

Siwar Krai(y)tem

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Still in my Quotidian

The lecture-performance takes on language as a confrontational tool. Based on diary entries documenting Siwar's relationship to Arabic since moving to Amsterdam, It addresses language in relation to questions of privilege, hierarchy, and precarity, reflecting on multilingualism and society and tools of social negotiation. Still in my quotidian is a housewarming of sorts for a stranger in Amsterdam, a long awaited one. As Siwar receives their residency permit to stay another two years here, she questions what it means to stay in Amsterdam, find space and allow for their language to claim space.

Siwar met Alev, Betül and Hanieh on a screen in 2023, as part of their current participation in BAK's Fellowship for Situated Practice. Soon after, they formed a gathering called 'Yaani' inspired by the common word in colloquial Arabic and Turkish. Alev and Betül will be performing with Siwar about belonging, alienation, and familiarity as part of their ongoing discussion around language. Hanieh's voice will accompany them through a remote yet close proximity.

March 2024

De Appel, Amsterdam,
in collaboration with
Alev Ersan, Betül Aksu,
and Hanieh Fatouraee

lecture-performance

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Arabic is still in my Quotidian, yes it is.

Since moving to the Netherlands, Siwars' focus on language and multilingualism have been her driving force. In early 2021, she wrote two letters to her mother tongue, Arabic.

The diary-like series in this publication responds to those two letters, documenting Siwars' evolving relationship with the language since moving to the Netherlands, mainly as a testament to herself and a way of keeping her promise to the language.

November 2023

Published by
Unformed
Informed

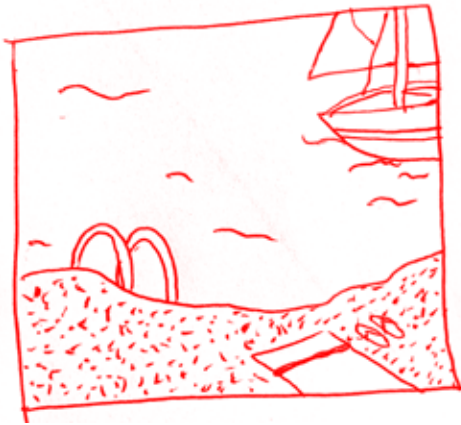
publication

Arabic is still in my quotidian

comissioned writing + publication design / November 2023

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اللغة العربية لا تزال لا تزال

Tongues at Play

Languages act, they perform and inhabit. They also oppress, witness, haunt, and play. Tongues at play is a work that speaks to our multilingualism and the complexity of roles and performativities that different languages play in our lives. At times an oppressor, at others witness, haunter, or impolite, these roles often shift and transform, occupying different objects, spaces, and relevances. In a series of letters addressed to the languages that have so far been part of her journey, Siwar creates a space that attempts to resolve and understand the relationships she has with each, activating memories, reflecting on proximities, and forming new insights and connections spatially. Participants are invited to engage with the letters in a playground-like space where each letter is translated into scale, space, and sound fed by the roles they currently embody in a scene that denotes the transformational capacity of those roles and that present a self-reflective journey as a case study of one's relationships with languages.

June 2022

graduation work
for DD design,
exhibited at
Kunstkapel,
Amsterdam

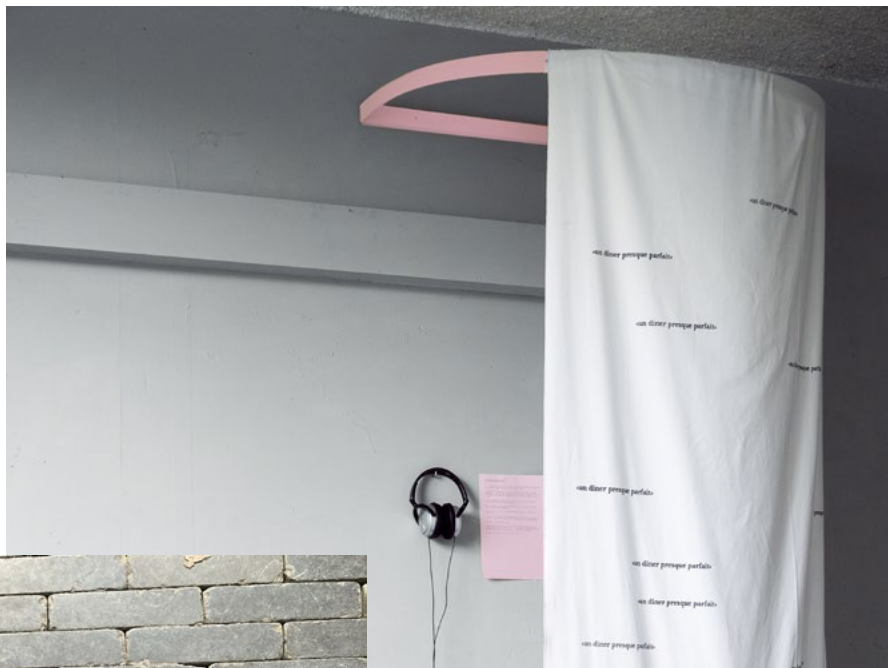
sound and spatial installation

TONGUES
AT PLAY

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TONGUES
AT PLAY



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Word Match

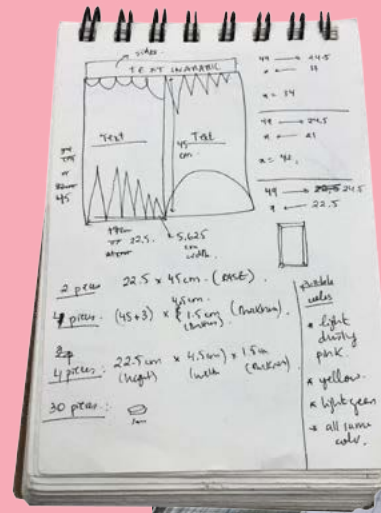
This was an interactive installation that took place at Mediamatic Amsterdam, as part of the group show 'disclosing discomforts'. It was a work in progress display on my research on multilingualism and the politics of language. Like a public square or classroom, backgammon is a tool for social negotiation. It is a format of the public sphere that has been common in Arabia, Persia, and Mesopotamia for centuries, played in coffee houses, on the sidewalks by the sea, with or without an audience. With an intention to explore intuitive formats and tools of collective social negotiation, I invited guests to engage with my research on the communal transformative aspect of language and the different glossary-related projects I am involved in, through a word debate and discussion over a match of backgammon.

interactive installation and product design

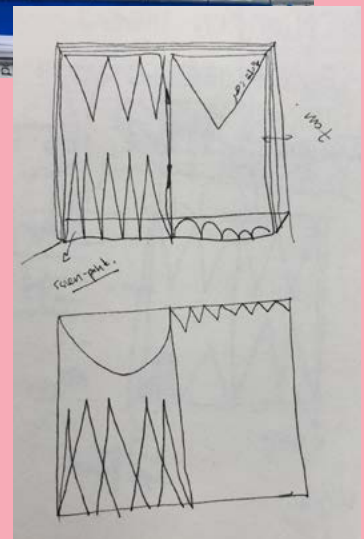
November 2021

Designed with
Hatem Imam
while working with
© Studio Safar

As part of a wood-workshop, we were prompted to think of an object we would like to bring or build to a collective space. I decided to build a backgammon table. I saw it as a social negotiator which would add value to a collective space.



The panels were cut and the patterns were screen-printed.



For the exhibition, I conceived a backgammon booth where participants would engage with my research on language



The players would roll the dice, based on the number they got, they would receive a card and reading which we would engage with together. It would become the topic we would discuss as we play.



2

If you roll a 2,
we will go through the essay

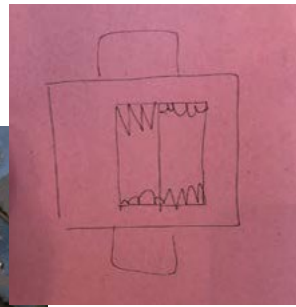
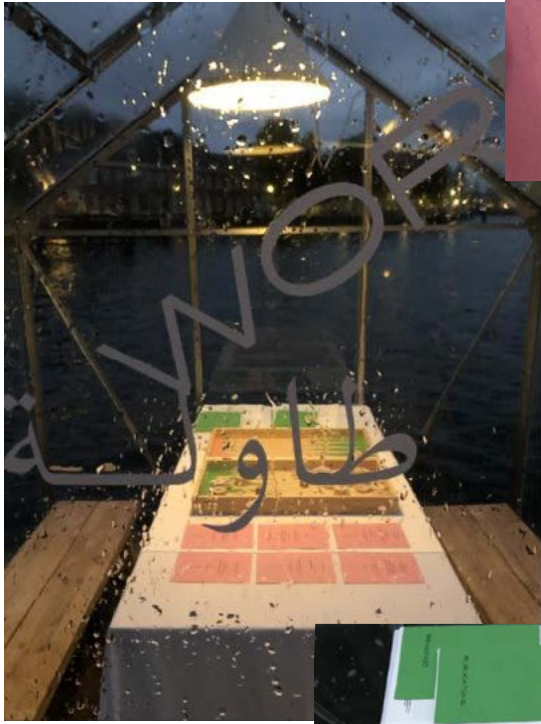
To Write in a
Foreign Language
Etel Adnan

vs.

New Materialisms
Sarah., S, Ahmed

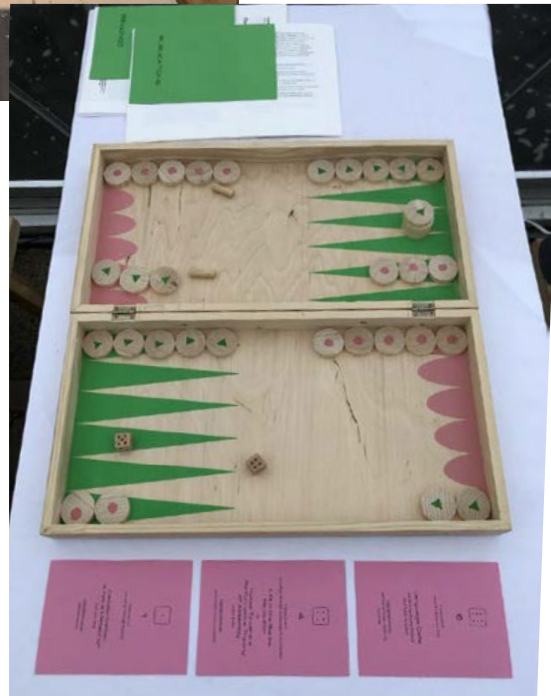
highlighted words:
positionality

WORD
MATCH



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Latlateh **لآلآة** (language café)

Since 2021, I co-curate Latlateh (Arabic for unmeaningful chatter). In its first series, 'The Language of Oppression and Resistance', we held 7 encounters that took place between The Netherlands and Belgium, tackling the language used in media, social media, power plays, the battle of narratives, and the dominant discourse on the Palestine question. Latlateh's upcoming series 'On Urgency' will take place at Sandberg Instituut, de Appel Amsterdam, and Framed Framed Amsterdam will deconstruct the term 'urgency' through a series of encounters in which we discuss its meaning in relation to other terminologies that we associate with such as time, speed, action and solidarity.

platform on language
and translation

June 2021 - ongoing

In collaboration
with Rasha Dakkak

chapter 1: KUNSTHAL GHENT *in collaboration with cairography collective*

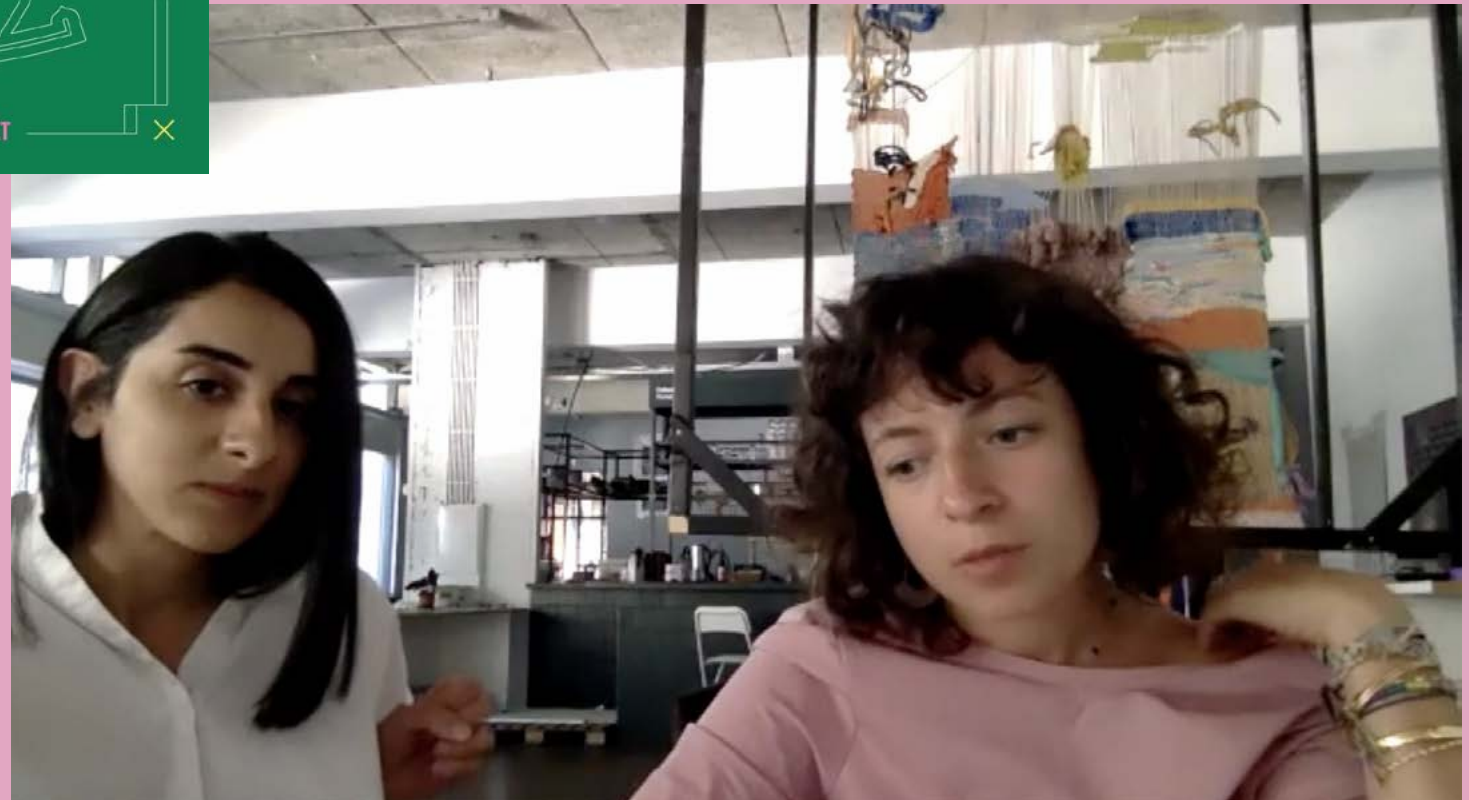
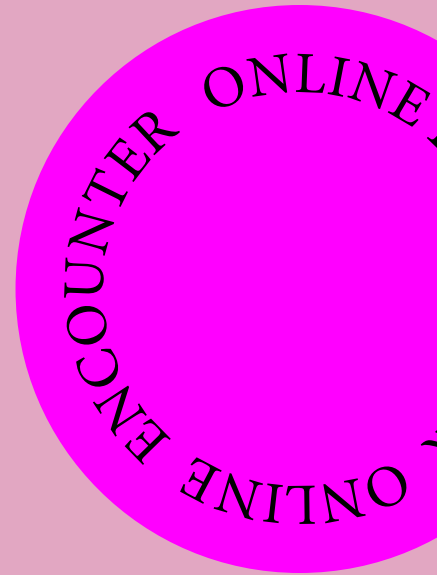
07.06.2021



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This session was conceived as a discussion on the vocabulary used to describe the events occurring in Palestine in May 2021. The interactive session which happened over two dates aimed to study terms that have been used in media to describe what goes on in Palestine and contest it by proposing a list of terms to be 'added' or 'removed' from the conversation on Palestine.



chapter 3: APPLES & ORANGES GENK

02.10.2021

The third session was through our participation in the book fair 'Apples & Oranges' in Genk, Belgium where we presented an archive of censored social media posts on Palestine, headlines, as well as videos, such as the famous interview of Ghassan Kanafani. During the session we discussed the importance of terminology in shaping political narratives and opened up the discussion to other struggles beyond Palestine.

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chapter 4: MEDIAMATIC AMSTERDAM

28.10.2021

The fourth session was centered on the statement that was rewritten by the students of the Disarming Design program, us included as a pitch statement to be issued by the Sandberg Institute in response to the events in Palestine. We also used this piece of text that we wrote as a base to pick out terms that we analyzed and built on such as: in solidarity with, oppressor, and liberation movement. We also juxtaposed other statements written in the same light.



INSTALLATION

SYSTEM

PROSPECTIONS

18/06/2021

Tactical Solidarities

In solidarity with the Palestinian decolonization struggle and decolonization efforts everywhere

BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht stands in solidarity with the Palestinian decolonization struggle and with decolonization efforts everywhere.

To counter the long histories and pervasive colonial violence that persists till today, we need to expand the horizon of intersectional solidarities across decolonization efforts everywhere. We firmly believe that the role of cultural institutions such as ours is to tackle and widen the understanding of how knowledge and language are structurally woven in the oppression, and to propose and enact alternatives that align with the struggle and the possibility to build a world together otherwise.

BAK also fully endorses the statement issued by the Graduate Gender Programme & Netherlands Research School of Gender Studies at Utrecht University, on 14 May 2021. Read it here.

Moreover, BAK co-wrote (on 19 May 2021) a joint statement with Jan van Eyck Academie and Rijksakademie, as fellow Netherlands-based cultural and post-academic institutions. Read it here.

Sandberg and Rietveld have remained publicly silent so far. You claim to teach decolonial theory and yet have failed to take even the smallest of action in solidarity with Palestine. This year, your lack of action* is more problematic than ever, given, as you have stated officially before, that our department 'is derived from the long-term collaboration between the Design Department and the design platform 'Disarming Design from Palestine', which is committed to design practices that deal with conditions of conflict, oppressive forces and entangled histories.' We ask you to condemn the settler-colonial genocidal entity that is the

INSTALLATION

chapter 5: FRAMER FRAMED AMSTERDAM

25.03.2022

REFUGEE + MIGAS

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Europe welcomes Ukrainian refugees with open arms and a different take on solidarity and sanctions. It appears that the term "refugee" has multiple layers and that fleeing a country to avoid danger does not automatically qualify you as a "conventional" refugee. Over time, we have witnessed solidarity called into question and sanctions banned or criminalised in some European nations. In this encounter of "Language of Oppression and Resistance," we will get together to explore these terminologies as we notice a shift in tone from many with anti-migration sentiments.



Latlateh *on urgency* May 5^H 7^{PM} 12^H 4^{PM} 2023 **NEU**

Latlateh, Arabic for meaningless chatter, is a platform curated by artists Rasha Dakkak and Siwar Krai(y)tem that centers on the potential of language, our relation to language(s), and the impact of translation.

NEAR EAST UNION INVITES YOU TO

2 SESSIONS OF LATLATEH
TO DECONSTRUCT THE TERM:
"URGENCY"

11 MAY 2023 - 17—19:00

12 MAY 2023 - 13—16:00

Published texts on Language

I was commissioned to write or co-write on my main research topic of 'Language' and 'Multi-lingualisms'. These texts were published with different entities: Hackers & Designers, a collective from Amsterdam, Journal Safar, a bi-lingual graphic design and visual culture journal from Beirut, Lebanon.

ongoing

Hackers & Designers

Durable Discussions

Journal Safar

Unformed Informed

Published texts

This text is a reflection on naming and un-naming, it questions personal names,

The collective, Hackers & Designers also commissioned me to write a text on language as part of their new publication: "First... Then, Repeat".

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 - 3.5 Roleplaying in Etherpad
 - 3.6 Skinship
 - 3.7 Spreadsheet Routines
- 4 How-tos
- 5 Distributed Curricula
- 6 Active bibliographies
- 7 Colophon

Prompts ←

Untitling

Siwar Kraytem

I. How to understand your name

When my parents found out they were pregnant with a girl, back in early 1991, they couldn't agree on a name. My father always had one in mind, an old Arabic name, which was quite uncommon at the time. It was the name of an older family member that had always resonated with him, and a gut feeling told him it would become the name of his daughter one day. My mother, on the other hand, preferred more modern names like Karma or Sarah. As my mom would later do and advise me to do in situations of indecisiveness, she would perform a particular prayer, استخارة istikhara, which is meant to help you decide which choice will be best for you.

In Islam in general and with my family in particular, names carry a lot of significance. A child has the right to be *حسن التسمية* "well-named" by their parents as this will be the carrier of their personality. In Islam, it is believed that a child's name is chosen by Allah. My mother and father had different ideas about what to name their daughter. My mother wanted a name that was meaningful and my father wanted a name that was easy to pronounce.

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- 1 First, Then... Repeat.
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- 7 Colophon

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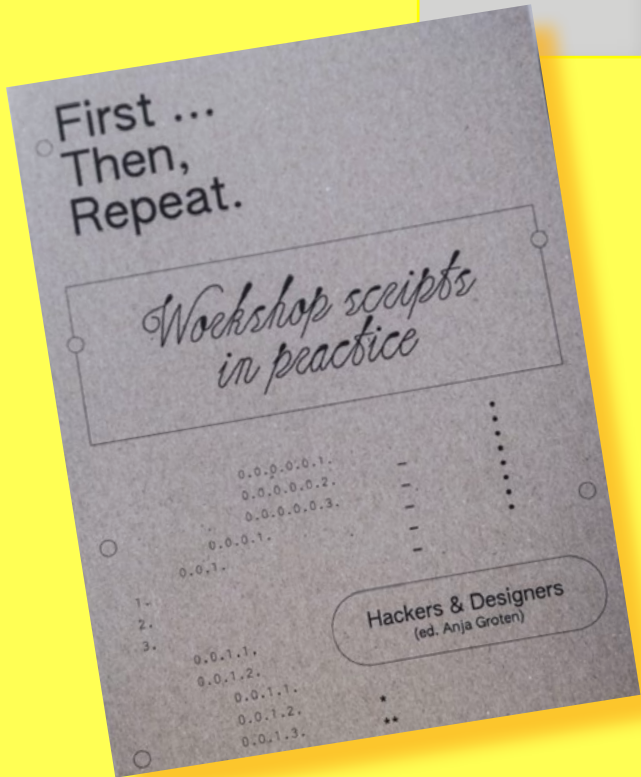
Thought:

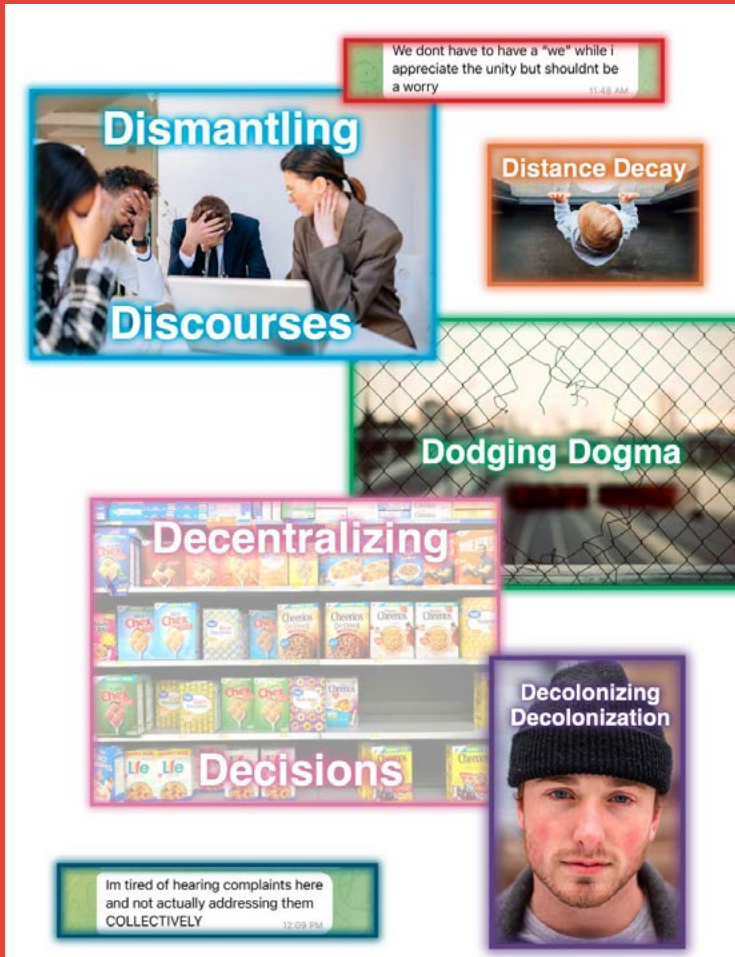
The journey of your name began long before you came into the world. Accept that journey as part of your platonic past—perhaps you can learn something about yourself, your parents, and who you will become through it.

II. How to name a revolution

Was it better to name it the "October revolution," although eminently "the October revolution" is a popular nomination for the "Great October Socialist Revolution," also known as "The Bolshevik Coup," "Bolshevik Revolution," "Bolshevik Uprising," or "Red October"?

In October 2019, the concept of "naming" preoccupied my thoughts once again, this time in a more overtly political fashion due to the "protests" in Beirut. It is something I still have no conviction of a name for. Most named it ثورة (revolution), in those first few weeks when hope and momentum had overfilled our cups. Others called it "uprising" or "intifada" in Arabic, in solidarity or nostalgia to the Palestinian انتفاضة. The politicians named it حراك ("harak" or "movement"), which seemed to undermine what it actually was, reducing it to just another "political movement" or voice, rather than the collective uprising of a people. Ghassan Kanafani, in his famous interview with Richard Carleton, engages in a "vocabulary battle" as Carleton attempts to find politically correct terms to describe the situation between Palestine and Israel. He first calls it "war," followed by "civil war," then "conflict." In retaliation to Carleton's reductive choice of words, Kanafani tries to offer a more descriptive and comprehensive account. He interjects Carleton's attempts with: "It's a people fighting for their rights," and "a liberation movement fighting for justice," after which Carleton, stumbling over his words, calls it "whatever it best be called.", Kanafani replies "It's not whatever, because this is where the problem starts." What Kanafani meant was to highlight the weight that decisions about terminology bear. He also brings to light how vocabularies affect the way a people view their own fight, how it is perceived by others, and the imminent power structures that lie therein. It is that which determines and justifies acts of violence, disobedience, and war.





facet of this naming strategy, listing corporations that have sidelined their names in favor of initials, such as BP, KFC, etc. They undergo such rebranding—diametrically opposed to their past—in an effort to conceal their histories. Another case in point is the IDF, which has been called into question, since the IDF may be a better reflection of how Israel has abandoned its 'defensive' military tactics in favor of 'offensive' ones.

Siwar Yazan was also excited about this idea to transform the name during those two years. It's like when you start with a hypothesis that follows the scientific method at the beginning of an experiment, thinking you will either prove or disprove it by the end. Instead, you end up transforming any prejudice you had in favor of something much more malleable, something you have shaped as you go along.

Despite Division

Did we move to the Global North to be freed from the very subjugation of the Global North?



How important is this name really?

- Disarming Design**
- Disclosing Discomforts
- Design Department
- Desired Discipline
- Decentralized Depictions
- Developing Discrepancy
- Disassembling Details
- Daily Decisions
- Dismantling Discourses
- Doubling Data
- Double Displacement
- Disorganized Drama
- Daring Dance
- Dazzling Days
- Diapora Dialogues
- Decolonising Decolonisation
- Dutch Design
- Dodging Dogma
- Depth Dwellers
- Distance Decay
- Dramatic Dinosaurs
- Dear Deviants
- Devoted Devices
- Detailed Detours
- Damned Dadaism
- Deployed Desires
- Divine Dialects
- Direct Development
- Decentralizing Decisions

- Done Deal
- Divergent Demonstration
- Distorted Discourses
- Demanding Discourses
- Distant Departure
- Dramatic Difference
- Dissemination Dreams
- Diving Deep
- Deadly Discussions
- Discursive Discourse
- Disobedient Devices
- Dirty Dicks
- Different Disappointments
- Distressful Disorders
- Distinctive Distress
- Darkness Descending
- Double Dilemma
- Definite Demands
- Debatable Discussable
- Deepest Desires
- Doubling Down
- Dumb Deadlines
- Decent Drafts
- Desirable Delights
- Delicious Dough
- Delectable Dates
- Digesting Delights
- Diabura Delights

'Disarming design' is a temporary one-time program offered by us as a way to answer urgent discursive mostly multidisciplinary approaches

https://dailydecisions.space/

*Hatem Imam, Farah Faysal

** This is an extensive list of 17 of us. It allows the reader to...

1. The 'Language Cafe' is a translation curated by Siwar Yazan for discussion around the language, often paired in its first, five-session 'Resistance,' we tackle narratives; and the one forward. The last session unpacked the term 'Resistance' towards the Iberian Peninsula.

This piece was co-written with Rasha Dakkak, on the renaming process of our masters department 'Disarming Design'.

Find the journal here: www.journalsafar.com



I was commissioned by Journal Safar, a design and visual culture journal from Beirut, Lebanon, to co-write a piece with my colleague, Rasha Dakkak on the renaming process of our program at Sandberg Insituut: 'Disarming Design', newly known as D.D.

THE MISPELLED

West Beirut, by Ziad Doueiri, is a film about two teenagers, Tarek and Omar, living on the streets of Beirut, their families, their struggles. It takes place in the 70s, at the onset of the civil war that erupted in 1975. Recently, one specific scene keeps replaying in my head.

1975, Beirut. Tarek, the main character, lives in the Western part of Beirut, but goes to school, a French missionary school in the eastern part of the city. He is a troublemaker, as many are in their teens, especially when he gangs up with Omar, his neighbour and partner in crime.

Every Monday morning, children in Lebanese schools sing the national anthem in a general assembly of all students. In my anglophone* Orthodox school in the 1990s, we always sang both the Lebanese and school anthems. In Tarek's case, it was the French anthem.

Lebanon was under the French mandate for a little over two decades between the years 1923 and 1946. It had a large effect on religion and education, where French religious missionary schools were set up, by priests and nuns.

Etel Adnan, acclaimed poet, painter, and writer* speaks of her time going to a French convent school, and how French education was soon attributed to power. At these schools, the history taught was that of the French, with which they passed on a hatred of the Germans of course. The customs and ideas were also all in French.

She says: "Somehow we breathed an air where it seemed that being French was superior to anyone, and as we were obviously not French,

the best thing was at least to speak French. Little by little, a whole generation of educated boys and girls felt superior to the poorer kids who did not go to school and spoke only Arabic. Arabic was equated with backwardness and shame. Years later I learned that the same thing was happening all over the French empire, in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Black Africa and Indochina."

You must also understand that this 'colonial' education, went far further than just exposing children to the language and history; it was quite consciously erasing any space left for Arabic at the same time. It also came in a certain double-form of power, which is still very much in place in Lebanon even half a century later; the double authority of a religious and educating figure, which produced absolutely unquestionable immunity.

Franz Fanon uses the example of the "Negro," in Antilles as an example of challenges that colonized people face regarding language. Blacks in Antilles, specifically Martinique, were pressured to speak French as opposed to Creole. By speaking French, Fanon explained that Blacks could become more "white;" achieve higher social status and think of themselves as being equal to whites in society, as can be seen in his personal example: "To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture."

Fanon addresses this issue of the 'hierarchisation' of language, which is present to a large extent in Lebanon. It unfolds this dimension that enables queering and othering, however subtle or outspoken.

To put it plainly, French speakers in Lebanon are mostly the bourgeois. English speakers are less sophisticated. If they spoke a more American English, they might be upper class and went to expensive private American schools, and if they spoke no languages

ITALIAN AND MY FATHER

I got to know you to be closer to my father. My father had to Italy for most of his young adult years. He studied to be an Orthodox doctor and along with his long years of studying, he did all kinds of student side-jobs. Of all the jobs he tried, cooking stuck. At home, my parents had a cooking arrangement. My mom cooked all week, my dad cooked on Sundays. He often made Italian dishes, from his famous vegetable lasagna - that was literally on the menu whenever we hosted any family lunch - to more elaborate home-made gnocchi where we spent hours in the kitchen, boiling potatoes and modelling the gnocchis.

Cooking together was mostly how I connected and shared with him. He would often tell me stories of his years in Italy, like this time he saved his Egyptian friend Sameh who attempted a swim in the Lago Maggiore to try to impress a girl, when he couldn't actually swim, or how he became the chef of the hotel in Stresa after he began by only washing dishes there two summers earlier. In the summer of 2006, I was in Amman, Lebanon. I found myself stuck at home in very, very warm Beirut. During those antiquated and long days at home, I needed a new hobby, something to give some sense of purpose and sanity to my summer. On yet another afternoon when my dad was glued to the TV screen watching the news, I came to him with a notebook and said: you will teach me Italian.

*Buongiorno casa, come stai oggi?
Dietro appunto? Sei a casa stamattina?
Sì, ma ancora guardo ancora sempre i giornali.*

To this day, we make all sorts of deals to keep a thread of this alive. Leaving Lebanon helped, as we began seeing more often, and the rule now is we only text in Italian. You became the thread of our conversation.

THE HAUNTED

"When I see people speak a foreign language that I do not understand, perplexed for a moment, I almost come to think that they are lost in their language, unable to escape from its clutches, that their condition has no remedy."

- KILITO, Thou Shalt Not Speak My Language

He speaks Arabic, she smiled to herself. Undeniably, his broken Arabic handwriting wooed her. She often felt a sense of fulfillment and pride whenever she heard

a European speaking Arabic, it was impressive. He a German, was flirting in her own language.

As things developed, she also learned German, mainly because of that relationship and the prospect of moving to Germany.

After moving to Europe, (not Germany), she became even more sensitive to this power dynamic. The flaunting of notions like 'decolonisation' in classes as part of the master's program under the name 'Disarming Design', and other discussions happening across different institutions in the continent, morphed this once prideful and fulfilled feeling in hearing her language being spoken by non-Arabs, into disgust, sometimes offense.

It has made me question the intentions, the motives behind non-Arabs familiarizing themselves with a language like Arabic. When Arabs growing up in the third world learned 'colonial' or 'imperial' languages, there was a clear purposeful conditioning, as part of a primary education in a country that was under mandate, but how is it when the reverse happens?

Abdellatif Kilito in his book *Thou Shalt Not Speak my Language* speaks of this notion very literally, and describes this same feeling. He speaks of the notion of 'protectiveness of a language,' which resonates a lot, especially the farther away one gets from home. So, there is an openness to colonial languages that spreads much through our upbringing, and yet a protectiveness of the mother tongue.

Is it a feeling that this, too, is being robbed from us? Or is it, as Kilito would say, *تطاول على اللغة* which literally means 'stretching'

My series of essays on language and multi-lingualism entitled: 'The Onion and Other Language Stories' was published as part of the essay book, 'Durable Discussions', edited by the D.D. department and published by Onomatopoeie.



Ali are you ok?

Spatial intervention by Farah Fayyad, Ayman Hassan, and Siwar Kraytem. ALI R U OK? is an ongoing investigation initiated by Edwin Nasr at de appel Amsterdam, which summons artists, scholars, and cultural workers in and outside of the Netherlands committed to dismantling carceral systems.

July 2021

de Appel
Amsterdam

performance



Siwar Krai(y)tem is a multi-lingual artist and designer from Beirut. She has been based in Amsterdam since 2020 and graduated from the temporary program D.D. (Disarming Design) program at the Sandberg Instituut in 2022. Her practice mainly focuses on multilingualism and language in times of transformation, as well as the construction of society through language.

Siwar has an active practice as a graphic designer, focusing mainly on bilingual design, identity, and publication design.

Her clients include The Arab Funds for Arts & Culture, Gemeente Amsterdam, Mophradat,

a _____ revolution

The Lebanese revolution broke on October 17th, 2019, posing endless possibilities of political involvement through guerilla and activism work.

A _____ *revolution* is a personal project that focuses on the multi-faceted aspect of revolutions in general and the Lebanese revolution in particular. It is a work in progress.

It is a young research that aims to map several axes the revolution has brought forward in an attempt of collective catharsis. The research has room to develop in several directions, among which is an exhibition and publication.

In the context of movements and uprisings that have been happening globally, I continue to reflect on the significance of my work as a designer in a time when the socio-political landscapes are in dire need to be depicted. Driven by a strong sense of responsibility, I have been keen on being present in the activism scene as an instigator and catalyst for political and social change. Besides printing and cycling, politics is one of my dearest axes of community-based activism. This is especially relevant for me coming from a region fuelled with geo-political conflict, a history of wars and colonization as well as ethnic and religious diversity.



These are some axes the Lebanese revolution has brought forward in the past 4 months thus far.

a FILL IN THE BLANKS revolution

a W H A T S A P P
revolution

an I M P O L I T E
revolution

a S O L I D A R Y
revolution

an A N T I - C A P I T A L I S T
revolution

a F E M I N I S T
revolution

a L A N G U A G E
revolution

a P U B L I C _ S P A C E
revolution

a Q U E E R
revolution

a M E N T A L _ H E A L T H
revolution

a N A T I O N A L I Z A T I O N
revolution

a FILL IN THE BLANKS revolution

a WHATSAPP revolution

Lebanon's Wild 'WhatsApp' Revolution Challenges Hezbollah and the Old Elites

|PARTY ON|

On the heels of mass protests in Algeria, Sudan, and Iraq, Lebanon has joined a second wave of social discontent in the Arab world.



What's Up With Lebanon's WhatsApp Revolution?



at's Up With Lebanon's WhatsApp Revolution? – LobeLog

[s://lobelog.com/whats-up-with-lebanons-whatsapp-revolution](https://lobelog.com/whats-up-with-lebanons-whatsapp-revolution)

Oct 8, 2019 - By Gareth Smyth. Nearly half a century after Gil Scott Heron proclaimed "The revolution will Not be Televised," Lebanese television stations ...

Lebanon's Wild 'WhatsApp' Revolution Challenges Hezbollah ...

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/lebanons-wild-whatsapp-revolution-challe...>

Oct 28, 2019 - On the heels of mass protests in Algeria, Sudan, and Iraq, Lebanon has joined a second wave of social discontent in the Arab world.

'WhatsApp Revolution': Controversial Tool that Sparked ...

<https://www.news18.com/World>

Oct 27, 2019 - 'WhatsApp Revolution': Controversial Tool that Sparked Protests Mobilises Millions in the Arab World. Across the region, digital ...

Lebanese call for government to resign in 'WhatsApp revolution'

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/middle-east/lebanese-call-fo...>

Oct 18, 2019 - Tax on social media platform last straw for disgruntled protesters.

Lebanon, WhatsApp and a Revolution | AJ+ - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch>

Nov 15, 2019 - Uploaded by AJ+

Ever since the Lebanese government announced they were going to put a tax on WhatsApp in October ...

"It all started because of whatsapp?" is a common question people were asking the first days of the revolution after people went crazy when the telecom minister announced there will be a whatsapp tax along with other incurred taxes the government suggested to cover up their neverending corruption and the impending economic crisis.

Whatsapp has become thus far a huge archive of several revolution-related organizational groups, not to mention the creativity in creating stickers in the light of the events etc...

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an I M P O L I T E revolution



← “ Fuck the system ”



← A tag on the wall of an illegally built hotel on public beach property that reads: “ Fuck Politeness ”.

This was a reaction to several politicians including Hezbollah leader Nasrallah primarily, who condemned the use of curse words in the protests.

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↓ “dick country”



← Lawyers jumped in to defend protestor's rights to express themselves freely. The only legally binding text prevents cursing the president.

an ANTI-CAPITALIST revolution



→ Some references from other revolutions have also been used.

↓ The Lebanese version of 'Uncle Sam' with the traditional 'Tarboush' hat.



↑ The voice of communists in the revolution against the capitalistic system in Lebanon which led to a deteriorating economy and the imminent suffering of the working class, creating a landscape of poverty.

a F E M I N I S T revolution



← “The revolution is female”



The feminist voice has proven to be very loud in this revolution, with several women marches taking place.

The feminists have also been on the forefront of the protests with their megaphones, banners, and chants.



↑ “A feminist revolution”

a PUBLIC SPACE revolution



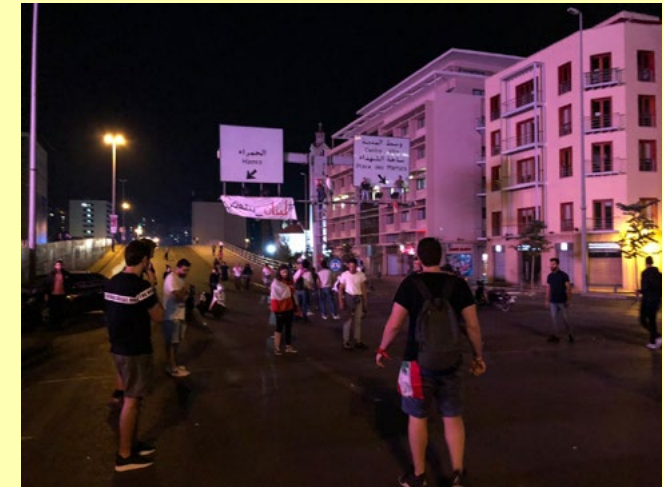
← "This street is ours"



The ring highway was turned into a living room and football/skateboarding arena after the roads were blocked by protestors.



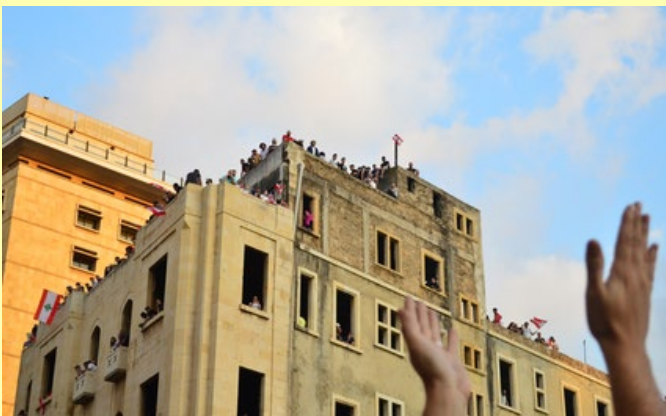
The egg



Another crucial layer was the reclaiming of abandoned, public, and private spaces.

This started with the public squares in the city center but even extended to highways, roads, etc.

It reminded people of how many spaces were raped by the government, and of the dire need for public spaces.



The grand theatre



a QUEER revolution



The voice of the LGBTQ community was fervent, with flags being raised during protests and tags everywhere on the walls.

Homosexuality was only decriminalized in the country earlier this year, but is still heavily unaccepted.



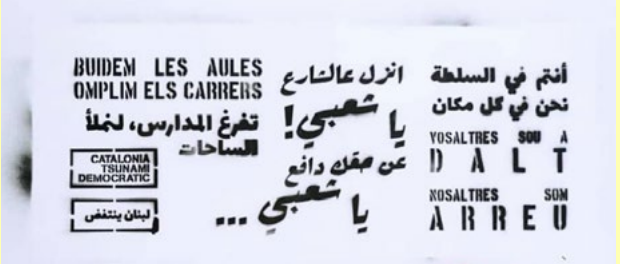
↓ "Gay is not a curse word" was sprayed everywhere around the city.



← This tag was sprayed on the walls of a church in the city center area.



a SOLIDARY revolution



← In solidarity with Catalonia

↓ A message from Palestine



← "Gaza on our minds
Iran on our minds
Baghdad on our minds
We are all rising"



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The revolution is also acutely aware of the other revolutions that are happening at the same time, in Chile, Iraq, Iran, Hong Kong. The list goes on.



The fist, a symbol of the OTPOR movement of Serbia, also shows solidarity with historical revolutionary movements.



a NATIONALIZATION revolution



← “We will not pay”

In reaction to illegal capital control, a civil disobedience campaign was launched to invite account holders to stop paying back their bank fees and loans if the banks do not cooperate.



↓ “Nationalize banks”



↓ “Down with the banking system”



A catastrophic problem that continues to drive the country into the abyss is the brutal and illegal decisions banks are taking against small account holders including capital control, bans on international transfers... in collaboration with the central bank that denies that the country is hitting a huge wall economically, yet the currency has lost almost half its value in the market.

a LANGUAGE revolution



In a country where bilingualism / multilingualism is very prevalent, the revolution took the country back towards their mother tongue, Arabic.

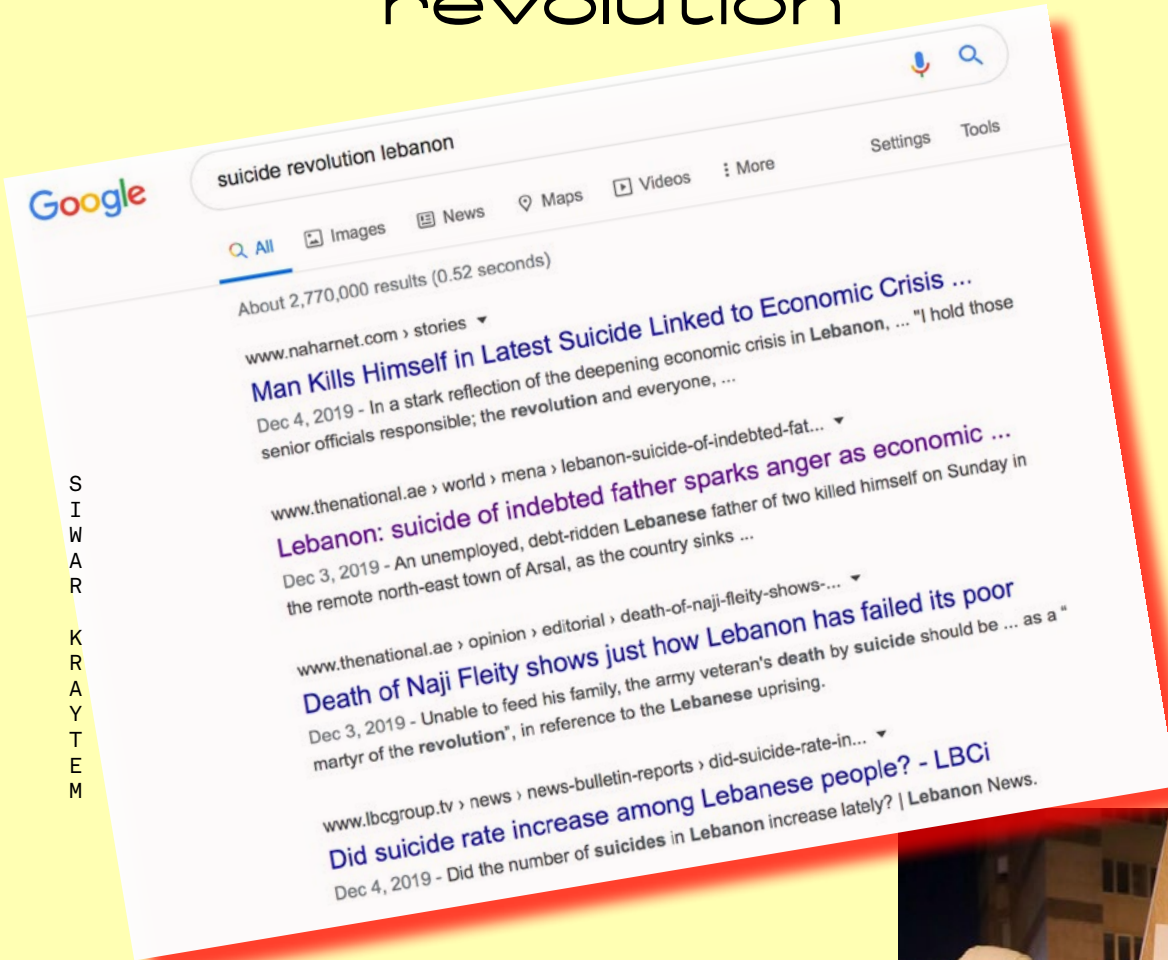
It came as part of relating again to the collective sense of community among people of different classes, ethnicities, and religions that had been absent for years.



Pubs started focusing on playing Arabic music.

Arabic rap resurfaced with rappers performing in the streets and connecting to the struggle.

a MENTAL HEALTH revolution

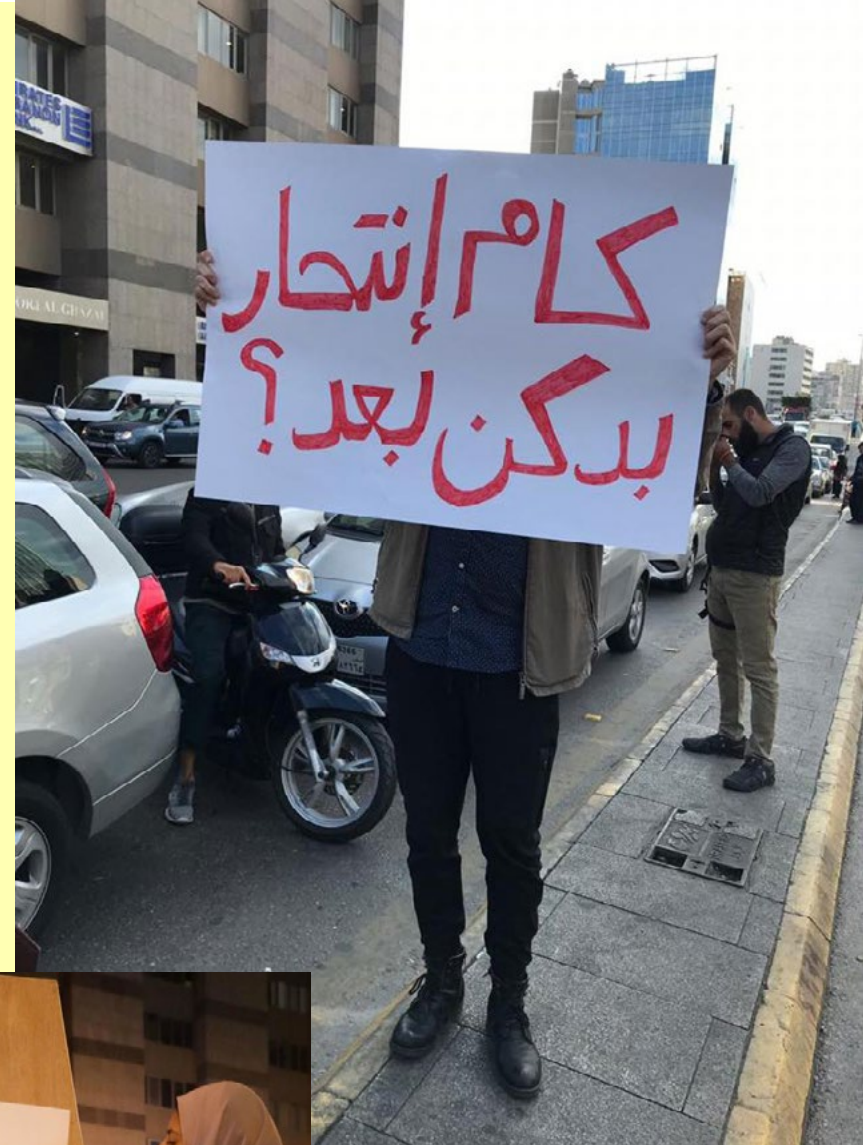


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In the same week of December 4th, we heard about more than five suicides, all of which happened within young fathers, who could not afford food or education for their children. Their financial situation has hit rock bottom.

During that week, tv talkshows were on the suicide topic and people were made aware of an already existing suicide hotline.



↑ A message to the failing state:
"How many more suicides are you still waiting for?"

← "Their blood is on your hands"

Silk-screening the revolution

This is silk-screen guerilla work. It happened at the onset of the Lebanese revolution that erupted on October 17, 2019. I came up with the idea with a friend at a road-block during one of the protests. We printed slogans and illustrations that were being shared on social media and chanted during protests and demonstrations. We brought down a silk-screen table and paints to the main protest square and printed them directly on people's t-shirts and banners, free of charge. A documentation of this installation has been exhibited at MK&G in Hamburg and the V&A in London.

public space
silk-screen
intervention

October 2019

personal initiative
with Farah Fayyad
and S.S. Silk-
screen

This abandoned cinema center, also known as the 'egg', is an icon of Lebanese modern architecture. Its construction started in 1965, but was discontinued during the civil war to later be closed off until October 17th, 2019, the night the revolution broke. It has since become a reclaimed space that held screenings, lectures, etc...





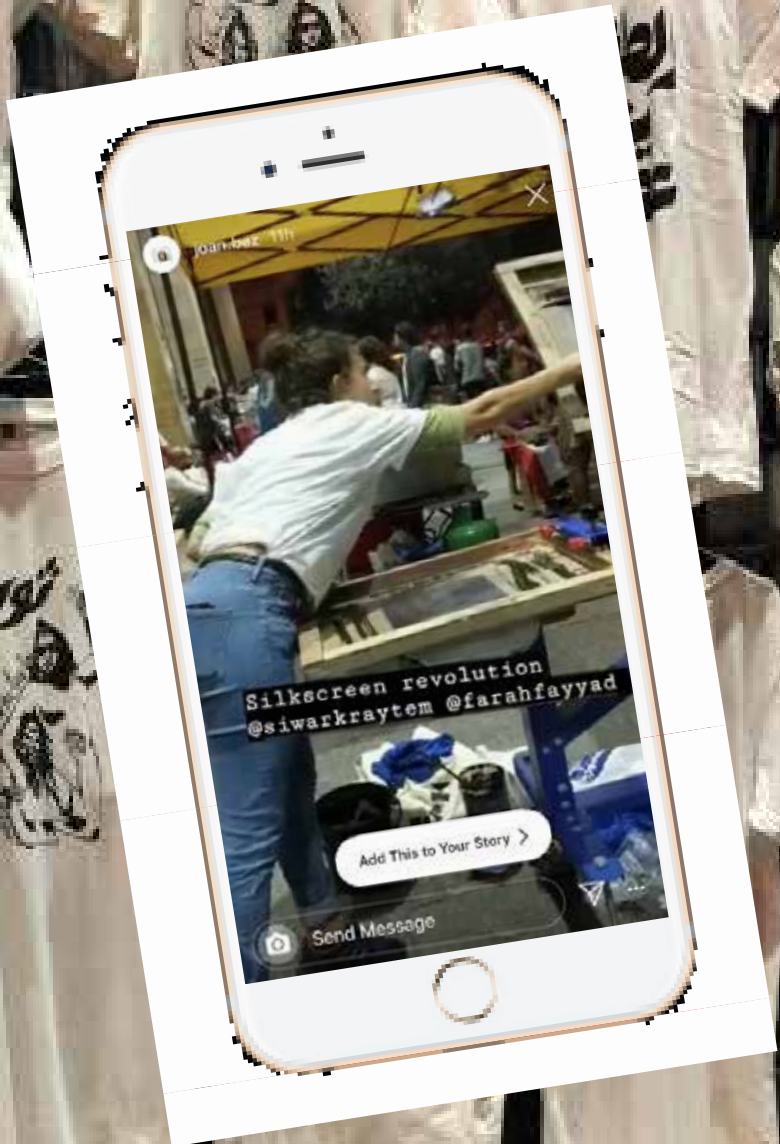
This is the illustration I made and printed. I spotted the print at one of the protests





We exposed the screens and printed t-shirts, tote bags, and banners in the streets. We had to drag the equipment a couple of blocks to get to the square because of all the crowds.





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Identity and Poster design

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Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC)

Web platform design, social media,
and pamphlet designs

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Publication design

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Publication design

Ballroom Blitz

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Standard

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Yani / Yaani / يعني

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Word Match

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A Fill in the blanks revolution

Web platform design, social media,
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Screen-printing the revolution

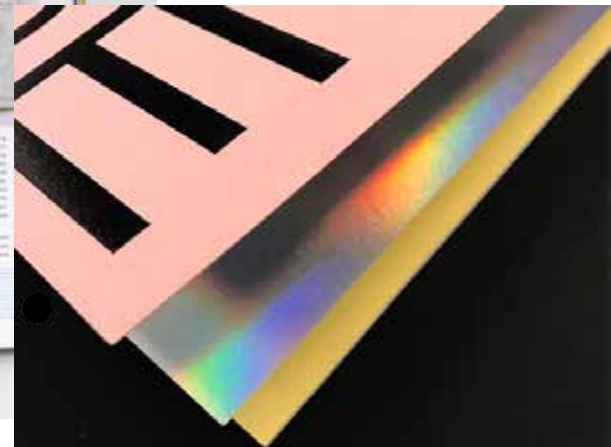
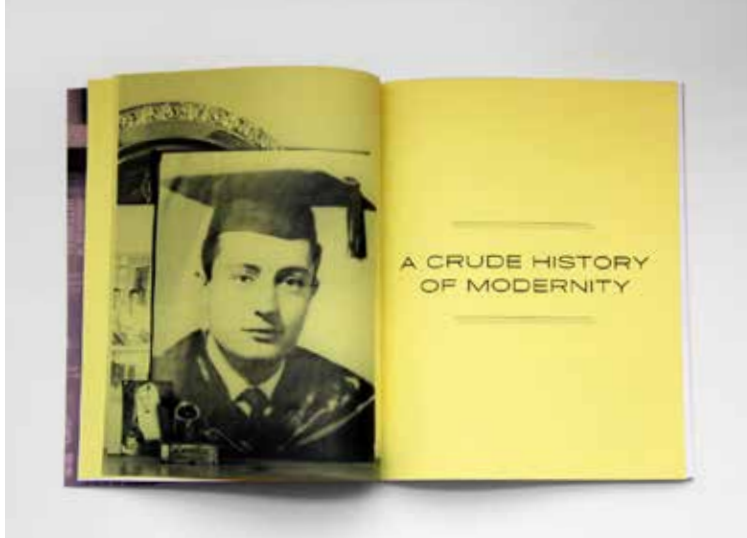
Publication design

Crude

Exhibition and publication design for Crude, the first exhibition that took place at Art Jameel, Dubai, UAE / designed while working at Studio Safar, Beirut, Lebanon / October 2018

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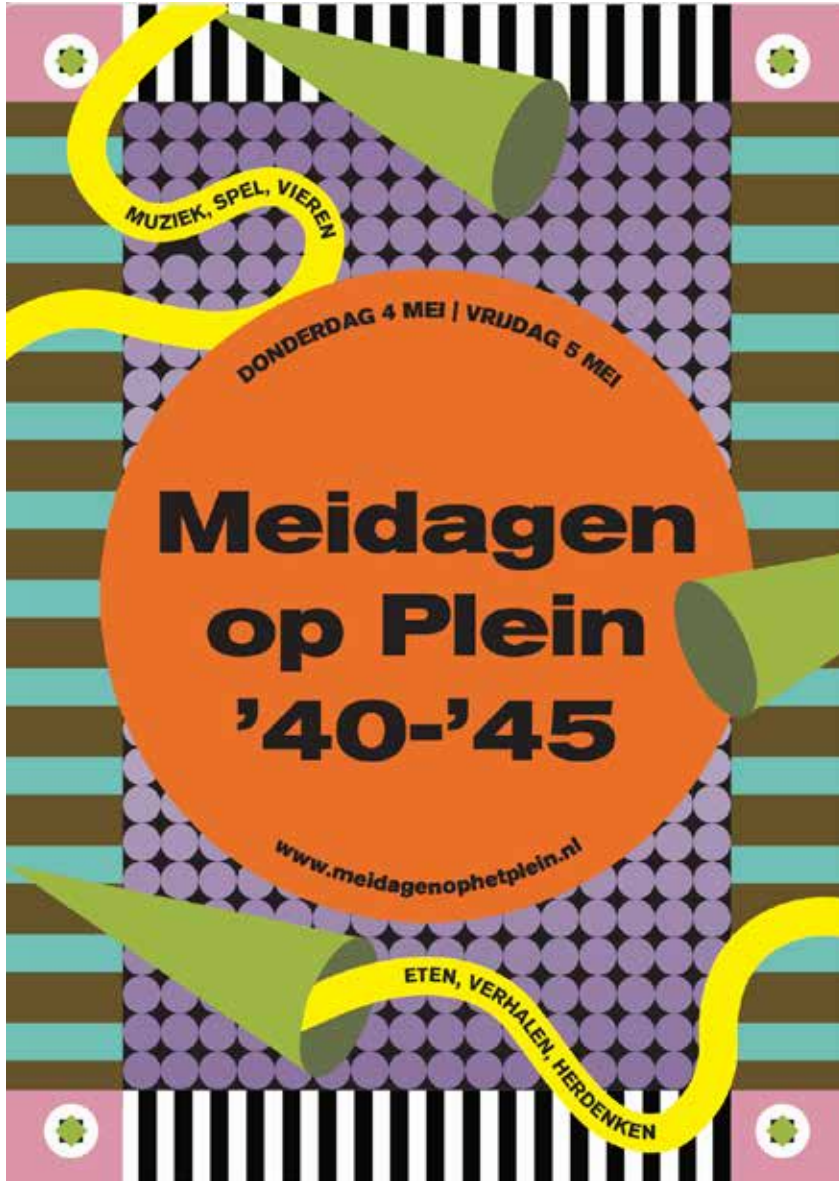


Meidagen

Identity and poster design for two editions of the Meidagen Festival
Amsterdam / April 2023 and April 2024

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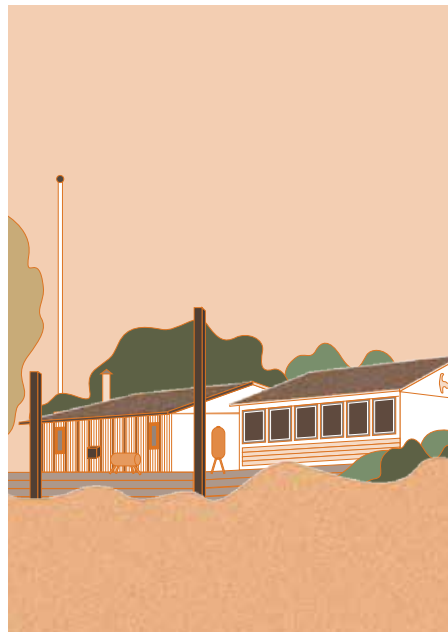


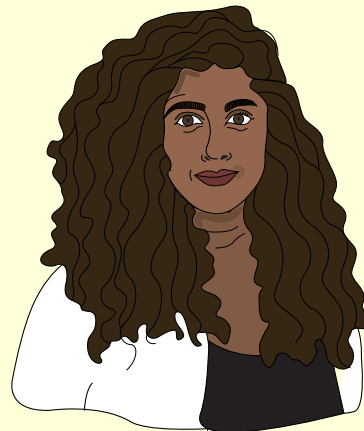
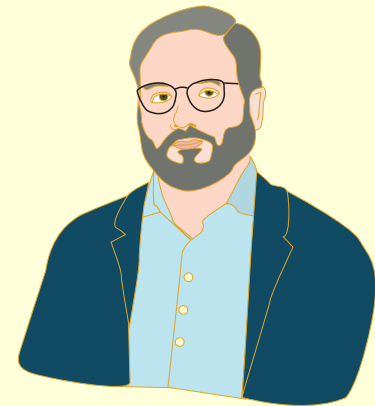
Nieuw West

Illustrations for the Nieuw West
Publication / January 2024

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A Song to a Place

Comissioned artist book design /
May 2024

the artist book is a production diary
for artist Noor Abed's films including
notes, texts, and photographs taken
on sets

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Mophradat

Webseries branding and animations/
November 2021

Lentil space is a cooking show initiated by Mophradat, hosted by artists in their own spaces



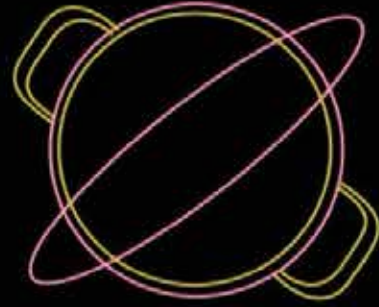
تشاركتها في المطبخ، هنا المكونات المطلوبة: لوبيا/فاصوليا بيضاء ويصل وثوم وتل وكروية/كر
يونزة وهريسة تونسية حربي أو بنارات قاني الأحمر مشححة/محففة ومركز ماعظم وزيت زيتون و
الخصر حار أو حلو ومحتوس/بفتونس وخايف.



Lentil Space

Episode #6: Deena Abdelwahed cooks loubia
Tonight, December 2, at 7pm Brussels/Tunis, 8pm Athens/Beirut
You can register here.





الطبخ مع فنانين

فضاء

Lentil Space

عدسي

Cooking with artists



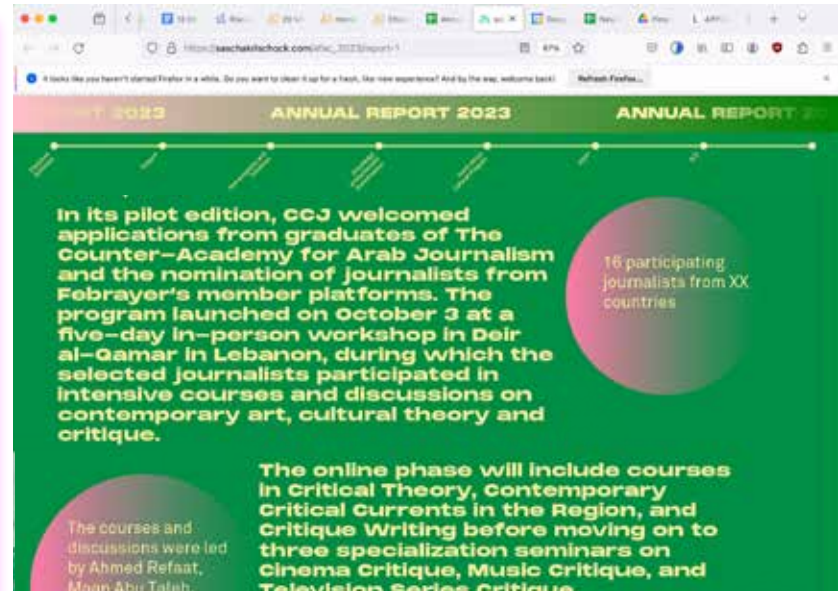
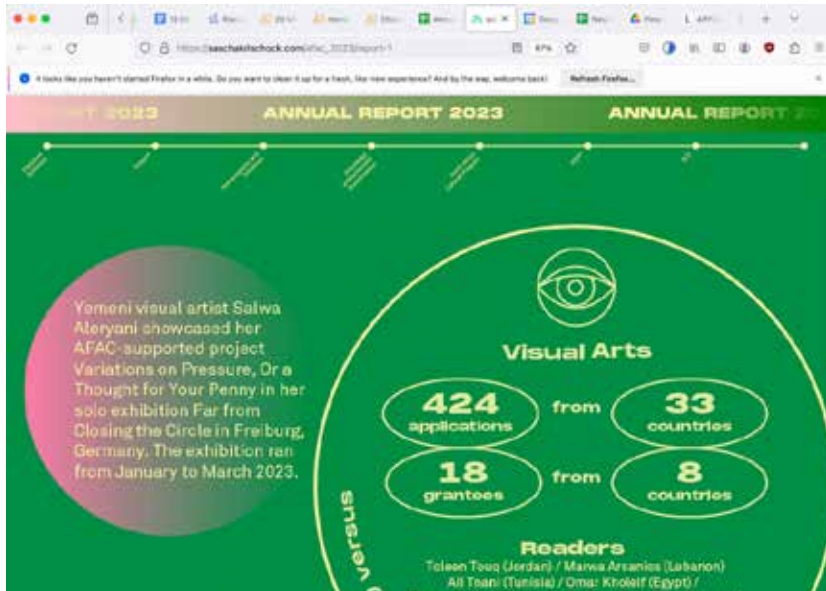
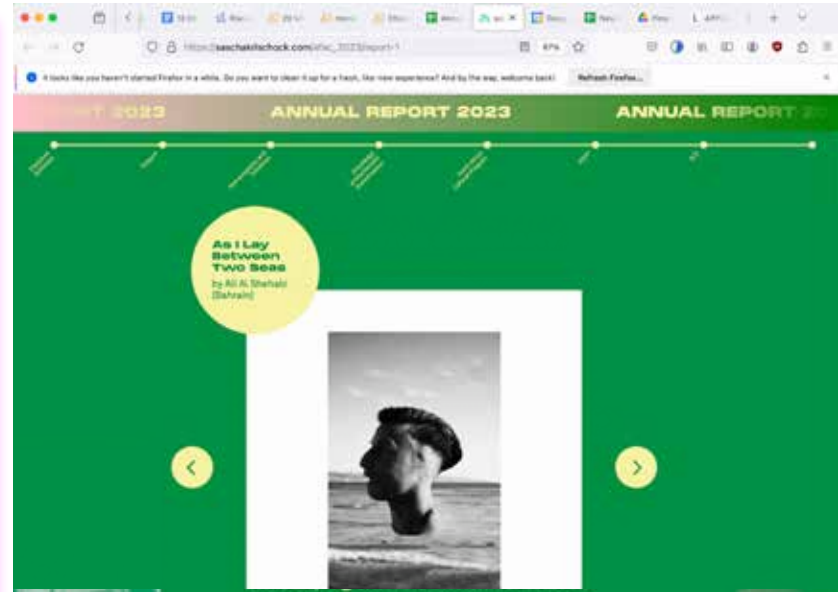
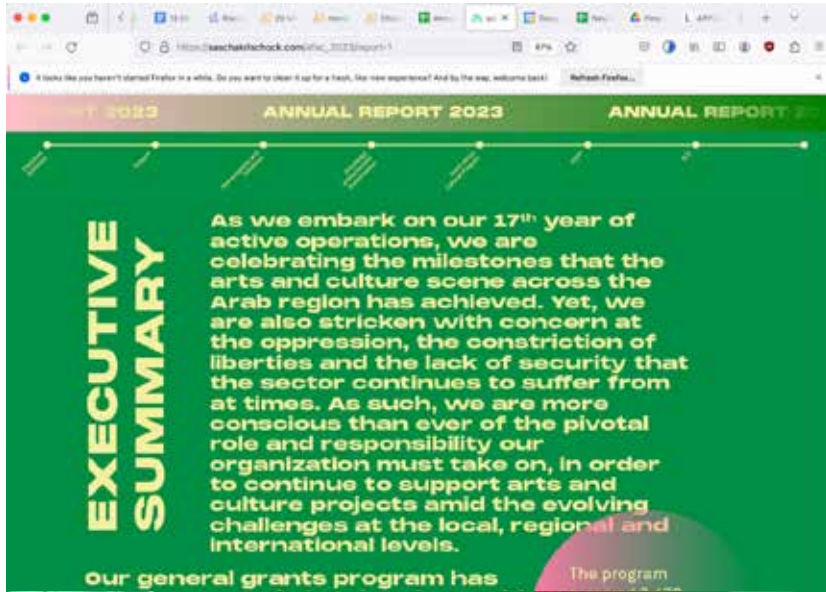
AFAC

Annual report and interactive platform in collaboration with Sascha Krischock / ongoing

the report documents AFAC's activities over the year, including application and grantee statistics for their 9 programs

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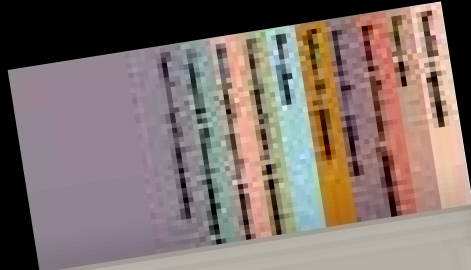
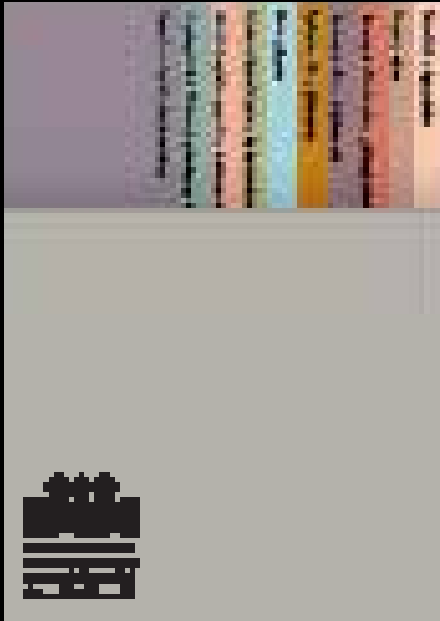
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AFAC

Pamphlet design for AFAC's
10 programs / designed while
working at Studio Safar / 2018

the report documents AFAC's activi-
ties over the year, including application
and grantee statistics
for their 9 programs



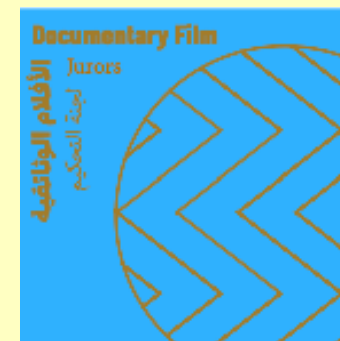
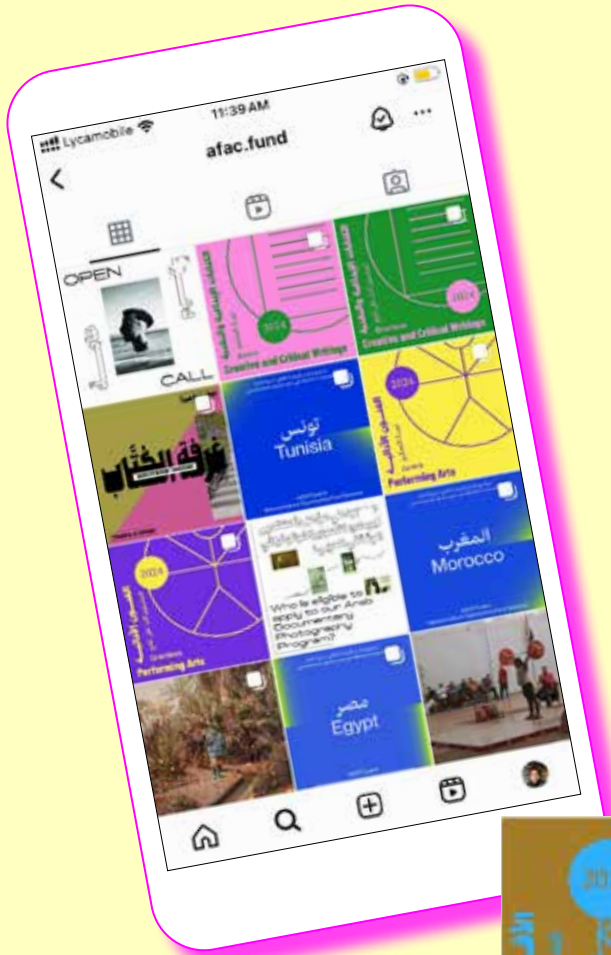
AFAC

Second cycle social media announcement campaign for Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Documentary Film, and Creative and Critical Writings Programs / ongoing

the campaign is based on the icons of the different programs that AFAC offers.

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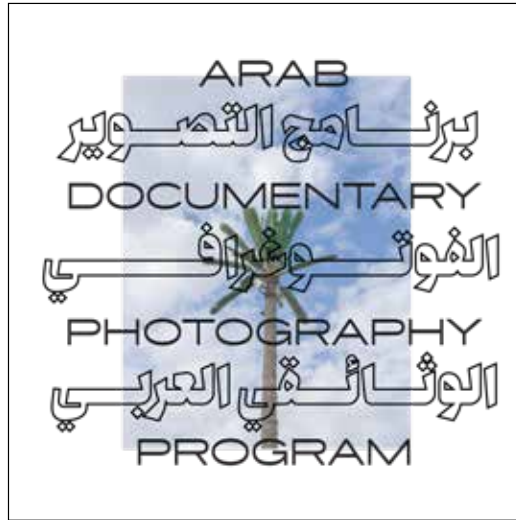
AFAC

Arab Documentary Photography Program
Social Media Campaign / ongoing

the campaign is based on a black and white minimal direction that focuses on typography and giving emphasis to the documentary photis

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On Entering the Garden

Illustration based- Identity and social media campaign for the AFAC conference in Rabat, Morocco / August 2023



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**31 آب / أغسطس حتى
2 أيلول / سبتمبر 2023
August 31, September 1 & 2, 2023**

**On Entering
دخلت مرة الجنيينة
the Garden**

تنسيق: طارق العمري وريشا سلط

Curated by Tarek El-Ariss and Rasha Saiti

<p>ريم بطل Rim Battal</p> <p>عدنان بركة Adnane Baraka</p> <p>هدى بركات Hoda Barakat</p> <p>هشام بوزيد Hicham Bouzid</p> <p>رنا النمر Rana Einemr</p>	<p>مريم الحايك Myriam El Haik</p> <p>إدريس كسيكس Driss Ksikes</p> <p>سعاد لصبيح Souad Labbize</p> <p>بيتر ليمبريك Peter Limbrick</p> <p>فاروق مردام بك Farouk Mardam-Bey</p> <p>سالم مراد Salim Mrad</p> <p>ستيفانيا باندولفو Stefania Pandolfo</p>	<p>غريغوري كونييه Grégory Quenet</p> <p>زهية رحباني Zahia Rahmani</p> <p>حامد سنو Hamed Sinno</p> <p>م. م. طابع</p>
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تنظيم
organized by

بتعاون مع
in collaboration with

ar



Yaani

publication design documenting our work as the *Yaani* language collective as part of Fellowship for situated practice at BAK, Utrecht / July 2024

the publication is based on the spiral binding allowing for different sequences based on each of the members of the collective's experiences.

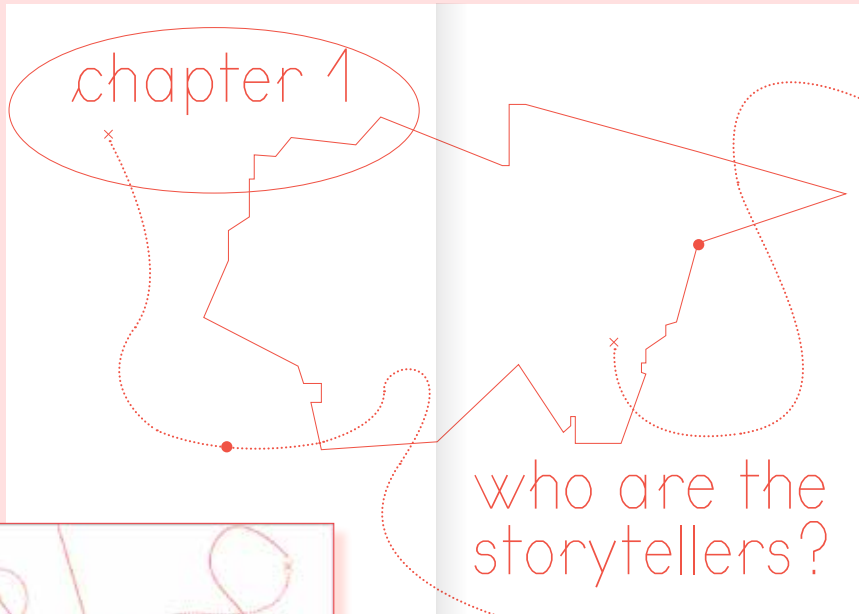
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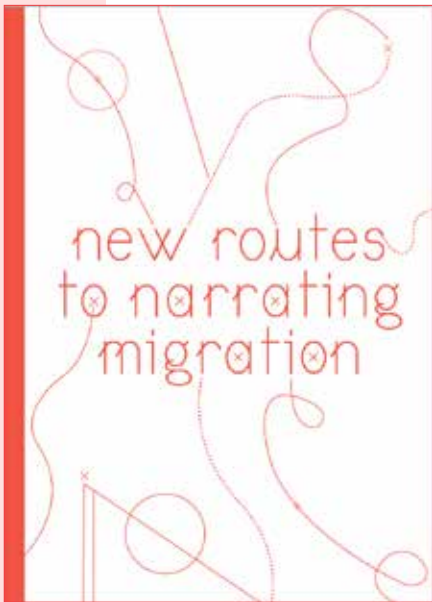


New routes to migration

publication design / November 2023



who are the storytellers?



introduction

Migration. Rarely in history did we talk as much about a topic. We discuss people and families crossing borders or moving from place to place, either to work or to settle down; sometimes temporarily, others for good; at times by choice, others by force or necessity. Media outlets, politicians and people conversing across their kitchen tables – everyone these days seems to talk about migration. This makes it easy to believe that our worlds are shaped, more than ever, by the causes and effects of human migration.

Whether this statement is correct or not matters less than the fact that our worldviews are shaped to a high degree by the many conversations and media reports on the topic. When we hear about something often enough, we start to think about it and our ideas get shaped along those lines.

This is why we, a project called Switch Perspective based in Beirut, started to organise workshops around the topic of migration. We felt a need to discuss, reflectively and critically, how migration is being covered by storytellers and what impact it has on the world. The first workshops were organised in 2016, and brought together practitioners from across the fields of journalism and academia for week-long sessions of exchange and self-reflection. Journalists, writers, NGO

workers, a had experi themselves... stories about migration. What image of the world are we projecting? How do we invite readers and listeners to think about it? What does bad reporting lead to – and how can we do it better?

Throughout the course of more than four years, the conversation continued. Many experiences were shared, and both personal and professional accounts were told. Participants talked about individual experiences of being refugees or migrants, and about being reporters on a topic to which they were personally connected. They shared strategies they used, and ways in which storytellers can be more aware of biases and inequalities. So much important knowledge was created that somewhere along the road, we realised that it should be documented and shared. This publication is the result of that.



who are the storytellers?

Stories, whether written, filmed or recorded, are intimately connected to their tellers. How stories are told vary depending on who tells them, and where these storytellers come from. The same topic can be researched and narrated in different ways depending on the background, experiences, gender, class and other identities of the storyteller. The same place can be observed from different angles, and the same context can be related to in different ways. Stories of migration and mobility, consequently, are told in several ways, depending on who is the author. This is why, in the first chapter in this publication, we start by asking the question: Who is the storyteller?

The chapter looks at who tells stories about migration in the world today. It describes the impact lack of diversity has on our understanding of the topic, and how power dynamics in society influence who gets access to reporting and telling stories. It also points to the value of experiential knowledge, knowledge gained through experience, when covering migration and highlights how self-reflection can lead to better narration.

First of all, in order to understand the impact that storytellers like journalists or communicators with NGOs have on our conception of migration, we must start by looking closer at who they are. We may be heading towards more diversity in newsrooms, academia and organisations, but we are far from a balance in representation. Stories still tend to be told from a mainly Western perspective and get published by outlets based in that part of the world. The same goes for major international non-profits, including their funders. Mi-



gration stories are regularly told by people who lack the lived experience of migration themselves. Much too often, they 'look in from the outside.'

"Whenever I tell a story about something, I also tell my own story."

This issue was addressed by several participants from the workshops. Samih Mahmoud, a Syrian-Palestinian video journalist working with the online platform Campji in Lebanon's refugee camps, said that his own experience of being a refugee who escaped the war in Syria gives him a different kind of understanding. "The fact that I am from the area I cover and face the same conditions as other people living there means that whenever I tell a story about something, I also tell my own story. People's problems are also my problems," he said. His colleague from Campji, Rayan Sukkar, who is a Palestinian born and raised in Lebanon, described something similar: "When I started working here, I felt that this was my place. That I can express myself here, and transmit messages better than someone from the outside." Her insider position, she said, allows her to "present people the way they like to be presented."

Mahmoud and Sukkar produce videos that are published online and watched by both camp residents and many others. The idea from the start, they said, was to be a locally grounded voice, something that was missing before Campji. "Our slogan is 'from camp to camp' or 'from refugee to refugee,'" they said. Fatima Alhaji, a Syrian journalist who now lives in Berlin, spoke in a similar way about the importance of lived knowledge. She recounted her experience when arriving in Lebanon with her family, and having to register as refugees with the UN. "This was at the beginning of 2014, so refugee stories were everywhere. At the UN there was a journalist with a big camera, and I thought to myself: 'Maybe someone will see me on television' and I didn't want that. I didn't want to be seen like that," she said. For Alhaji, these experiences put her in a different position than other journalists writing about migration: "I have the tools to tell these stories, and I can tell them in a way that people can identify with."

While personal experiences give an intimate understanding of the topic at hand, it does not necessarily mean better reporting. There are cases where an outsider's view

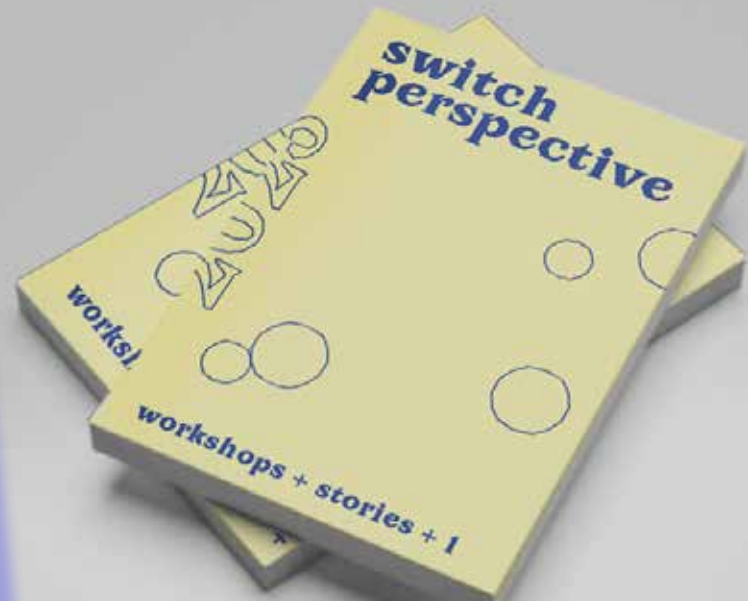


Switch Perspective

commissioned publication on migration stories / work in progress

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Stories of the Mediterranean still flow both ways: A story of friendships across borders

Taha Hussein's Beirut

This is the story of Hussein El Zein, both my friend, my father, who I met in Cairo in 2012 and his grandfather, Hassan. So, let us start from the beginning of the story. Unlike the Lebanese tradition, Grandpa Hassan married his son after his death, instead of his life own father. His mother was a revolutionary who wrote and spoke against the French occupation of his land. He also spoke seven languages fluently and founded the well known El Oufay magazine in Lebanon. His uncle inspired him to start a publishing business in Beirut which spread to Cairo and beyond. But my father knew that his nephew Hassan would become friends with Taha Hussein. Most probably not, but I am certain he would have approved, though Taha did study in France.

Taha Hussein was and still is a literary giant in the Arab world. I well known and respected poet, author and literary critic who greatly loved the classical Arabic language.

Even though Taha and Grandpa were friends for only a few years before Taha's passing, he seemed the potential for them would have on the publishing market in the region. Not a bad reputation for someone who never finished school.

Grandpa did not finish school past the eighth grade. He had a difficult childhood, losing one eye in an accident and never gaining his sight back on that side. His father grandfather's

grandfather's wealth and he had to start his life from scratch. He taught himself how to read and write in Arabic, French and English.

In the early 1970s, he began the Al-Kalab Al-Sabaa, a small publishing house which would go on to be a giant in the well known Beirut market. Publishing textbooks, children's books and everything in between from dictionaries, literary journals, history and office management books. Grandpa soon was handed an opportunity to open a bookstore in Cairo. A perfect downtown location on Qasr El Helwan, combined with cheap rent and his own connections, he opened the Al-Kalab Al-Sabaa in the intellectual heart of the city. Not wanting a printing press, he became an intermediary for publishing, printing and distribution, a new form of working in Egypt in which many publishers followed suit, modelling their businesses from Grandpa's example.

Business was good, demand was high and the market was growing. Hassan decided to bring his children with him to Cairo. In 1972, his son Ahmed entered middle school, beginning his own love story with Cairo which would pass on to his own four children, including my friend Hassan.

Then, in April 1973, war in Lebanon broke out. Grandpa, his son Ahmed, and his other children would set down deep roots in Cairo. In fact, this part of the El Zein family would not go back to visit Lebanon until after the end of the Civil War in 1990. There was no need to go home to Lebanon, though, except for visits to my family. In the 1980s, business was not just good in Cairo, it was great. With 70 percent of their stock (including textbooks, which were bought annually by the Ministry of Education, the future of the publishing business seemed bright) and the diverse community in which the El Zein lived, themselves in Cairo and their former political neighborhood of Zawiya, nurtured their love for the city.

"It was almost as my father (Hassan) said:

There is an old Arabic expression that says: Cairo is like Beirut publishers and Baghdad reads.

This story is from the time when this expression was true.

Taha would go on to read Grandpa the price of the publishing market to the Arab world.

Sometimes, opportunities fall into our laps. Sometimes, better publishers in Cairo.

You can see Grandpa always had a book for writing books. When he dropped out of school, he would find used textbooks and sell them to buy the cost of new books for the students who would

Me, a butcher shop and Tripoli

In writing this story from Lebanon where I have spent the past two weeks as a PhD researcher, what I didn't expect was that my Australian research and a city in Lebanon would collide and mesh in a way, yet beautiful, way.

Australia has the harshest policy in the world regarding asylum seekers. Any person seeking asylum by boat must be imprisoned indefinitely in a tiny offshore prison and can never be resettled in Australia. A few years ago, I worked in the refugee camps as a teacher - something that ultimately led me to my PhD research - and there was a family who were impressed that I got to know over the years. They were from Lebanon. There was a man and four boys. I never asked about the dad, but I got little thought into it as there were many single parents in the camps.

Then, the man, reached out to me while I was working there. The youngest son, Youssef, had completely withdrawn from school and she wanted me to come and provide some weekly lessons to him. I happily obliged as this was part of my job, and I began to visit Razan and Youssef once or twice a week. At this point, Razan and her four sons were no longer living in a prison state. They were the lucky ones, only having to endure about a year of tent accommodation before being moved into converted shipping containers. Their containers had four solid walls and a roof. One room was a kitchen and bathroom. It was tiny and I was always prepared as to how five people fit in the space.

Youssef was about 13 years old and despite his chaotic, messy smile and gregarious nature, he had more interest in school and therefore more interest in my visits. I mean, who on earth would want their teacher to come to their house and make them do maths work. I didn't take Youssef's noticeably disposition each time I walked into their shipping container as a personal attack, although the teacher inside of me readily wanted him to do his maths work.

But why would Youssef want to engage in school? He was detained in a purpose built refugee prison, on a tiny Pacific island that he was never allowed to leave. School had no meaning in his life. Each time I visited, I extracted about 30 minutes of school

work from Youssef in a similar manner to how a dentist extracts teeth. Not fun for either party.

This meant that my time would mainly be spent with Razan. I was always impressed by her, thinking about her tenacity to take herself and her four sons on a risky wooden boat across open water from Indonesia to Australia. I couldn't even imagine, and then to be detained indefinitely in a refugee prison, I couldn't even imagine.

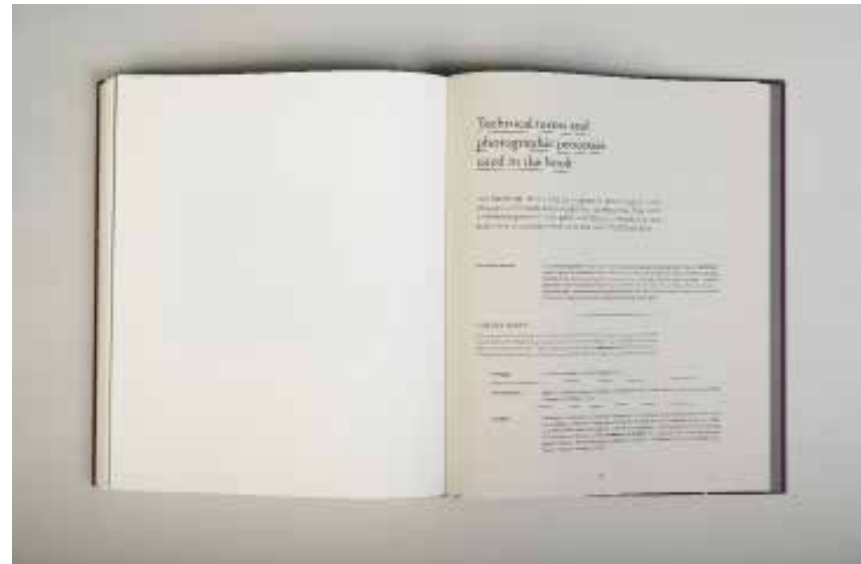
The house I spent with Razan, situated on two floors only. The first was teaching me, a student cook, how to cook Lebanese food. The second was having her complete despair at the imprisonment of the way she was living. I started to say anger at being backed up indefinitely by the Australian government. I started to feel pain about being separated from her family in Australia. I started to feel hopelessness of never leaving the tiny container of her Pacific prison. I started to see as the prison had heart not to me, all the while during the most negative part of which I can claim to be cooking. I started to see Razan and her sons and her husband and I have no idea how Razan survived the imprisonment - and I didn't ask - but either way, Razan's cooking was the best.

Razan's cooking was so good that her eldest son, Ahmed, decided to open a bar and restaurant on the island prison, with Razan being the head chef. The refugee prison was a strange place. Razan and her sons had refugee status, which meant that although they could never leave the island prison, they could work. Ahmed, who was by his own invention, was industrial, driven and optimistic. How someone could stay positive in this harrowing environment was beyond me, but Ahmed was giving me pretty fair lessons. He was a visionary and cleverly tapped into the lucrative fly in to fly out export economy of prison workers. He opened a beach bar for serving all types of delicious cocktails and offered a mouth-watering selection of Lebanese dishes created by his mom, Razan. The night (including research) packed to the brim, it had the view, the music and the drink.



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Thank you.