

### **ETTIJAHAT**

### International exposure of Syria artists. By Daniel Gorman Executive Director of the Shubbak Festival

https://www.ettijahat.org/page/784

"Based on this experience [Shubbak Festival], I thought it may be useful to share some key lessons we learned from the process:

### Flexibility

This is really the key lesson for us. Many displaced artists will be caught up in a quagmire of bureaucracy regarding their new residency status. There's not much international organisations can formally do about this (other than providing letters of support), but there is a need for understanding, moral support, and much flexibility around timelines.

### **Networks**

Although pretty cut off until the early 2000s and beyond, since 2011 many Syrian artists have often developed strong networks across the MENA region, and some have developed significant networks internationally. However, this will not necessarily lead to networks of artistic partners, collaborators, funders and audiences in their new and specific context (such as Germany). As such funding support should ideally come with some level of mentoring and brokering of new relationships, and possibly language support to get materials translated.

### Exoticising the other

Within Shubbak we have presented artists as 'artists' first and foremost, and worked with them to ensure their framing is as they would wish. There is a risk of falling into a media narrative of 'conflict' or 'refugee' artists which we aim to avoid. Parallel to this, there are risk of poor curation, of work being shown just because it's made by someone who is of Syrian origin. This is often done by well meaning individuals or NGOs, and as such we would advise a more joined up working relationship between NGOs and arts organisations.

### Work with Syrian run initiatives

Since 2011 there have been a number of excellent Syrian run arts organisations and institutions springing up around the world. We would strongly advise partners or discussing ideas with some of them. These include Syria Sixth Space, Ettijahat, Bidayyat, the Atassi Foundation and the forthcoming Syria Biennale, and many more.

Finally, and foremostly, our key recommendation is that Syrian artists should be treated as artists first and foremost. We as international arts institutions need to think creatively about how best to support them, and others in times of displacement, in creating and presenting their work alongside their international peers."

https://www.ettijahat.org/page/914

### **ETTIJAHAT**

Art Education within the Context of Germany's "Welcome Culture" by Miriam Schickler, Cultural worker and project manager of the \*foundationClass at weißensee academy of art berlin

https://www.ettijahat.org/page/788

"Students of the \*foundationClass, many of who had participated in a number of other programmes before, often complain about both being addressed as "refugee artists", as well as about this exact expectation. Talking about a film workshop one student stated that even when they attempted to work on a different theme the facilitators managed to flip it around in such a way that the work eventually dealt with the student's violent experiences in Syria. For the dominant culture the art students' experience of displacement, war and exile thus "become what they are, their unique selling point, their only selling point."

This lack of awareness of power hierarchies and structural mechanisms of exclusion is not only a feature of "alternative artistic trainings aimed at refugees and asylum seekers, it is, unfortunately, also extremely common to art academies (for a thorough analysis see Institute for Art Education, Zürcher Hochschule der Künste 2016). During the interviews that are part of the entrance exams to German art academies for instance, some applicants coming from the \*foundationClass were not asked about their artistic practices and interests, but about how they fled to Germany. In addition to being reduced to one's legal status, or the experience of displacement and exile, educators in art academies commonly stick to Eurocentric understandings of aesthetics and art histories. An applicant who applies as a transfer student from the University of Damascus, for example, is therefore commonly expected to have no knowledge of contemporary art and to display a "traditional", if not folkloristic approach to fine art."

Palestine as a "Profession": Syria also? By Fatin Farhat, Palestine

https://www.ettijahat.org/page/529

## I

### **SAVE HAVENS**

### Art Spaces Hosting Activism Using surplus resources to provide individual assistance and strengthen community engagement

### **Considerations for Art Spaces: Examples / Possible Solutions**

- 1. Time duration of placement: By understanding that a culture worker in distress may not be able to return home after their temporary placement in Creative Safe Haven, the Art Space can begin to raise this issue for the culture worker to help think about and process the current situation and future options.
- 2. Financial: Engaging human rights organizations, art and free expression funders, finding organizations specific to the area that the artist is active in (e.g., music) or civic and NGO organizations engaged in the cultural worker's region; and academic institutions.
- 3. Legal: Utilize networks of human rights organizations that are skilled in the process and regularly perform background checks. Probono legal service organizations; particularly helpful are those that specialize in asylum law.
- 4. Health care: Small grants or donations to provide the culture worker with health care insurance. Building relationships with health practitioners in the local community is one way to cover these expenses. For example, an artist that was hosted by a Brazilian art space received free dental insurance and an Uzbek national hosted in Spain received medical care for a knee injury.
- 5. Mental health support: The culture worker may have experienced trauma and been exposed to a variety of severe stressors. In addition, transitioning from one culture to another presents a variety of challenges. Being in prox- imity to and having access to appropriate mental health services may be cru- cial for many. Furthermore, a supportive social environment can help with adaptation to a new culture. Building relationships with torture treatment centers, mental health organizations, and religious communities can help to provide this additional support.
- 6. Artist's form of expression: When the opportunity to engage with other culture workers working on similar issues is limited, the art space can facilitate interventions that engage artists from multiple media and disciplines. It is important to consider that not being able to cater to the culture worker's medium may limit continuation of work. Lesson learned: An avantgarde musician and women's rights activist was placed at a conservatory that focuses on classical music. Although the placement was welcoming, the musician was not able to find a community of support.
- 7. Language: When art spaces host multiple culture workers at the same time, there is potential to build a community that helps the activist translate some work into a local language or provide opportunities to support writing in the artist's own language. Various options exist for communication among the culture worker, the art space and the community. The culture worker can build bilingual partnerships with those who study their language, or even organize performances in their own language and share it with the community. Additional connections can be encouraged with other people from the culture worker's home country who may be residing in the host community.

- 8. Other factors: One of the unique aspects of Creative Safe Haven has been the opportunity to customize the experience based on the unique situation and needs of both the culture worker in distress as well as the art space. One art space was able to partner with an academic institution to provide housing for the culture worker's family while the artist took advantage of the residency in the art space community. (See example: "From the Art Space Perspective Ledig House & Pierre Mumbere Mjjobma")
- 9. Art space needs: Others in the artist residency have an opportunity to broaden their perspective on issues such as censorship, human rights, and the costs of expression to artists around the world. By hosting culture workers in distress there may be an opportunity for highlighting the mission and work of the art space to a broader constituency – locally, nationally and internationally.
- 11. Community needs: The surrounding community has a chance to meet with a culture worker in distress and listen to stories and potentially to engage in action on behalf of the culture worker's own situation or more generally on issues of censorship and human rights.

First of all: It is very important that people in exile do not have to have the additional worries of fulfilling their subsistence needs.

Secondly: People in this position may need professional help for psychological or social problems.

Thirdly: Finding the right person for a residency such as this needs careful evaluation of many different factors. This process takes time and energy, which all parties need to be devoted to.

Fourthly: Creative people in exile need more assistance than others [artist residents] to be able to function professionally in new surroundings.

Fifthly: Possibly a more structured relationship between the sender/senders and the host should be established with some routine tasks.

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### 31 MAG MOROCCAN HIP-HOP DANCERS IN NETHERLANDS

### Are artists from the Global South not welcomed in the EU?

https://www.31mag.nl/are-artists-from-the-global-south-not-welcomed-in-the-eu/

"Some may say Dutch border police were sending a "Dutch direct" message when they essentially imprisoned three Moroccan hip-hop dancers visiting the Netherlands early this year. The three dancers arrived at the Eindhoven airport and were sent to a detention centre by Dutch officials where they spent at least five days, according to cultural activist Maria Daïf. At this Rotterdam centre, which is used for undocumented migrants, the dancers were allegedly not told how long they'd stay detained, received unreliable legal advice and could only leave their cells for about two hours each day. The fiasco began on January 10 and partly ended on January 15 when two of the artists were transferred from Rotterdam to the Eindhoven airport for a flight bound for Marrakech. All this happened despite the dancers possessing visas to stay in the Netherlands.,

"In the case of the three Moroccan dancers, passport control denied and detained them on the grounds of "lack of means of subsistence and lack of evidence of the reasons for their travel," according to Daïf. **A foreign national who wants to enter the Netherlands must possess at least €34 per day for period of stay.** The dancers arrived at Eindhoven on January 10 and two of them were scheduled to return to Morocco on January 17, meaning they would each need to have a minimum of €238 for their trip. The group only had about €300. "

"From a legal perspective, member states of the Schengen Area are <u>legally</u> allowed to deny entry for short-stay visa holders; officers at passport control may decide to refuse entry for a number of reasons, including insufficient funds of support, reason for visit and perceived length of stay."

### **PARLE**

### THE ULTIMATE COOKBOOK FOR CULTURAL MANAGERS - VISAS FOR THIRD COUNTRY NATIONAL ARTISTS TRAVELLING TO THE SCHENGEN AREA

https://www.pearle.eu/publication/the-ultimate-cookbook-for-cultural-managers-visas-for-third-country-national-artists-travelling-to-the-schengen-area

https://www.pearle.eu/policyarea/third-country-nationals

Furthermore, On the Move collaborated with PEARL\*, the European sector federation of music and live performances, to battle the issue of restricted mobility. The federation coordinated a campaign to call on European institutions to consider the specific needs of the cultural industry. "The cultural sector in Europe desires transparent and easy application processes when inviting artists, cultural professionals, touring groups, and others from visa-required countries," On the Move writes. Eighty organisations joined the campaign, demanding Europe to reevaluate their treatment of foreign artists. But campaigns such as these can only do so much to combat the growing phenomenon of limited mobility of creatives. Refusing to accept artists from the south will continue to dampen Europe's artistic legacy until Europe recognises and appreciates the impact these people have on their society. "[Allowing artists to enter Europe] is important for market opportunities, visibility, cultural exchange and also for the sake of diversity," Le Sourd says to 31mag.nl. "More than ever we need such diversity represented on European stages and international connections of European arts and cultural sector."

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### ROBERTO CIMETTA FUND

### The Roberto Cimetta Fund's contribution to the mobility of artists and cultural operators between Europe and the Arab world | ANGIE COTTE - ROBERTO CIMETTA FUND

http://artmobility.interartive.org/the-roberto-cimetta-funds-contribution-to-the-mobility-of-artists-and-cultural-operators-between-europe-and-the-arab-world-angie-cotte-roberto-cimetta-fund

How can mobile artists define a new framework of references to work with?

A new framework of references should first of all consider that mobility is not the aim itself. Equal access and facility to mobility as a way of developing arts and culture in the four corners of the globe, is the main goal. The aim is also to increase the autonomy and emergence of artists and their producers.

Mobility is a global policy issue. As such it is a cultural policy issue for Europe, for member states and for local governments. In this context we aim for mobility to be understood as a round trip concept, directly linked to local development at the starting point. One-way trips from one corner of the world to another are a human rights issue more than a cultural policy/development issue, even if this issue is a central pillar of democracy building.

We must acknowledge the geographical imbalances at work between the rural and the urban, between the North and South, the directional imbalances, are directly related to colonial heritage. There is an urgent need for a more reciprocal and respectful exchange between Europe, its neighbours and the world at large particularly the so called emerging countries. This exchange must also take stock of the need to rebalance the artistic needs such as infrastructures, training and human resources. Artistic imbalances are not linked to talent and artistic capacities being higher in some parts of the world than in others: artistic potential exists in anyone of us, everywhere. Potential to overcome artistic imbalances depends on the setting up of policies related to given sectors that respond to the operators and artists working at local level. Building up democratic platforms to address the needs and ideas and transform them into concrete policies in various sectors of artistic activity remains a key issue in Arab countries as well as on the European continent.

Are we ready to think in terms of an artistic community without frontiers, which exists through encounters, works through experimentation, and is productive through interaction of a multiplicity of actors - not only from different nationalities but also working at different levels (artists, managers, critics, programmers)?

What are the tools that artists need to be mobile?

Being mobile and productive cannot be possible without intermediaries or relays (ie organisations that already exist and help artist to find other contacts in other countries). Intermediaries can also be networks of operators that organise meetings so that the sector can interact at European or international level (such as Istikshaf network or IETM network for example). They can also be platforms of exchange in which operators come together at a given moment on a given topic to build up a framework for action, for project-building, or to advocate for their needs. Translation is also a necessary tool for mobility to further the capacities of artists to communicate and translate their own works (see also the work done by Transeuropéennes). Information needs to circulate to all actors so that opportunities, financial resources, events, regulations, studies, and so on are available in all countries to all actors wherever they may be (such as the network On the Move). Representation of the cultural and arts sectors is vital to federate the needs, advocate or relay policy issues at a wider level (such as the platform Culture Action Europe). Strengthening of capacities in the sector through training at international level is also required.

About the fund:

http://www.cimettafund.org/article/index/rubrique/1/lang/en/fm/1/id/29

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### **ISTIKSHAF: EXPLORING MOBILITY**

The Arab Education Forum (Jordan), the International Association for Creation and Training (Egypt), and Roberto Cimetta Fund (France), in collaboration with 36 social and cultural organizations so far, indentified 4 policy areas that included 16 policy positions and recommendations and 21 advocacy actions that should be implemented on a regional level.

### Policy Issue 1: Mobility on the national agenda

We aim to ensure that decision makers adopt the concept of mobility in the national agendas in the region, influencing the cities' agendas and private sector strategies to acknowledge that mobility is a public concern.

### Policy Issue 2: Financing mobility

We aim to agree with public and private sector institutions and the donor community in the region on transparent mechanisms for allocating budgets and distributing funds to support mobility initiatives without restrictions.

### **Policy Issue 3: Crossing Borders**

We aspire to the free movement of people and ideas across the Arab Countries and their external exchanges.

### Policy Issue 4: Mobilizing communities

We aim to encourage the engagement of people to be supportive of art, culture and mobility and reduce the fear factors that limit the participation of men, women and youth from different backgrounds in being active citizens.

http://www.cimettafund.org/content/upload/file/Istikshaf%20Mobility%20Policy%20Agenda%20English%2020-11-2012.pdf

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### POLICY ISSUE 3: CROSSING BORDERS

**Challenges:** The right to free and responsible movement within national and international borders, as described in the international declarations, can have profound effects on societies and people. During the past years, the concept of free mobility of people has been faced by unexplainable social behaviors and legal systems that aimed to place artificial boundaries between Arab countries and also the world.

**We aim** to reach for a free movement of people and ideas across the Arab Countries, where all borders are open without limitations, and to ensure all Arab citizens including artists, social entrepreneurs, men and women are capable of spreading social and cultural initiatives.

### Positions / Recommendations

- Governments in coordination with local and international organizations and activists should work to ensure free mobility between Arab countries for all Arab citizens, and should also work collectively to ensure the freedom of movement of people in Palestine.
- Governments, on the short term, must set new policies that are in line with the human rights
  principles, in order to better govern the movement of artists, social entrepreneurs across
  borders, and create an effective, efficient and transparent visa system and procedures.
- Governments should work to ensure the availability of information on laws and regulations related to movement across borders, and visa procedures and costs.
- Governments and NGOs should work to encourage foreign authorities to set clear, simple and cost effective international visa procedures in order to facilitate the movement of artists and social entrepreneurs to their countries.

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### ON THE MOVE MOBILITY CHARTER

### On the Move's Charter for cultural operators

### Visas and cultural mobility

- Ease the mobility of artists and cultural professionals you invite / send abroad as far as visa procedures are concerned.
- Signpost artists/operators to reliable and updated sources of information about visa issues and procedures. Make sure they are aware of the possible length of bureaucratic procedures to get a visa and that the applications are properly prepared and lodged in due advance.
- Train somebody in your organisation to make her/him able to support artists during the application process (incl. know good arguments, refer to existing literature/legal information, contact civil servants, asking about reasons for refusal/delays, etc.).
- When you invite professionals from other countries, make sure you provide on time all the necessary documents you have to provide/can help with: detailed invitation letter, programme, information about work permits... and include the name and contacts of a reference person in case clarifications were needed.
- Raise awareness on obstacles related to visa issues at different levels: national – international, political-social.
- Take the time to report back to organisations, funders, mobility platforms etc. about difficulties and obstacles related to visa issues. Use existing web platforms to share positive and negative experiences.
- Encourage /ask for a collaboration between cultural institutions, foreign affairs institutions and consular representations abroad to allow the artists/cultural professionals you collaborate with experience smooth visa procedures.

### Arts Organization Decries Denial of Visas to Iraqi Artists in MoMA PS1 Show: 'It Is Unacceptable'

BY Alex Greenberger POSTED 11/08/19 1:53 PM











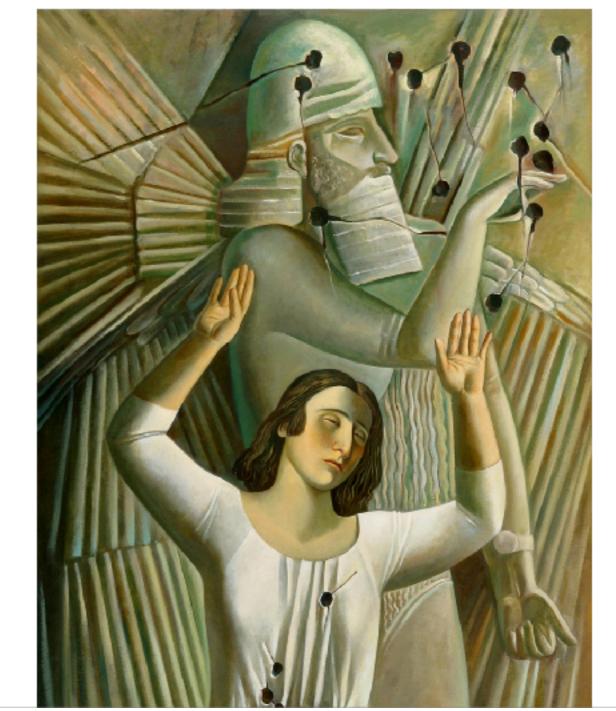




A major survey on view now at MoMA PS1 in New York takes as its subject wars in the Gulf region between 1991 and 2011, and much of its focus is the way Westerners watched the horrors of conflict in Iraq unfold from afar, via the internet, television, and news publications. Now, after being denied visas, artists of Iraqi descent are being forced to remotely look on as Americans celebrate the exhibition while they remain unable to travel from their home countries.

Several artists in the show have been unable to come to America to view the 300-work exhibition, titled "Theater of Operations: The Gulf Wars 1991–2011." Among those artists are Afifa Aleiby, who was born in Iraq and is now based in the Netherlands, and Ali Eyal, who splits his time between Beirut and Baghdad.

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Some may say Dutch border police were sending a "Dutch direct" message when they essentially imprisoned three Moroccan hip-hop dancers visiting the Netherlands early this year. The three dancers arrived at the Eindhoven airport and were sent to a detention centre by Dutch officials where they spent at least five days, according to cultural activist Maria Daïf. At this Rotterdam centre, which is used for undocumented migrants, the dancers were allegedly not told how long they'd stay detained, received unreliable legal advice and could only leave their cells for about two hours each day. The fiasco began on January 10 and partly ended on January 15 when two of the artists were transferred from Rotterdam to the Eindhoven airport for a flight bound for Marrakech. All this happened despite the dancers possessing visas to stay in the Netherlands.



From a legal perspective, member states of the Schengen Area are <u>legally</u> allowed to deny entry for short-stay visa holders; officers at passport control may decide to refuse entry for a number of reasons, including insufficient funds of support, reason for visit and perceived length of stay. However, these discretional powers raise questions in the midst of rising anti-immigrant sentiment within European politics. Does profiling contribute to the rejection of certain individuals? Are there nationalities and ethnicities overrepresented in the portion of people who are denied entry at passport control?

Daïf, who lives in Morocco and <u>highlighted</u> the aforementioned incident, believes Schengen officials have biases toward people from countries like hers. "Europe definitely considers the citizens of the southern countries, whether artists or not, as dangerous for its security," she tells 31mag.nl. In the case of the three Moroccan dancers, passport control denied and detained them on the grounds of "lack of means

### **Politics**

Why Did the US Deny Kurdish Artist Zehra Doğan's Visa? She Doesn't Know—and She's Not the Only One Affected

"They made me feel like a criminal," the artist said of the visa application process.

Sarah Cascone, November 15, 2019



# wF1Crufhg

The Kurdish artist and journalist Zehra Doğan, who was imprisoned for nearly three years for making art that offended the Turkish government, was denied entry to the US last month when she attempted to attend the opening of a show at the **Drawing Center** that includes her work.

The exhibition, "The Pencil Is a Key: Drawings by Incarcerated Artists," features the work of incarcerated artists, including political prisoners and concentration camp detainees. Doğan was accused of being part of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which Turkey considers a terrorist group, after she painted a photo of a Kurdish area that had been destroyed by Turkish security forces.

Doğan believes her time behind bars was a factor in the US's decision to deny her visa application, she told Artnet News.

During her application interview, she was asked about her conviction and imprisonment. "They did not speak with me at the counters where they usually speak with other people, but took me to [a] special room where they take criminals. They kept asking questions just like the police that [were] questioning me under custody. This situation continued for hours," she said in an email, translated from Turkish to English. "It made me feel guilty, like I was a criminal."



Left, the photograph of Nusaybin, Turkey, after military forces destroyed it. Right,

wF1Crufhg

## Doğan's imprisonment was widely publicized, in part thanks to the British street artist Banksy, who painted a mural in tribute to her on New York's Houston Bowery Wall. Afterward, she wrote a letter thanking him, saying that his support helped raised awareness of her work, and that "my painting now accomplished its mission of showing the atrocities." Doğan's inability to attend the Drawing Center show was "a significant loss Banario Güiraldes, and of the exhibition's curators, told Artnet News in an

Doğan's inability to attend the Drawing Center show was "a significant loss," Rosario Güiraldes, one of the exhibition's curators, told Artnet News in an email. "Her work is central to the exhibition, and demonstrates the ways in which drawing can be such a powerful tool for those who are surviving imprisonment or struggling against it."

Both the Drawing Center and PEN America, the nonprofit that defends international freedom of speech in literature, had written letters in support of Doğan's visa application, and were ready to help the artist appeal the verdict. But the artist told them not to.



## 

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It's Harder Than Ever for Artists to Get Visas to the United States. But an Army of Volunteer Lawyers Wants to Help <a href="https://news.artnet.com/art-world/visual-artists-immigration-clinic-1747227">https://news.artnet.com/art-world/visual-artists-immigration-clinic-1747227</a>

Visual Artists' Immigration Clinic, designed to guide emerging visual artists through the process of obtaining a visa to the United States. <a href="https://itsartlaw.org/immigration-clinic/">https://itsartlaw.org/immigration-clinic/</a>

Exposing the good and bad practices of art institutions, galleries, and studios https://codeofacquisitions.org/

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### MAIN PROBLEMS (summarizing the research)

- 1. **Lack of knowledge** regarding Visa problems in cultural sector. Info is gathered (On the Move, Parle) but is not distributed and its not easy accessible.
- 2. Mobility taken for granted by EU citizens.
- 3. The declarations vs. the practice, the fantasy about inviting artists from outside of Europe Union, **Fantasy about inclusivity vs. Visa reality**
- 4. Artist as a token. It is good to have Palestinian/Syrian artist at a festival/ exhibition
- 5. Stereotype that migrant artist can do only refugee art, art about conflict, exoticising the other
- 6. **Luck of flexibility**. Too little time for displaced artists to deal with bureaucracy regarding their residency status or visa.
- 7. Expensive visas to Europe. Or **not enough money** to enter Europe.
- 7. Migrants as the subjects of debate not participants in it. Migrants are often spoken about, but rarely asked.
- 8. Visa as a business.

KNOWLEDGE
DISTRIBUTION?
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OPEN GUIDE?
PROTOCOL?

For small institutions, non profit spaces, project spaces etc.