

The word 'MRO' is rendered in a thick, purple, hand-drawn outline style. The letters are set against a background of a fine, light gray dot grid. The 'M' is on the left, the 'R' is in the middle, and the 'O' is on the right. The outlines are slightly irregular, giving it a sketchy, artistic feel.

MRO

Meeting Points

Contemporary Art Festival from the Arab World
Locus Agonistes: Practices and Logics of the Civic

Curated by Okwui Enwezor

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Omar Abusaada

Look at the Streets...This is How Hope Looks Like

2011, Reading performance, directed by Omar Abusaada, dramaturgy by Mohammad Al Attar, performed by Reem Ali.
Work commissioned by Meeting Points 6.
Arabic with English subtitles.



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Upper Stage 10/03 18:00-19:00

More than a month since the start of the Syrian Revolution, Reem is spending the Independence Day's evening at her place trying to work on a theatrical text, in which she is trying to merge articles by Egyptian Novelist Ahdaf Soueif, with comments and statues from Syrian young people profile on Facebook. But this will not be an easy task, as Reem is receiving continuous updates about horrible accidents and more victims all the night long. For Reem the night turns to become a bitter confrontation with herself, as she found herself surrounded by questions about ability to act and helplessness.

Based on two articles published by the Egyptian writer Ahdaf Soueif, published in the Guardian as she was in the heart of the Tahreer Square during the Egyptian Revolution, and also using comments and statues from Facebook taken from Syrian members reflecting on the current events. This text reflects what is happening in our world at this moment. It is an attempt to contribute to the current incidents through the art of the theatre.

Mohammad Al Attar

Can you please look at the camera?

2011, Reading performance, directed by Omar Abusaada, written by Mohammad Al Attar, performed by Lama Hakim, Fatina Laila, Jamal Choukair, Wessam Taihouq.
Work commissioned by Meeting Points 6.
Arabic with English subtitles.

Upper Stage 10/03 19:00-20:00



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How do we document the detention experiences in Syria during the current uprising? And what does the document in this context really mean? Is it a narration of reliable and objective facts only? But what about the personal perspectives and the emotional reactions of the detainees?

Nora, the amateur film maker, is recording the testimonies of some fellow Syrians who were illegally detained. This clear mission soon turns to be a devastating one; Nora is confused while facing questions like: is recording what concretely happened is the most important thing? Or is it more important to bring out all the stories with all vague memories, as a step to push us to reconsider things differently?

While Nora is spending more time with the interviewees, they stopped to be just the subject of her documentary piece, they crossed too far inside her personal space.

The text is a mixture of true and fictional stories; some details are narrated as exactly happened with real characters who have been recently detained. However the plot and the characters in the text are all fictional.

Omar Amiralay



The eruption of the 1968 student rebellion in Paris proved a turning point in the career of late Syrian filmmaker Omar Amiralay, who at that time was enrolled at the Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (today known as FEMIS). His involvement in the revolt and the act of documentation that he undertook as the incidents broke through made him drop his studies and begin making films that would become part of the canon for generations of documentary filmmakers in the Arab world.

Amiralay's filmography includes about twenty of the most important documentaries covering crucial cultural, political and social issues, and is considered as a key chapter in the modern history of Syria, the region and beyond. His films include such masterpieces as: *Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam* (1970), *Everyday Life in a Syrian Village* (1974), *On a Revolution* (1978); *Love Aborted* (1983); *For the Attention of Madame the Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto* (1990); *Light and Shadows* (1994); *On a Day of Ordinary Violence, My Friend Michel Seurat* (1996); *The Man with the Golden Soles* (1999). Driving force in the creation of the Arab Film Institute (2005-2008), Amiralay received several international awards from the early stages of this career, amongst which a 2006 retrospective of his work at Centre Georges Pompidou's Cinema du Réel festival in Paris.

At the time of his death in February 2011, Amiralay was working on his latest work, *Seduction*.

Omar Amiralay – Civic Imagination

Film-Essai on the Euphrates Dam (Film-Muhawalalah 'An Sadd al-Furat)

Syria, 1970, 12', B&W
OV Arabic with English subtitles

Upper Stage 09/03 22:30-22:50



This first film by the veteran documentary filmmaker Omar Amiralay follows the construction of a dam on the Euphrates river that is supposed to bring tremendous improvement in the lives of villages around it. Thirty years later, the filmmaker will revisit the site in *Flood in Baath Country*, and the enthusiasm once generated by the Baath. The original print has been restored and digitized very recently, and subtitled in English especially for this program.

Omar Amiralay – Civic Imagination

Everyday Life in a Syrian Village (al-Hayat al-Yaomiyah fi Qaryah Suriyyah)

Syria, 1974, 80', B&W

Upper Stage 09/03 22:50-00:10



The first documentary to present an unabashed critique of the impact of the Syrian government's agricultural and land reforms, *Everyday Life in a Syrian Village* delivers a powerful jab at the state's conceit of redressing social and economic inequities. Interviews with farmers, health workers and a police officer contrast the peasants' regard for the state with the mindset of state representatives toward those peasants. Sa'adallah Wannus, a prominent Syrian playwright and essayist collaborated with documentary pioneer Amiralay on the project. The film remains banned in Syria. The original print has been restored and digitized very recently, and subtitled in English especially for this program.

Omar Amiralay – Civic Imagination

A Flood in Baath Country (Tufan fi Balad el-Ba'th)

Syria/France, 2003, 46'
OV Arabic with English subtitles

Upper Stage 09/03 00:10-01:00



In 1970, Omar Amiralay made a short documentary, *Film-Essai on the Euphrates Dam*, in praise of the ruling Baath party's project to construct an impressive system of dams. Today, after fatal construction flaws have been discovered, his controversial new film explores the metaphorical implications of such weakness. Without commentary or criticism, Amiralay's film exposes Baath party propaganda and its debilitating effects on the people of al-Mashi village, 400 kilometres (250 miles) northeast of Damascus. The camera moves slowly from students to teachers to government officials, with everyone reciting the exact same praises for the president and slogans glorifying the Baath party. The film is the harshest indictment yet of the regime, portraying the devastating effects of 35 years of rigid Baath party rule on Syrian society.

Infinite Times Zero

2010 / 2011, Sound piece, thirteen months and ongoing Courtesy of the Artist.
Work commissioned by Meeting Points 6 and co-produced by The Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah

Upper Stage 10/03 22:00-22:45



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Launched in Beirut at the first venue of Meeting Points 6, Atoui's new piece, Infinite Times Zero, approaches the creation of overlapping time and space continuums over an 8-months period during which the sound remains uninterrupted while moving from one city to another as it follows the trajectory of Meeting Points 6 through the internet without ever ending until it becomes an autonomous independent organism endlessly written and existing on the web.

Entirely made up of digital and abstract sound transcending socio-cultural references and provided with special software, this piece is composed of hundreds of digital signals and tones of generators offering infinite possibilities of composition and improvisation and synthesizing complex soundscapes free of any loop effects or repetitiveness. The mutating sound will continue to transform through the intervention of a performer as a multi-channel installation, or still, transmitted through a simple speaker.

Infinite Times Zero is an radical translation of physical performances and sound installations that prolong each other through the technologies of the Internet, annihilating distance and transcending concrete space, borders and geography.

Tony Chakar

One Hundred Thousand Solitudes

2011, Reading performance in English, 45'

Upper Stage 11/03 21:00-21:45



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From the sweetness of Cairo to the bitterness of Beirut, and all that's in between, *One Hundred Thousand Solitudes* is an attempt to grasp and to comment, hence to participate in, what is currently happening all through the Middle-East and writing a crucial chapter of the region's History. Our hearts go up, our hearts go down – like an emotional rollercoaster breaking into our rooms from behind the computer screens, transforming our supposedly most private space into a public area, as we surf Facebook's newsfeeds from what is actually nothing but an interaction of systems of solitude.

Hafiz Dhaou and Aicha M'Barek

Do you believe me?

2011, Commissioned by Meeting Points 6 Concept and performance Aicha M'Barek.
Text and Sound design Hafiz Dhaou & Aicha M'Barek



© Maya Wilsens

Main Entrance 11/03 19:00-19:30

Hey !
Listen to me
Turn back
I am here
No
Look
Here
I love you
Not you
You
Follow me
You are encircled
Wherever I go!
It is a game
I promise
You will die
We all will die
I love you
I love you all
Are you here with me?

Follow me, I am here, right
here with you
For how long will this game
go on?
Yes
We are caught!
He told me that I
understood you
What is this circus?
What am I saying?
You know that I love you
No
Not you
I am dreaming
With my eyes open
Are you here?
Listen to me
Too late
It is over.

Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige

Aida, Save Me

2009, Visual lecture, 60'

Presented in December 2009 at The Halles de Schaerbeek, Brussels

A coproduction of The Halles de Schaerbeek & Chantier TEMPS D'IMAGES 2009

Thanks to : Thomas Fernandez, Fabienne Verstraeten, Alexis Gaillard, Ziad Saad, Feyrouz Serhal, About Productions, Mille et une Productions, Tony Arnoux, Ashkal Alwan, Christine Tohmé, Galerie In Situ (Paris), CRG Gallery (New York), Rabih Mroué and Walid Raad

Upper Stage 10/03 20:30-21:30



© Maya Wilsens

This lecture-performance is inspired by an extraordinary experience that took place during the 2006 Beirut premiere of Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige's film *A Perfect Day*, when Aida – the protagonist of the lecture – recognized in a fake newspaper clip made for the film to announce a missing person, the image of Antoine, her previous husband. "Antoine was looking at me and saying: 'Aida, save me. I don't know what I'm doing in this film, save me!'", Aida told the filmmakers. From this moment, they got involved in a series of eerie coincidences: the fictive date they chose for Antoine's disappearance met the anniversary of his marriage with Aida, his assassination while the film was still screened in Lebanon... all kind of incidents jeopardizing the career of the film in their homeland. Moreover, Aida decided to sue them, until they managed to reach a compromise when they agreed to cut Antoine's image for Lebanon's screenings. "Beyond this territory, he could remain a character, and she was able to put up with the fiction", Hadjithomas said. *Aida, Save Me* tells a story that measures the distance between recognition and representation of oneself, and recounts an adventure wherein fiction suddenly takes on documentation.

Mona Hatoum

The Negotiating Table

2011, Re-performance of Negotiating table 1983. 180' live.
Courtesy of the Artist

Lecture and Exhibition Space 07 and 10/03 17:30-20:30



The Negotiating Table, created in 1983 as a response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The room is dark, lit only by a light bulb lowered over a table on which a body lies motionless. Empty chairs surround the table. The body is bloodstained, covered with entrails, wrapped in plastic, and the head is firmly covered in surgical gauze. On the sound track news reports about civil war and speeches of Western leaders talking about peace can be heard.

© Mona Hatoum, "The Negotiating Table", 1983. Performance.

Mona Hatoum

Variation on Discord and Divisions, 1984

Documentation of a performance on December 14, 1984. The Western Front, Vancouver, 27:45 min.
Courtesy of the Artist and White Cube, London

A disturbing performance where the artist, wearing an opaque mask and all dressed in black, crawls between the rows of spectators to reach the performance space. She then performs a number of actions that culminate with her removing raw kidneys from under her clothes, cutting them up, putting them on plates and serving them one by one to the audience.

Foyer 07/03 17:30-20:30 08-11/03 12:00-21:00

Don't smile, you're on camera! 1980

Documentation of a performance on March 26, 1980. Battersea Arts Centre, London, 11:15 min.
Courtesy of the Artist and White Cube, London

Hatoum points a live video camera directly at the audience, while a monitor displays what the camera could see. With the help of assistants behind the scenes, the images on the monitor are mixed with images of naked body parts or x-rays, giving the impression that the camera could see through layers of clothes, skin and down to the bone.

The Negotiating Table, 1983

Documentation of a performance December 5, 1983. The Western Front, Vancouver, 20:33 min.
Courtesy of the Artist and White Cube, London.

The Negotiating Table, was created as a response to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The Room is dark, lit only by a light bulb lowered over a table on which a body lies motionless. Empty chairs surround the table. The body is bloodstained, covered with entrails, wrapped in plastic, the head firmly covered in surgical gauze. On the sound track, news reports about civil war and speeches of Western leaders talking about peace can be heard.

Roadworks, 1985

Documentation of a performance on May 21, 1985. Brixton, London, 6:45 min.
Courtesy of the Artist and White Cube, London

The artist walks barefoot through the streets of Brixton, dragging behind her a pair of large boots attached to her ankles by their laces.

The Sexual Physiology of Hermaphrodites

2011, Lecture performance in English, 50'

Upper Stage 11/03 18:00-19:00



© Maya Wilsens

This multimedia performance is an attempt to explore notions of national identity and belonging among Jordanians of Palestinian origins as a focal point, through an analogy of the complicated psychological and sexual behavior of Hermaphrodites, using only simple props and audiovisual material.

The performance pivots around the dichotomy of the Hermaphrodite's biological mutation and personality, while subliminally referring to the polarities that can mirror indirectly the duality of the Jordanian-Palestinian identity, and the Jordanian national politics which unintentionally add layers of complications to this fundamental existential dualism.

Fadhel Jaïbi and Jalila Baccar

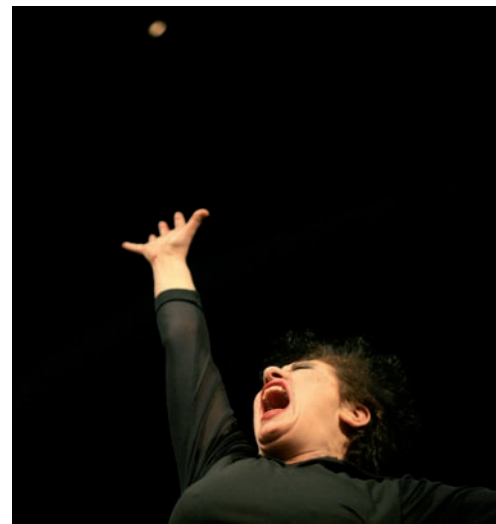
Main Hall 07-08/03 20:30

Yahia Yaïch Amnesia

2010, Concept, text and direction Jalila Baccar and Fadhel Jaïbi Performers Jalila Baccar, Fatma Ben Saidane, Sabah Bouzouita, Ramzi Azaiez, Moez M'rabet, Lobna M'lika, Basma El Euch, Karim El Kefi, Riadh El Hamdi, Khaled Bouzid, Mohammed Ali Kalai Team Yvan Labasse, Habib Jarmoud, Jaila Madani, Nozha Ben Mohammed, Habib Bel Hedi Production, Familia Productions and Bonlieu Scène National Annecy.

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Intention note

1

Individual responsibility, collective responsibility. Group and individual. Group versus individual. Individual versus group. Group versus group. These are the thematic variations that we continue to explore for an epic Theater production, anchored in the here and now.

2

The Greek tragedy stages a sick chorus as the background for the dramatic action. The chorus is the incarnation of a sick order, a system in crisis, a society in complete dysfunction, in total collapse of its values, laws, convictions and dreams. In Islam as in Greece, these multiple lines of rupture in the group, family, pack, clan, tribe, region, ethnic group, and homeland give rise to lost individuals, devoid of references, crushed under the weight of the bend and the panic; atypical, nondescript, or indomitable individuals like so many specks of dust, pushed outside the walls of the city, expelled outside of the law by the law itself, a perverse or fossilized law, sinful or villainous, that in the end pits one against another, or against the law itself.

3

The "bend", the loss of dignity, despondency, the breaking of the human being during its attempt to become an autonomous individual. Such is the destiny of the characters of the Greek tragedy. The same is true in the Islamic idea of "OUMMA" (Nation), the definitive and fossilized entity that denies the existence of the sovereign, autonomous, individual citizen. And the "panic," as in Greek tragedy, is the reaction of the individual to an expulsion from the chorus (from the group). This panic specifically originates from the awareness of the broken bond. Jalila Baccar and Fadhel Jaïbi

Fable

The great man learns that he was fired while watching television.

Head of the executive committee of a date palm republic, he falls like a worm eaten fruit from his tree. His fall is an inexorable descent into the hell of disgrace, abandonment by his peers, sentencing to house arrest and multiple accusations, stirred up by popular opinion in the absence of any transparent information.

Deprived of all his titles, honorary positions and political responsibilities, he ends up in a psychiatric hospital after having set fire to his library.

Placed under strict surveillance, he is treated according to his rank and prestige, among the insane and the deranged and handed over to an arbitrary and unpredictable medical and paramedical hierarchy, like the system that promoted then rejected him.

By day, he faces his "jailers," his doctors, his family, his lawyers, and his investigating judges that come to his bedside one after another. Other "visitors," wandering shadows and survivors of his disastrous policy populate his restless nights.

A reckless journalist who lost her soul "bending" to a violent and corrupt authoritarian regime will attempt to buy back a free conscience by "helping" him go through a process of self-criticism, to help him save his soul, so that his soul can free her own, which will not stop tormenting her. Attempts in vain.

About to be handed over to the law, he escapes from his hospital room at night with the complicity of a devoted nurse and clandestinely reaches the border, disguised as a Bedouin.

Joined in exile by his damned soul, the journalist who is determined to try anything to make him speak, he finally works with her to write a book of exclusive interviews in which he aims to disclose everything that his political career taught him about human treachery... and to escape unharmed.

Pardoned in the meantime, as though nothing had happened, he returns to spend quiet days in the country that forgot him.

Jalila Baccar and Fadhel Jaïbi

Selma and Sofiane Ouissi

Here(s)

2011 Co-produced by Meeting Points 6 Online dance performance 40'

Concept and choreography: Selma and Sofiane Ouissi Software and interactive installation: Yacine Sebti



© Maya Wilsens

Upper Stage 11/03 20:00-20:45

"We are two distinct persons, but we really make one artist. We have forever lived with this feeling of wholeness, completeness and achievement, only possible when we are two".

Selma and Sofiane Ouissi currently live in two different cities: Paris and Tunis.

This geographical separation has forced them to find creative means to keep rehearsing together every day. The answer came through one of today's most fascinating yet simple communication tools: Skype.

With the help of Yacine Sebti, they created a poetic interactive video dance performance. The duo invites the audience to enter a world that transcends the nature of performing arts itself: the physical presence of the performer, his/her (a)live interaction with the one sharing the stage and the spectator.

The screen turns into a peephole, and the entire performance raises questions about the essence of presence, distance, proximity, isolation, immediacy, mobility, the use of new technologies in the arts and voyeurism. But isn't this separation at the centre of the dramaturgy of this choreography? Does it not reflect the virtual nature of today's relationships?

Laila Soliman

No Time for Art

2011, performance in English and Arabic, 45'

Concept & Direction by Laila Soliman

Based on testimonies by Aly Sobhy, S.A.H. & Mustafa Said

Production, Lights & Video by Ruud Gielens

Performed by: Mustafa Said, Mina El Naggar, Zainab Magdy and Sherin Hegazy



Upper Stage 11/03 22:30-23:30

No Time for art / 0 proposes a documentary performance to honour the martyrs of the revolution.

No Time for art / 1 is a performance combining and intercutting three first hand testimonies; comparing police and military violence and injustice before and after the Egyptian Revolution. A young blind musician, a young prisoner's testimony given voice by his sister, and a young actor tell their stories as one.

In No Time for Art / 1 the performers complement and split plot threads, which are randomly spun around the brutal arrest of two prisoners: one in October 2007, the other in March 2011.

The setting for this documentary performance is minimalistic. The power comes from the words of precisely-cut testimonies. The density overwhelms and moves. Powerlessness and resistance lie, in this dispute between pre-and post-revolutionary, brutality close to each other. In the background, the state TV-channel, flickers. Blessed is the success of the police over the "Criminals who have terrorized the community."

Conversations: Revolution of the Present

With Adania Shibli, Ahdaf Soueif, Mona Hatoum, Okwui Enwezor, Christos Ioakimidis and Kostis Papaioannou.

Conversations: Revolution of the Present seeks to underscore the vitality of the processes that link Civic Imagination and Struggle. As the collapse of many regimes in the Arab world exposed urgent civic and political demands, the current events of change, transformation and renewal move way beyond the frontier of technocratic "reform". Where popular disenchantment cannot be confined within a specific contemporary practice, new horizons of the future need to be and are already constructed and imagined. Thinkers, writers and artists engage in a series of conversations offering a philosophical insight that will provide an important contextual orientation of the Meeting Points 6 project.

Entrance is free and on a strictly first come, first served basis.

The distribution of entrance tickets begins one (1) hour before the event.

Civitas, Citizenship, Civility. Art and the Civic imagination Okwui Enwezor and Christos Ioakimidis

Upper Stage 09/03 18:00-19:00

A lecture by the curator of Meeting Points 6, chaired by the art curator Christos Ioakimidis.

Common Grounds and Belongings: A Critical Look at the Civic Ahdaf Soueif and Adania Shibli with Kostis Papaioannou

Upper Stage 09/03 20:30-22:00

The writers Ahdaf Soueif (Egypt/London) and Adania Shibli (Palestine) in conversation with the President of the National Commission for Human Rights, Kostis Papaioannou.

Mona Hatoum and Okwui Enwezor

The Art of the Civic
Mona Hatoum and Okwui Enwezor

Upper Stage 09/03 19:00-20:00



Okwui Enwezor, the curator of Meeting Points 6, speaks with artist Mona Hatoum about the relationship between art and civic society.

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