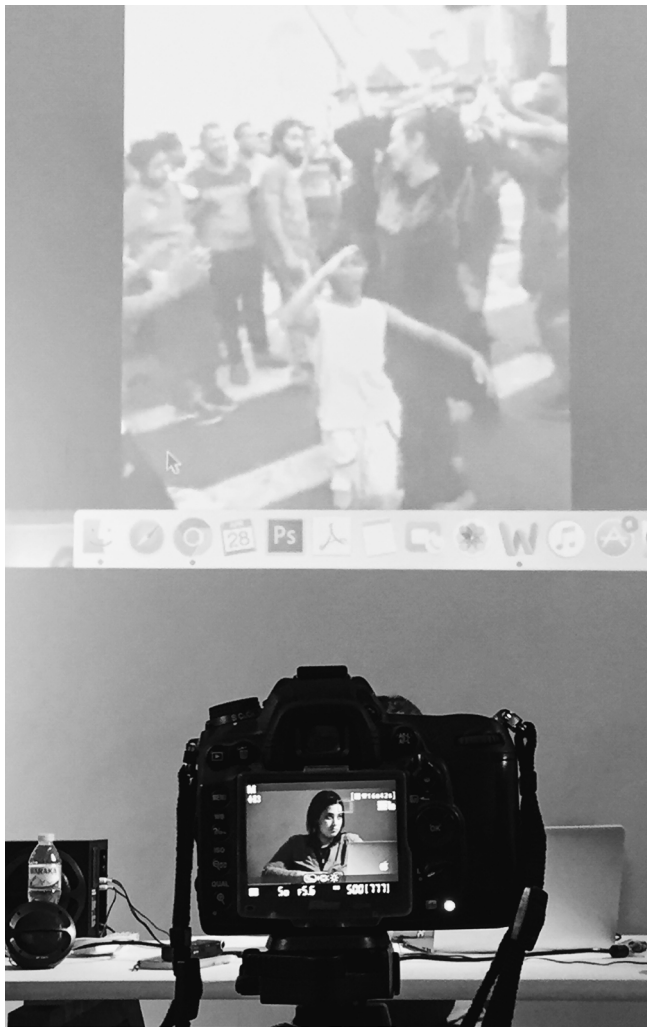
In the following years the school brought out two more programmes with curators Daniella Rose King and Petra Swais as programme coordinators, and Adriano Pedrosa, Alex Freedman, Amal Khalaf, Angela Harutyunyan, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Hoor Al Qasemi, Janna Graham, Judith Wielander, Malak Helmy, Susanne Pfeffer and William Wells amongst other as visiting professors, and was invited to participate in dOCUMENTA 13 and the Sharjah Biennale. However, the international success of MASS Alexandria did not save the school from being heavily affected by the unrest, realignment, transformation and change happening in Egypt in the years after 2011, and in 2013 MASS Alexandria was forced to close.

It did not take long until it became clear that it was desirable to keep the programme running despite the increasingly complex political, social and cultural situation. In 2015 MASS Alexandria thus decided to open its doors again after a two-year hiatus and extended renovations, independent as before, but with the support of an advisory board.

The new programme of MASS Alexandria, conceived and directed by curator Berit Schuck, integrates research seminars, workshops and lectures and is centred on four themes, questions or topics that help structure the year. The twenty-four artists enrolled in this year's edition of MASS Alexandria's studio and study programme discuss what its means to be an artist under the current circumstances, explore urban narratives, work towards the decolonization of the history and historiography of art, and look into possibilities for art spaces that exist in challenging environments with Ahmad Ghossein, Ali Cherri, Bassam el Baroni, Antje Majewski, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung, Haig Aivazian, Jakob Jakobsen, Jasmina Metwaly, Mahmoud Khaled, Mohamed Elshahed and Mounira Al Solh as visiting professors.

At the group critiques held once a month under the title Making Things Public², the artists of MASS Alexandria all give a presentation about their work and are then requested to contribute to the discussion of the works to the discussion of the works by pointing out inspiring theories, debates, artists and exhibitions. Sometimes invited guests join the discussions, but the idea is to give the feedback into the hands of the artists and to encourage them to find their own language. In short, MASS Alexandria's Making Things Public² is a marathon of presentations and discussions that is exhausting but in a sense a good example of collective making.

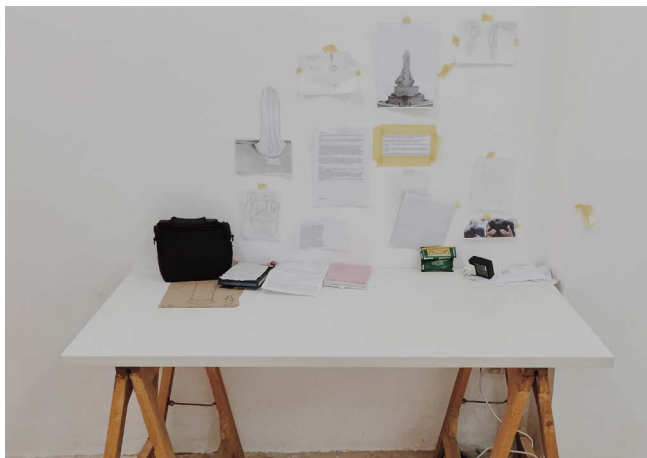
How does contemporary art, how does art education look like



in a place where the sound of shouting street vendors, honking cars and Sha'abi music is never far away and actually penetrates the silence of the artists' studios every other minute? How and with whom do the artists of MASS Alexandria currently create new work? To find answers to these questions put forward by the invitation of the Madrassa Collective to participate in *Something to Generate From* the artists of MASS Alexandria suggest coming for a visit or engaging with the installation they made for the exhibition space at Kunsthal Aarhus. The installation comprises a video documentation of one of the last Making Things Public events at MASS Alexandria's studio space in Miami including presentations of all twenty-four artists, a small edition of their personal research archives and twenty-four letters where they talk about the traditions, impulses, exhibitions and theories they find relevant for their current work.

1- See "Writing the Canon: Notes on Art Education in Egypt" by Omar Kholeif published in 2013 on the blog of the New Museum, <http://www.newmuseum.org/blog/view/writing-the-canon-notes-on-art-education-in-egypt>)

2- The title was first used for an exhibition on atmospheres of democracy curated by Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel for the ZKM in Karlsruhe in 2005.



MASS Alexandria © Fathi Hawas 2016

Madrassa Collective would like to thank all who participated in the making of the exhibition, the public programme and the publication:

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