ASHKAL ALWAN
2016
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The Symposium on Arabic Novel, Ashkal Alwan, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ashkal Alwan

Video Works 2016. Photo courtesy of Haitham Moussawi
INTRODUCTION

During the course of 2016, Ashkal Alwan continued to develop its facilities as a public space for research, as well as re-thinking its programs in response to current discourse and concerns surrounding contemporary art and the civic sphere.

To further diversify our social scope, Ashkal Alwan initiated a new NGO-in-Residence program, offering Lebanese initiatives, NGOs and associations a subsidized office space, for a period of one year. The first NGO to take up residence was Social Media Exchange (SMEX), an organization that works to advance self-regulating information societies in the Middle East and North Africa. The new association that will take up residency in January 2017 is Difaf, a consultancy and technical design enterprise that works on identifying activities and assessing impacts on water and environmental systems.

2016 also saw the Artist Residency Program expanding significantly, with seven international artists and art practitioners conducting research and developing their practice at Ashkal Alwan.

In addition, Ashkal Alwan continued to run its core programs: in June, Home Workspace Program concluded its 5th edition with the annual open studios, and October welcomed fifteen new fellows for the 6th edition of HWP. Video Works allocated six grants in 2016, and nine projects were selected for the 2017 edition.

For an enhanced online presence, and as part of Ashkal Alwan’s wider objective to make more resources available to a larger global audience, a new website is currently being designed and developed by the young Lebanese startup Yellow. The new website will not only provide information, but also act as a virtual space for archiving and research.
PROGRAMS

HOME WORKSPACE PROGRAM
HWP 2015 – 16
October 2015 – July 2016

The 5th edition of HWP started on October 5th, 2015 and ended on July 29th, 2016 with its annual open studios. Titled *From the Miraculous to the Mundane*, the edition explored different forms of mischief, and the gestures artists deploy between the ‘real’ and the ‘really made-up’, between mimesis and representation. The edition welcomed thirteen fellows from Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Canada, India, Germany, Cuba, Palestine and the US.

The program began with a three-week preface with the artist Ali Cherri, and was conceived as an orientation to Beirut and its artistic practices. The various preface speakers invited, explored the city through notions of center and periphery, and additional themes of urban expansion, population displacement, real-estate development, gentrification and road planning.
The preface was followed by four workshops led by Resident Professors Ghassan Salhab, Sandra Noeth, Minerva Cuevas and Raqs Media Collective, each of whom invited guests to give talks and workshops of their own. Three shorter seminars led by Ahmad Beydoun, Finbarr Barry Flood, and Iman Issa were also given. Haig Aivazian, the Resident Advisor, led three sessions of group critique, with invited guest jurors. Ghalya Saadawi took up post as artistic director of the HWP, with tasks including preparing the curriculum and open call for the coming edition, co-organizing the group critiques and open studios as well as general management of the program.

The 5th edition of the program addressed various concerns with Ghassan Salhab asking questions around the images that we produce, that we watch, and that watch us; Sandra Noeth drew out the relations between political modes of action and physical, performative, digital and urban space; Minerva Cuevas enquired into power structures as part of daily life, and the role of public art, sabotage, hacking and magic; and Raqs Media Collective put the ‘ordinary’ and
the ‘extraordinary’ into play with each other by mobilizing readings of cultural practices in order to unravel how the mundane and the miraculous differ from, shadow and mimic each other.

Each Resident Professor invited a series of guest speakers to elaborate on their points of inquiry, including artists and thinkers such as Walid Sadek, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Mounira Al-Solh, Janez Janša, Heath Bunting, Francis McKee, Mania Akbari, Salima Hashmi, Sami Khatib and Cuauhtémoc Medina.

One of the highlights of the program was the public conference *Wounded Places: On the Integrity of the Body* that took place on February 27th - 28th, with speakers Ismail Fayed, Gian Maria Greco, Ayesha Hameed, Latifa Laâbissi, Youmna Makhlouf, Sandra Noeth and Jalal Toufic. The two-day public encounter addressed and challenged the idea of integrity in relation to physical as well as social body. The lectures, case studies and presentations formulated an invitation to question how our individual and collective bodies can stay intact and unharmed, in light of what is happening today.
As with every year, open studios marked the end of HWP, taking place from July 25th – 29th, 2016, where each of the fellows presented their work-in-progress making use of the entire space of Ashkal Alwan, including the library, the editing suite, the studios and the auditoria.
The 6th edition of Ashkal Alwan’s study program titled *Head Above Water*, opened on October 10th, 2016, with fifteen fellows. Structured by the now inhouse HWP Resident Professor, Ghalya Saadawi, in collaboration with the Curricular Committee, this edition aims to give more emphasis on practice-based workshops in parallel to the theoretical framework of weekly seminars. The edition welcomes fellows from Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, Turkey and USA.

This year’s course is framed along four interconnected nodes: *Seeing, listening, writing, moving; Histories of the artist; Technologies, life and the future; and Financialization*.

As in the previous year, the program started off with a three-week preface co-organized by the artist Ali Cherri that introduced the new fellows to the urban, literary, political-economic and artistic
“For me, HWP is a life learning experience. Every detail of the program allows the flow of all types of knowledge. You learn about art while learning about yourself and others, as well as learning how to learn.”

- Dina Mohamed, HWP fellow, 2016-17

“Ashkal Alwan is a great place to use as an extended playground to think about art, where multiple disciplines come together. The people who we converse with, all practicing philosophers, thinkers, artists and curators also embody this kind of thinking. The structure of the program is at the same time conducive for introspective work and seminars are interspersed with ample time to develop one’s own projects.”

- Aarti Sunder, HWP fellow, 2016-17
contexts of Beirut and Lebanon.

Following the preface, the first workshop took place in November and was led by the artist Cevdet Erek, exploring practices of composition and improvisation, with a special focus on translation. The weekly seminars have so far included Guest Professors Hala Auji, Diann Bauer, Seth Ayyaz, Jalal Toufic, Haytham Al Wardany and Mirene Arsanios.

Joe Namy, this year’s Resident Advisor has held the first round of one to one sessions with the fellows. Group critique preparations are also underway, with the critiques due to take place in January 2017.

The forthcoming workshops in 2017 will be lead by Visiting Professors Lina Majdalanie, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Maha Maamoun and Metahaven. The seminars will be held by artists and thinkers such as Tirdad Zolghadr, Walid Sadek, Kristine Khoury, Ray Brassier, Jihad Touma, Keller Easterling, Suhail Malik, Sami Khatib, Ana Texeira Pinto and Elie Ayache.

The open studios will take place from the 5th - 8th of July, marking the conclusion of the program.
The sixth edition of Video Works held its public screenings at the Beirut Art Center on June 9th, 10th and 11th, 2016. With two screenings a day, this edition reached a large and diverse audience. The six selected grant recipients were Panos Aprahamian, Hiba Farhat, Karam Ghousein, Mohamad Kanaan, Alain Kantarjian, and Léa Lahoud. The jury was composed of Mounia Al Solh, Ahmad Ghousein and Rania Stephan.

This year’s grantees are Ahmad Al Trabolsi, Toni Geitani, Johnny Hchaime and Ieva Saudargaite. In addition to the four grants, Video Works program has also supported new projects by Mohamad Hafeda, Ahmed Ghoneimy, Serene Fattouh and Stephanie Dadour, with two more commissions to be announced. The jury for this year was composed of Tamara Al Samerraei, Vatche Boulghourjian, Marie Muracciole and Ghassan Salhab.

Following a more rigorous approach towards supporting the grantees of Video Works, two group critiques are scheduled for 2017. The group sessions are conceived for the grantees and jury members to come together and discuss the work in progress, encouraging an exchange of views and advice on the technical and conceptual aspects of the grantees’ work.

The screening of the selected projects will take place in the Beirut Art Center in June 2017.
Video Works 2016. Photo courtesy of Marwan Tahtah
ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM

With a greater focus on the Artist Residency Program, Ashkal Alwan welcomed seven artists, curators and researchers for a two to three-month period, covering travel, accommodation and per diem, in addition to a studio space.

January 2016
Inti Guerrero (b. 1983, Bogotá) is a curator of Latin American Art at Tate Modern, London and of the Ireland Biennial 2018. His projects often employ a speculative approach to art histories, where concepts around the body, architecture and the tropics are intertwined. As part of his residency, Guerrero gave a talk on the concepts, research and processes behind a selection of exhibitions he has curated in recent years.

March - May 2016
Ilse Frech (b. 1972, Amsterdam) is a visual artist, documentary photographer and filmmaker. During her residency, she explored the theme of war and memory in relation to Lebanon’s history, and the embodyment of trauma through objects and the city. As a public event, Frech presented Fugacious Presence, a live-poem in the form an audiovisual composition.
June - July 2016
Ahmed Badry (b. 1979, Cairo) is a visual artist. During his residency, Badry worked on a new series of sculptural works. Interested in the collective visual memory, he continued to develop a practice of making everyday visual objects - from traffic signs to branding logos - his own, thus re-assembling their meaning and function.

Yara Saqfalhait (b. 1989, Ramallah) is a researcher, architect and co-founder of Group28, a research collective looking at the built environment in Palestine. During her residency Saqfalhait started a long term research project on the history of architectural education in Palestine and its immediate region.

Farid Rakun (b.1982, Jakarta) is an artist, writer, editor, and teacher based in Jakarta. Rakun’s residency was organized as part of Art Schoolaboratory an initiative for exchange and collaboration between the member organizations of the Arts Collaboratory network, which Ashkal Alwan is part of.

Performance | Ilse Frech, Fugacious Presence, Ashkal Alwan, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ashkal Alwan
August 2016
Salome Lamas (b. 1987, Lisbon) is a filmmaker. During her residency at Ashkal Alwan, Lamas worked on a new film project, shooting some of the footage in Lebanon, exploring the boundaries and circumstances of documentary filmmaking.

October - December 2016
Aykan Safoğlu (b. 1984, Istanbul) is an artist that works with participation as medium. During his residency, Safoğlu held a series of workshops with various LGBT organizations based in Beirut and held an artist talk “to practice art” is a reciprocal verb, where he introduced previous work in relation to his current enquiry into modes of friendship and community.
OTHER PLATFORMS

LIBRARY & AUDIO VISUAL ARCHIVES

Throughout the year 2016, the library has continued the initiative of expanding its archive and making it more available through efforts of research and digitization. Some of the main tasks include building an online library catalogue, as well as continuing to digitize the CDs, DVDs, VHS tapes and other ephemera collected by Ashkal Alwan over the past 20 years.

The open source archiving database used by the library is continually being updated with artist video and film works, as well as with documentation of Ashkal Alwan’s public events, in an effort of making available an extensive and cohesive archive of Lebanese contemporary art.

The long term objective is to make all of the library’s archive available online and for free to everyone from anywhere, for which Ashkal Alwan is currently looking at funding opportunities and individual supporters.

To make these rigorous processes possible, the library has worked with a dedicated team of part-time and freelance staff members. In September 2016, Ashkal Alwan welcomed Nader Tabri who has joined us as the second library coordinator, working alongside Sarag Pailian.
PRODUCTION FACILITIES & GRANTS

In 2016, Ashkal Alwan awarded the following grants in support of artist production:

Nesrine Khodr (Lebanon) was given support to develop a new video piece shot in Turkey, where she explores distances crossed in current migrations and displacements, and their relationship to the human body and its capacity.

Ashkal Alwan facilitated Toufic Kerbage and Ali Jaber’s (Lebanon) radio project *Cut the Mean Tone* through offering space to broadcast, technical advice, as well as financial support.

Randa Mirza (Lebanon) was supported with an accommodation grant whilst residing in Beirut in the lead up to her exhibition *El-Zohra was not born in a day* at Galerie Tanit in November 2016.

Ashkal Alwan published *Mihan El Riwaya* by the writer Waddah Charara (Lebanon) which will be released in December 2016.

Mahmoud Safadi, a former fellow of HWP, was supported in the post-production of his new video work.
PUBLIC PROGRAMS & WORKSHOPS

In addition to the lectures of HWP, Ashkal Alwan had a dense public program in 2016, built on various collaboration with local and international organizations.

*Decolonial AestheSis: Colonial Wounds, Decolonial Healings*

by Walter D. Mignolo

April 4th, 2016

A talk by Walter D. Mignolo, William H. Wannamaker Professor and Director of the Center for Global Studies and the Humanities at Duke University. Looking at the etymology of the Greek word “aestheSis”, Mignolo focused on the Eurocentric use of aesthetics, and the postcolonial struggle to reclaim and reimagine the term.
In this talk, WJT Mitchell, the Gaylord Donnelley Distinguished Service Professor of English and Art History at the University of Chicago, discussed art history, cinema, and forensic science in order to read images not only as existing within environments such as museums, books, monitors, and commercial displays, but as environments in their own right.
The Symposium on Arabic Novel  
April 29th - May 2nd, 2016

This four-day literary symposium was part of Ashkal Alwan’s systematic efforts to approach contemporary shifts within the Arabic language by looking at its literature, narrative and idiomatic as well as communicative instruments.


The book Arabic Language and Social Networking, was released in conjunction with the symposium.

Film Screening: Nigol Bezjian  
May 30th - 31st, 2016

A two day screening program of the filmmaker Nigol Bezjian’s work, including Roads Full of Apricots (2001), I left my shoes in Istanbul (2013) and Thank You Ladies & Gentlemen (2014). The second day of the screening included a conversation between Nigol Bezjian and the artist Akram Zaatari.
THE SPACE

In 2016, Ashkal Alwan continued to implement its space as a public workplace and a hub for artistic, creative and civic practices.

2016 was also the first year of the NGO-in-Residence. As a new way of sharing its space more sustainably, and to further engage with the civic sphere, Ashkal Alwan has decided to rent out an office space for a subsidised price to a Lebanon-based initiative, NGO or association, for a duration of one year.

SMEX (Social Media Exchange), an NGO that works to advance self-regulating information societies in the Middle East and North Africa, completed its residency in September 2016, having organized a variety of screenings and workshops during their time at Ashkal Alwan.

From January 2017, Difaf will be the second organisation to take up the year long residence. Difaf is a consultancy and technical design enterprise based in Lebanon that works on identifying activities and assessing impacts on water and environmental systems. Difaf is formed by a team of engineers, natural scientists, and policy experts that work on delivering appropriate technologies in order to promote better natural resources conservation, management, and restoration.

THE CAFETERIA

Ashkal Alwan is happy to have Sabah Jarada as our new chef, managing the cafeteria since October 2016. Offering home-cooked meals, this is Sabah’s first experience in running an independent business and a wholesome addition to the social fabric of the space.
RENTALS FOR NON-PROFITS

Ashkal Alwan has continued its engagement and support of non-profit organizations and their activities by renting its various spaces for a subsidized rate. The various events include a workshop addressing domestic violence held by ABAAD - Resource Centre for Gender Equality; a four-day workshop *Data4Change* held by Small Media Foundation, a human rights research lab; a one-day workshop held by the human rights organization Dawlaty; as well as a workshop for musicians from Tunisia, Iraq, Lebanon and Egypt organized by Sarah El Miniawy in partnership with the Swedish space Elektronmusikstudion, in the lead up to the Irtijal Music Festival 2017.

INCOME GENERATING RENTALS

In order to diversify its sources of income, Ashkal Alwan rents out different spaces for photo shoots, workshops, conferences and other events. This year the space rentals generated $25,000.
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<td>يوسف بزّي</td>
<td>أشكال ألوان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-Mar-16</td>
<td>السفير</td>
<td>&quot;ملتقى الرواية العربية الأول&quot; في بيروت</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;ملتقى الرواية العربية&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-Mar-16</td>
<td>الأخبار</td>
<td>أشكال ألوان: بيروت &quot;ملتقى الرواية العربية&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;ملتقى الرواية العربية&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Mar-16</td>
<td>المدن</td>
<td>ملتقى الرواية العربية في بيروت</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;ملتقى الرواية العربية&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-May-15</td>
<td>الجزيرة</td>
<td>ملتقى أدبي بيروت يناقش قضايا الرواية العربية</td>
<td>عفيف دياب</td>
<td>&quot;ملتقى الرواية العربية&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASHKAL ALWAN IN NUMBERS

ONLINE PRESENCE

[Graph showing social networking subscribers with bars for Newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for 2015 and 2016.]

HOME WORKSPACE PROGRAM 2015-16

Open Call applications - 115
Fellows - 13
Resident Professors - 4
Guest Speakers - 19
Open Studios attendance - 500

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING 2016

Talks, lectures and performances attendance - 1,500
The Symposium on Arabic Novel - 600
SUPPORTERS

Board of Trustees

Carla Chammas, Zaza Jabre, Robert A. Matta, Hoor Al Qasimi

Ashkal Alwan would also like to thank all the foundations and individuals who have generously supported our programs for the year 2016, including:

HWP 2015-16 Supporters
Basil & Raghida Al-Rahim Art Fund, Arts Collaboratory, ATHR Gallery, Karen Chekerdjian & Bertrand Fattal, Imane Fares Gallery, Ford Foundation, Fondation Aimée et Charles Kettaneh, Foundation for Arts Initiatives, Taymour Grahne Gallery, Haykel Hospital, Yola Noujaim, Oslo, Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Mohamad & Dina Zameli

HWP 2016-17 Supporters
Arts Collaboratory, Basil & Raghida Al-Rahim Art Fund, Ford Foundation, Foundation for Arts Initiatives, Fondation Aimée et Charles Kettaneh, Peter Hrechdakian & Nathalie Oghlian, Oslo, SAHA, Reem Shadid, Sfeir-Semler Gallery
2016 END OF YEAR
FINANCIAL REPORT

2016 Income Sources

- Individual Donations: 37%
- Board of Trustees: 31%
- Foundation Grants: 26%
- Galleries: 1%
- Revenue Generation: 5%

2016 Expenses Breakdown

- Running Cost: 58%
- Sharjah Biennial: 4%
- Video Works: 9%
- Library & Publications: 1%
- HWP: 10%
- Residencies: 3%
- HW7: 2%
- Arabic Novel Symposium: 5%
- Independent Grants: 8%
2017 ESTIMATED BUDGET

Operational Budget
Salaries & Fees $210,000
Running Cost $170,000
Subtotal Operational $380,000

Activities Budget
HWP ‘16-‘17 $200,000
HWP ‘17-‘18* $50,000
Video Works ‘17 $30,000
Video Works ’18 (advances) $10,000
SB13 – Culinary Program $80,000
Online Archives Project $30,000
Library & Publishing $10,000
Residencies & Independent Grants $20,000
Subtotal Activities $430,000
TOTAL $810,000

*The total budget of HWP ’17-‘18 will be reduced to $150,000, excluding HWP staff salaries.
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Carla Chammas, Zaza Jabre, Robert A. Matta, and Hoor Al-Qasimi

Director Christine Tohme | HWP Resident Professor Ghalya Saadawi | Development Director Mohammed Abdallah | Office Manager Zeina Khoury |
HWP Program Coordinator Lara Saab | Assistant to the Director Kasia Wlaszczyk | Public Program Coordinator Nancy Naser Al Deen | Library Coordinators Sarag Pailian and Nader Tabri