

## PUBLIC CONFERENCE

### *Wounded Places. On the Integrity of the Body*

Feb 27 – 28



Image Caption: from *A Rough History (of the Destruction of Fingerprints)*, Ayesha Hameed, 2015/16

With: Ismail Fayed, Gian Maria Greco, Ayesha Hameed, Latifa Laâbissi, Youmna Makhoulf, Sandra Noeth, Jalal Toufic

A wound in a physical sense is of a dual significance. It marks an intrusion into the body, a penetration of tissue, an attack on the integrity of the body: illness, violence, a traumatic experience. Neglect, not caring, indifference. At the same time, it tells of the body's ability to heal, to restore and to reorient itself and its environment. Wounds entail a twofold trajectory: as signs and places of weakness, and as signs and places of empowerment. The occurrence of a wound, the vulnerability of the body, allow us to (re-) experience our individual and collective bodies, it bundles our attention, and connects us to the injured bodies and places in society.

*Wounded Places* brings together artists and thinkers from different backgrounds in a two days public encounter. From their respective artistic, philosophical, political and juridical practices, they approach and challenge the idea of the integrity of our physical as well as imaginary and social body. The invited lectures, case studies and presentations move beyond the universal and idealistic claim and promise of physical and mental protection, which might lose sight of the 'real' bodies, pushing them in the back, leaving them abstract, far away, untouched. Much more, they expose the right to the integrity of the body to its own ideology and ultimately failure - to its politics of in- and exclusion and normative settings - , and formulate an invitation to question how our individual and collective bodies can stay intact, not wounded, safe and sound, safe, unharmed, in light of what is happening today.

*Wounded Places. On the Integrity of the Body* is part of *Denormalizing Bodies. Rehearsing Citizenship*, Workshop II of HWP 2015-16.

## Program

Sat, Feb 27

2pm – 2:45 pm

Introductory talk with Sandra Noeth

3pm – 4:00pm

*The inviolability of the body in the Lebanese legal framework: Between the “person” and the “the moral order”* - Talk with Youmna Makhoulf

The status of the human body in the Lebanese legal framework depends on fragmentary and inconclusive provisions that posit the human body as not only the direct extension of the *person* but also as the bearer of public morality. Therefore, as the incarnation of the person, the body is in general deemed inviolable and its integrity protected. For instance, any harm caused to the body is incriminated as an offense to the individual integrity and no medical act may be performed on the human body without obtaining the individual's prior consent. However, this approach dismisses the fact that the human body is also mobilized to dispel any act that is considered as contradicting public morality. As such, non-therapeutic abortion, dissemination of contraception means and “intercourse against nature”, as well as certain sexual acts considered as an outrage to decency, are hence criminalized. Furthermore, sexual acts involving others whose age or status renders them unwilling or unable to consent are reprehended according to the Criminal Code as “offences against morals and public morality” and not as “offenses to the individual's integrity” . In light of the above, the paper argues that this dual conception of the human body is paradoxical since the consideration of the human body as a direct extension of the person opposes its comprehension as a means to establish a single sexual behavior. Indeed, as a replication of the person, the human body should also reflect the plurality of behaviors based on the individual's right to privacy and self-determination.

**Youmna Makhoulf** is a PhD candidate in law at the Université Paris II Panthéon-Assas. Her thesis examines the question of the “individual in the Lebanese private law”. Youmna is a General Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Law at Saint Joseph-University of Beirut. She is also an attorney at the Beirut Bar Association, and acts as a board member of the Legal Agenda. She has published and commented extensively on Lebanese jurisprudence in relation to gender issues, domestic violence and the right of nationality among many others.

4pm – 5pm

*Accessibility, Human Rights, and the Ghetto Effect* - Talk with Gian Maria Greco

Over the past few decades, following many years of scanty attention – particularly if compared to the issues of gender and ethnicity – disability has come to gain a central position within the human rights agenda. Consequently, the rights of persons with disabilities have become a major issue within the human rights debate and research. Within the disability rights debate, a key role has been given to the notion of accessibility as a specific human right for persons with disabilities. In the talk, I will first make the case that this gives rise to a structural problem within the human rights framework, what I deem the “Accessibility as a Human Right Divide” problem. Through an analysis of the AHRD problem, I will then argue that the tension between the so-called universal scope of human rights on the one hand, and the definition of group-related human rights on the other, may give way to a Ghetto Effect: a renewed form of dehumanization of persons with disabilities. Finally, I will discuss how this might be a case of a more general, subtle tendency of perpetration of discrimination, and how it should be avoided in order to regain a sense of citizenship.

**Gian Maria Greco** (MA, PhD in *Philosophy*, International MA in *Accessibility to Media, Arts and Culture*) is Director of Research at POIESIS, an Italian organization specializing in accessibility, Adjunct Fellow in Philosophy at the University of Salento (Italy), and – effective from January 2016 – member of the international research group *TransMedia Catalonia* at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. His research focuses on accessibility and how it relates to human rights, the media, and the performing arts. He has held university positions as a post-doc and research fellow, and was Junior Research Associate at Oxford University (UK) from 2003 to 2007. In 2015 he was the keynote speaker at the 5<sup>th</sup> ARSAD Conference and coordinator of the panel on performing arts management at the 23<sup>rd</sup> ENCATC. He has been published in peer-reviewed journals and encyclopaedias, and has authored two books (in Italian): *Making as Healing Care* (2013), and *Accessibility, Health and Safety of Live Events* (2015). Since 2011, he has been the director of SoundMakers, a multidisciplinary festival dealing with accessibility and the performing arts. In September 2015, he was appointed as one of the three Advisory Board members of ACT, a 3-year EU project aimed at defining the competencies and skills required by experts of accessibility for the performing arts.

## 5:30pm – 6:30pm

*A Rough History (of the Destruction of Fingerprints)* - Talk with Ayesha Hameed

'To live means to leave traces'  
(W Benjamin)

We were huddled in front of the thin light of a fire in an abandoned house on a cold January night in Calais. X was making another cup of very sugary tea. Y, stirring the kindling, yelled as he accidentally grabbed a burning twig. "are you trying to clean your fingerprints?" laughed X.

*A Rough History* is a performance lecture that considers a practice by migrants entering the EU of destroying their fingerprints to avoid detection by in the Eurodac system, alongside other histories of fingerprinting and fingerprint erasures. It looks at the coalescence of skin and data in the collection and destruction of fingerprints, at the life and circulation of the image of the fingerprint, and the different lives of the bodies that produce such images. This is a speculative history that travels from border checks, to other forms of fingerprint erasure, to early gestures in film.

**Ayesha Hameed** is an artist whose work explores contemporary borders and migration, critical race theory, Walter Benjamin, and visual cultures of the Black Atlantic. Recent presentations and performance lectures include *Black Atlantis* in Where Theory Belongs at the General Theory Forum ICA London (2015), *Labour in a Single Shot*, conference at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2015), at The Chimurenga Library at the Showroom, London (2015), Oxford Programme for the Future of Cities, Oxford (2015), Edinburgh College of Art (2015). *A Rough History (of the destruction of fingerprints)* was exhibited as part of the Forensic Architecture at the House of World Cultures (Berlin) in 2014, at Social Glitch at Kunstraum Niederoesterreich Vienna (2015), and at Pavillion, Leeds in 2015.

Her publications include contributions to *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth* (2014), *The Sarai Reader* (2013), *Savage Objects: Inhuman Political Alliances* (2012), *TateETC* (2010), *Visual Cultures as Time Travel* with Henriette Gunkel (forthcoming 2016). She has presented her research at the University of Chicago, Cambridge University, the United Nations Human Rights Commission, the European Capital of Culture in Guimarães and the Städelschule. She is currently the Joint Programme Leader in Fine Art and History of Art and a Research Fellow with Forensic Architecture at the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths University, London.

## 6:30pm – 7pm

Conversation with Gian Maria Greco, Ayeesha Hameed and Youmna Makhoulouf

## Sun, Feb 28

### 2pm – 3pm

*Re-imagining Bodies: Resistance, Representation and the re-emergence of the Futuwwa* - Talk with Ismail Fayed

The last decade of Mubarak's rule witnessed massive securitization of the state and the hypertrophy of the security apparatus. This unprecedented securitization was accompanied by using police brutality against any form of opposition or dissent especially towards the marginalized and segments of society that have no recourse to social and economic capital. The revolution not only forced the question of the political use of state security as a tool of oppression but also called into question the problematic relationship between the state and those who are economically and socially deprived. The possibility of resistance or of imagining a body that is 'inviolable' slowly made its way into people's imaginaire. In this talk I will discuss the rise of the character of the underdog, the common man who resists the state constant incursions and claims to his body in cinema and TV and how its mass appeal can be seen as a way to re-imagine bodies that resist against the brutal force of the state.

**Ismail Fayed** is a freelance writer, translator and researcher in contemporary artistic practices. He has been a critic in residence at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin and Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels. His writings and reviews appeared in ArteEast, Mada Masr, Ibraaz, Nafas Art Magazine and Ahram Online.

### 3pm – 4pm

*Exposed Gestures, Ruined Gestures* - Talk with Latifa Laâbissi

My choreographic work is not limited to a re-reading of the past and its implications for today. Moreover, it is a certain relation to the present and the question of subjugation that I am trying to trace. I therefore turn to the figure of the minoritarian, who's existence and difference allows us to question concerns that we all share: a mental relationship to trauma and power.

On the occasion of this invitation, I propose to discuss the way in which I use embodiment as well as brittle and composed figurations in order not to "deal with" political questions, but to digest and work on its effects and tensions within performance and dance. As a kind of guard, who observes the social and cultural tensions that criss-cross the social and choreographic field, in order to detect and get hold of their critical potential. This kind of dance invents a kinaesthetic documentary of history and of the trans-national poetics of a body in France today; a kind of choreographic and tragic-comical fiction, which transcends the genre of auto-fiction and of auto-portrait.

Mixing genres, reflecting upon and redefining formats, **Latifa Laâbissi's** work seeks to bring onstage multiple offstage perspectives; an anthropological landscape in which stories, figures and voices are placed and highlighted. Going against the prevailing abstract aesthetic, she extrapolated a movement vocabulary built from the confusion of genres and social postures, from the beginnings of modernity.

In 2001, she created *Phasmes*, a work haunted by the ghosts of Dore Hoyer, Valeska Gert and Mary Wigman. She then came back to the German dance of the 20s, with her piece *La part du rite* with the dance historian Isabelle Launay, and with a lengthened version of Mary Wigman's *Witch Dance*, which she called *Écran somnambule*. The use of voice and face as vehicles for minor states and accents is indivisibly linked to the danced act in *Self Portrait Camouflage* (2006), *Histoire par celui qui la raconte* (2008) and *Loredreamsong* (2010). The most recent creation, *Adieu et Merci [Goodbye and thankyou]*(2013) continues to dig into the unconscious of the dance by constructing a minute choreography of traces and inclinations, creating an infinite recurring reflection.

### 4pm – 4:30pm

Conversation with Ismail Fayed and Latifa Laâbissi

### 5pm – 6:30pm

*The Aura: An Approach* - Talk with Jalal Toufic

The lecture addresses various instantiations of the aura, the "phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be" (Walter Benjamin): dancers, the undead, black holes and their event horizons from the reference frame of an outside observer; Jesus Christ; and the God of the Qur'ân.

**Jalal Toufic** is a thinker and a mortal to death. He was born in 1962 in Beirut or Baghdad and died before dying in 1989 in Evanston, Illinois. His books, many of which were published by Forthcoming Books, are available for download as PDF files at his website: <http://www.jalaltoufic.com>. He was a participant in the Sharjah Biennials 6, 10 and 11, the 9th Shanghai Biennale, Documenta 13, the 3rd Athens Biennale, and "A History: Art, Architecture, and Design, from the 1980s Until Today" (Centre Pompidou). In 2011, he was a guest of the Artists-in-Berlin Program of the DAAD; and in 2013–2014, he and Anton Vidokle led Ashkal Alwan's third edition of Home Workspace Program. He assumed the position of Director of the School of Visual Arts at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA) on September 1, 2015.