

For immediate release  
July 11, 2017

**SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES DETAILS OF *SHIFTING GROUND*,  
THE THIRD SHARJAH BIENNIAL 13: TAMAWUJ OFF-SITE PROJECT IN  
RAMALLAH**

10 - 14 August 2017  
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah  
Khashabi Theatre, Haifa



Photograph with red sheet filters corresponding to caesium 137 levels in Khirbet Al Taybeh, Hebron from Inas Halabi, *Lions Remind Us of Futures Present* (artist book), 2017. Courtesy of the artist.

The launch of ten artist publications and a symposium will take place from 10 to 14 August 2017 at the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah and Khashabi Theatre, Haifa. Titled *Shifting Ground*, the event in Ramallah is the third of four Sharjah Biennial 13: Tamawuj (SB13) off-site projects centred around the keywords 'water', 'crops', 'earth' and 'culinary'. SB13 curator Christine Tohme has invited Lara Khaldi to be the interlocutor who researches and dialogues with the keyword 'earth'.

Working with the keyword 'earth' represents a complex endeavour in Palestine because the relationship between Palestinians and the land has been romanticised into an organic and natural relationship. However, what actually connects Palestinians to the earth and makes them indigenous is their shared condition of being stateless in a world full of nation states. Earth is not only soil or land but can also be a surface, medium and envelope of objects as well as secrets and stories.

An infrastructure of wired networks, historical artefacts and graveyards made invisible by the ground and soil conditions constitutes our lives today. What is underground does not represent the past; it is rather very much in the present. Not merely technical networks, infrastructures are also fantasies produced out of desires that do not necessarily have technical functions. The earth envelops these desires.

Khalidi has conceived and organised a programme that includes newly commissioned publications, a symposium and performances. The artist publications highlight research on issues related to the keyword 'earth' and experiment with the book as an art form. The symposium provides an opportunity for presenters to enter into discussion with the audience and offers different styles of presentations, such as artist performances and academic papers.

Samir Harb and Mimi Cabell's publication investigates the history of the infrastructure of authority, tracing the literal and symbolic history of the Tegar fort in Palestine through multiple systems of design. Buried stories are also considered through the work of artist Inas Halabi as she looks at invisible buried chemical waste and radiation in the south of the West Bank. The work of the Ma'touq collective attempts to rewrite and reinsert Palestinian insurgents from the 1920s into present narratives. Subversive Film (Reem Shilleh and Mohannad Ya'qubi) addresses a syllabus for filming during the Palestinian revolution from the archive of filmmaker and co-founder of Fatah's Palestine Film Unit, Hani Jawhariyyeh. Yara Saqfalhait considers the newly emerging sinkholes around the Dead Sea in relation to a history of unrealised infrastructure projects in the area to investigate the relationship between systems of prediction and the reality they help materialise. Benji Boyadjian presents material on the history of the ancient aqueduct network in Jerusalem and the complexities that occurred once the network became clogged.

Additionally, in a collaborative effort with The Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind, a handbook of the museum collection will be published, as will the Arabic translation of Noor Abu Arafah's novel *'The Earth Doesn't Tell Its Secrets' – His father once said* (2017) about museums in Palestine, which was launched in Sharjah earlier this year. Many of the publications to be launched in Ramallah have been realised through editorial workshops where participants collaborated with the artists, and later this year, art and geography students will be guided by artist Maria Thereza Alves in the production of another publication, which includes various research material on plots of empty land in Ramallah. To exhibit all the new publications, a structure by AAU Anastas Studio (Elias and Yousef Anastas) has been designed by the architects and designers in response to the theme of 'earth' and will continue to display the books at the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center for a month after the end of the event.

The symposium *Shifting Ground*, which is curated by Lara Khaldi in collaboration with Rana Anani and Yara Saqfalhait, takes place over the span of five days. Invited scholars such as Keller Easterling, Suhad Daher Nashif, Abdul Rahim Al-Shaikh, Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbins, Chiara Decesari and Doreen Mende as well as artists working on the publications will discuss the themes of burial grounds in Palestine, the earth as medium and various museum models that reflect the colonial context. The symposium will also bring together local and international artists such as Jumana Emil Abboud, Filipa César, Noor Abu Arafah, Khaled Hourani, Khalil Rabah, Nasser Soumi and others, who will present performances, non-academic lectures and lecture performances. Kristine Houry, Rasha Salti, Lawrence Abu Hamdan and Rabih Mroué will be participating remotely as they cannot enter the Palestinian Occupied Territories. Palestinian poet Asma'a Azaizeh, who has been trained by Mroué in Berlin, will give three of his non-academic lectures in their first presentation in Ramallah and Haifa.

### **About Sharjah Biennial 13: *Tamawuj***

Taking place from January 2016 to January 2018, Sharjah Biennial 13: *Tamawuj* encompasses exhibitions, projects and educational programmes in five locations, expanding the biennial structure across space and time. Curated by Christine Tohme, *tamawuj* is an Arabic word that suggests the rising and falling of waves; a flowing, swelling, surging or fluctuation; or a wavy, undulating appearance, outline or form. Sharjah Biennial 13 (SB13) includes exhibitions and public programmes in two acts, one in Sharjah (10 March–12 June 2017) and one in Beirut (October 2017– January 2018), as well as SB13 School, a year-long education programme that spans the west, central and eastern regions of Sharjah. *Tamawuj* also seeks to mobilise ongoing conversations. Four interlocutors in as many cities have organised projects around keywords that are integral to SB13's conceptual framework. Kader Attia investigated water in Dakar (8 January 2017), Zeynep Öz considered crops in Istanbul (13 May 2017), Lara Khaldi studies earth in Ramallah (10 August 2017) and representatives of *Ashkal Alwan* reflect on the culinary in Beirut (15 October 2017).

Sharjah Biennial is organised by Sharjah Art Foundation, which brings a broad range of contemporary art and cultural programmes to the communities of Sharjah, the UAE and the region. Since 1993, Sharjah Biennial has commissioned, produced and presented large-scale public installations, performances and films, offering artists from the region and beyond an internationally recognised platform for exhibition and experimentation.

### **About Lara Khaldi**

Lara Khaldi is an independent curator based in Jerusalem, Palestine. She is a recent alumna of the De Appel Curatorial Programme, Amsterdam and the European Graduate School, Switzerland. Khaldi has curated exhibitions in Palestine and internationally at institutions such as Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah (2017); A. M. Qattan Foundation, Ramallah (2017); Qalandiya International 3, Ramallah (2016); Art Dubai Projects and residencies, Dubai (2015); De Appel Arts Centre and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2014); *s:in/* Festival for Video Art and Performance III, Ramallah (2012); Pianofabriek, Brussels (2014); Jerusalem Show 5, Jerusalem (2012) and 5th Riwaq Biennial, presented in various cities in Palestine (2012). She has also co-organised seminars and conferences, such as the symposium *Artist, Object, Institution*, Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival, American University in Cairo

(2016) and *Benjamin in Palestine*, International Academy of Art, Palestine and Birzeit University (2015). Khaldi currently teaches art history and theory at the International Academy of Art and has taught at Dar Al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture, Bethlehem.

### **About Christine Tohme**

Christine Tohme is the founding director of Ashkal Alwan, the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, which is a non-profit organisation established in 1993 to initiate and support contemporary artistic practice. In 2002, Tohme launched the multidisciplinary platform Home Works: A Forum on Cultural Practices, and in 2011, she started the free tuition Home Workspace Study Program. She is the recipient of the CCS Bard Audrey Irmis Award for Curatorial Excellence (2015) and the Prince Claus Award (2006).

**For more information, visit** [www.sharjahart.org](http://www.sharjahart.org).

**Instagram / Twitter / Facebook / #sharjahbiennial13 / #sharjahart**

### **Media contacts:**

Sharjah Art Foundation: Alyazeyah Al Reyaysa: T +971 6 544 4113 /

[alyazeyah@sharjahart.org](mailto:alyazeyah@sharjahart.org)

FITZ & CO: Katrina Weber Ashour: T +1 212 627 1653 / [kweber@fitzandco.com](mailto:kweber@fitzandco.com)