

Before the Contemporary: Arts, Institutions, Revolutions

A week-long conversation about new historiographies of art, urban space, and public culture in the Middle East, North Africa, and Turkey, 1900-present

Symposium

May 28 Thursday 3:00-6:00 pm

Graduate School Commons, 2122 Sheridan Road Evanston, IL 60201 (1st floor)

3:00 Opening Remarks

3:15 Revolutionary Art and Institutions of Circulation

Anneka Lenssen (Berkeley), "Extending Painting in Syria, Algeria, and Morocco c. 1965"

Kristine Khouri (Co-founder, the History of Arab Modernities in the Visual Arts Study Group),

"*The International Art Exhibition for Palestine, 1978: A (Speculative) Exhibition History*"

Chad Elias (University of York/Dartmouth), "Images from an Unfinished Revolution"

Erin Reitz (Northwestern), discussant

5:30 Reception

Friday 29 Friday 10:00am-6:00pm

Graduate School Commons, 2122 Sheridan Road Evanston, IL 60201 (1st floor)

10:00 Coffee

10:30-12:15 The Institutions of Space and the Practice of Place-Making

Nancy Demerdash (Princeton), "Gridding the *Gourbiville*: CIAM, Primitivism, and Tunisia's Quest for Dignified Dwelling"

Katarzyna Pieprzak (Williams), "The Problem of Perceptual Enclosures: Built Environment, Literature, and Aesthetics of Immobility in Casablanca's *Bidonvilles*"

Elliot Reichert (Block Museum), discussant

12:15-1:45 Lunch

1:45-2:30 Roundtable: Archival Excavations and Documentary Recuperations

Anneka Lenssen (Berkeley)
Kristine Khouri (Independent Scholar)
Rory Sykes (Northwestern)

2:30-4:30 The Institutions of Art

Dina Ramadan (Bard), "A Portrait of the Young Man as an Artist"
Sarah-Neel Smith (UCLA/MICA), "Traveling Critique: Tracing Non-Western Genealogies of
Art Criticism"
Emma Chubb (Northwestern), "Rif, *Rien*"
Brynn Hatton (Northwestern), discussant

4:30 Concluding Remarks: Jessica Winegar (Northwestern)

5:00 Reception

1 June Monday 12:00-1:30

Hagstrum Room, University Hall

In conjunction with the Program in Middle Eastern and North African Studies

New Directions in MENA Studies

Talinn Grigor (Brandeis), "'Iranian or Not?' This Might not be the Right Question."

3 June Wednesday 5-6:30

Graduate School Commons, 2122 Sheridan Road Evanston, IL 60201 (1st floor)

Sam Bardouil and Till Fellrath (Co-founders and curators, Art Reoriented)

"Tea with Nefertiti, or How the Arts Shape Culture!"

Sponsors

Organized by Hannah Feldman, Associate Professor of Art History with support from the Myers Foundations, the Buffet Institute for Global Studies, Keyman Modern Turkish Studies, the Crown Family Middle Eastern Program, the Program in Middle Eastern and North African Studies, the Center for Global Culture and Communication, the Department of Anthropology, the Department of Art History, and the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities.

Bios

Sam Bardouil and Till Felrath are the co-founders of Art Reoriented, a multidisciplinary curatorial platform based in Munich and New York. Integral to Bardouil and Felrath's practice is the critique of conventional art-historical classifications and the interrogation of traditional mechanisms by which contemporary art is understood. Through their work, they excavate art-historical materials, with specific interest in multiple modernities, for the purpose of questioning the way artists and artworks have been appropriated by diverse modes of representation. Some of their recent museum exhibitions include *Mona Hatoum: Turbulence* at Mathaf, Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha (2014), and *Songs of Loss and Songs of Love: Oum Kulthoum and Lee Nan-Young* at the Gwangju Museum of Art in South Korea (2014). In 2013, Bardouil and Felrath were the curators of the Lebanese Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale, and of the comprehensive retrospective *Paul Guiragossian: The Human Condition* at the Beirut Exhibition Center. They also curated Mathaf's inaugural contemporary art exhibition *Told Untold Retold* (2010 – 2011) and the critically acclaimed international traveling exhibition *Tea with Nefertiti* (2012 – 2014). Bardouil and Felrath have held teaching positions at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, the London School of Economics, the Singapore Institute of Management, and the American University of Beirut among other institutions. Their academic research projects include collaborations with numerous institutions such as the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA) in Paris, the Haus der Kunst in Munich, and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. They have authored and contributed to numerous publications such as *Overcoming the Modern: Dansaekhwa-The Korean Monochrome Movement*, *Iran Inside Out*, *ItaliaArabia*, and their recent book *Summer, Autumn, Winter... and Spring: Conversations with Artists from the Arab World*.

Chad Elias is a member of the Art History department at the University of York and will be taking up a position at Dartmouth College in the Fall. His research focuses on contemporary

art practices and visual cultures of the Middle East. Chad is currently completing a book about the memory politics of documentary video, archival photography and performance art in post-civil war Lebanon. A graduate of the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program, Chad's scholarship also engages with art historical debates on the aesthetics of protest, the activation of public space, the politics of representation and the legacies of institutional critique.

Emma Chubb is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Art History at Northwestern University, where she is also a member of the Society of Fellows and the Middle East and North Africa Studies Program. Her research examines the relationship between national identity, visual representation, minority communities, and postcolonial migration in North Africa and the Middle East, particularly in Morocco. She has been the recipient of grants and fellowships from the American Institute for Maghrib Studies, the Camargo Foundation, the Northwestern Presidential Fellowship, and the Buffett Institute. In 2014, she curated the exhibition, *Mohssin Harraki: Graft, Trellis, Tame*, at L'appartement 22 in Rabat. She regularly contributes articles, translations, and editorial expertise to *Nafas Art Magazine*, [Art.es](#), L'appartement 22, and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art. An essay on Bouchra Khalili and Yto Barrada is forthcoming in *The Journal of Arabic Literature*.

Nancy Demerdash is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University, where she is completing a dissertation on postwar architecture and reconstruction in Tunisia. Having taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, she has also held fellowships from the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies. Her work has been published in the journals *New Middle Eastern Studies* and the *International Journal of Islamic Architecture*, and in the award-winning open courseware platform, *Smarthistory*.

Brynn Hatton is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of Art History specializing in modern and contemporary art and theory, with an emphasis on the representational practices of social movements and the aesthetics of dissent. She has received fellowships from the Social Science Research Council, the U.S. Dept. of Education, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Her dissertation examines how global anti-war public spheres consolidated and disaggregated in the 1960s and 70s around the subject of the Vietnam-American art via local visual practices, with case studies anchored in the Middle East, Australia, Southeast Asia, and the U.S.

Talinn Grigor is an Associate Professor of modern and contemporary architecture in the Department of Fine Arts at Brandeis University. Her research concentrates on the cross-pollination of architecture and (post)colonial politics, with a particular focus on Iran and India. She is the author of *Building Iran: Modernism, Architecture, and National Heritage under the Pahlavi Monarchs* (Prestel, 2009) and *Contemporary Iranian Art: From the Street to the Studio* (Reaktion, 2014). With Sussan Babaie she has co-edited *Persian Kingship and Architecture: Strategies of Power in Iran from the Achaemenids to the Pahlavis* (I.B. Tauris, 2015). Her articles have appeared in the *Art Bulletin*, *Getty Research Journal*, *Third Text*, *Journal of Iranian Studies*, *Thresholds*, and *DOCOMOMO* among others. She has received grants and fellowships from the Getty Research Institute, Cornell University, the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art, Soudavar Memorial Foundation, the Soros Foundation, the Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute and the Aga Khan at MIT. Her present project deals with the turn-of-the-century European art-historiography and its links to eclectic-revivalistic architecture in Qajar Iran and the British Raj.

Kristine Khouri is an independent researcher and writer based in Beirut, Lebanon. She is a co-founder of the History of Arab Modernities in the Visual Arts Study Group, a research

platform focused around the social history of art in the Arab world. With Rasha Salti, she co-curated "*Past Disquiet: Narratives and Ghosts from the International Art Exhibition for Palestine*, Beirut 1978," an archival and documentary exhibition at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) in 2015. Independently, Khouri is researching the history of the Sultan Gallery, Kuwait as part of an exploration of Pan-Arab sites and events of the 1970s. She is curator of *The Founding Years (1969-1973): A Selection of Works from the Sultan Gallery Archives* (2012) at the Sultan Gallery, Kuwait.

Anneka Lenssen is Assistant Professor of Global Modern Art in the History of Art department at the University of California, Berkeley, and has previously directed the Visual Cultures Program at the American University of Cairo. She writes on modern and contemporary art, with a particular specialization in the cultural politics of the Middle East. Her work has been published in ARTMargins, *Mesa* Bulletin, and in several edited anthologies. She has received fellowships from the U.S. Department of Education (Fulbright) and the Social Science Research Council among others. Current projects include a forthcoming co-edited volume of writings on art from the Arab world (International Program of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, 2017) and a book-length study of painting in Syria under new regimes of political representation, 1930s-1960s.

Katarzyna Pieprzak is an Associate Professor of Romance Languages and Comparative Literature at Williams College. Her work focuses on contemporary art, literature and urban institutions in Morocco, and how they open and close discourse on citizenship, subjectivity, memory and identity. She is the author of *Imagined Museums: Art and Modernity in Contemporary Morocco* (University of Minnesota Press in 2010), and the co-editor of two volumes, *Land and Landscape in Francographic Literature*, and *Africanity and North Africa*, a special issue of *Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture*. She is currently working on a critical genealogy of *bidonvilles* [squatter communities] in Francophone literature and thought.

Dina A. Ramadan is Assistant Professor of Arabic at Bard College. She received her PhD from the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University and is currently working on a manuscript entitled *Brokers of Taste: The Aesthetic Education of the Modern Egyptian Subject*. She is a senior editor of *Arab Studies Journal* and the guest editor of the Spring 2010 themed issue on the visual arts. She is a founding member of the Association for Modern and Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran, and Turkey (AMCA). She has contributed articles, book chapters, and reviews to *Arab Studies*

Journal, *Art Journal*, *Journal of Visual Culture*, *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, and other publications.

Erin Reitz is a PhD candidate in the Department of Art History at Northwestern University.

Her dissertation examines the visuals and films of the Black Panther Party and the shifting geographies of the Panthers' political ambitions between 1966 and 1971, especially as they traced urban experience in sites ranging from Chicago to Los Angeles and Algiers. Last year she was a fellow at the Paris Program for Critical Theory.

Elliot Reichert is the Curator of Special Projects at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University. He has written for *Chicago Artist Writers* and is a frequent contributor to *Newcity*. He researches broadly on the relationships between architecture, urban space, cultural policy, and public art.

Sarah-Neel Smith will join the Art History Department at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) as assistant professor in Fall 2015. Her dissertation *Art, Democracy, and the Culture of Dissent in 1950s Turkey* (UCLA, 2015) focuses on the intersection of art and politics in Turkey in the post-war period, and her translation of the early writings of Turkish

art critic and prime minister Bülent Ecevit is forthcoming in *ARTMargins*. Her research interests include modern and contemporary art history of Turkey and the Middle East and histories of museums, exhibitions, and display.

Rory Sykes

Jessica Winegar is Associate Professor of anthropology at Northwestern. She is the author of numerous articles on arts and culture in the Middle East, with a number of recent writings on Egypt's uprising. She has also written about the representation of the Middle East and Islam through art in the U.S. and Europe. She is the author of the book *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt* (Stanford University Press, 2006), which won the Albert Hourani Book Award for best book in Middle East studies and the Arnold Rubin Outstanding Publication Award from the African Studies Association. She is also co-author, with Lara Deeb, of a forthcoming book entitled *Anthropology's Politics: Disciplining the Middle East* (Stanford). She was the Virtual Gallery curator for *ArteEast* for five years.