

DISARMING DESIGN FROM PALESTINE

YEAR REPORT 2016

Disarming Design Create Shop 2016 was organized with



and made possible with the generous support
of Dutch Creative Industries Fund and Lutfia Rabbani Foundation

**creative
industries
fund NL**



THE ORGANISATION

Disarming Design from Palestine is registered as a Palestinian non-profit company in Ramallah, and as a foundation in the Netherlands. They have worked in collaboration with the International Academy of Art Palestine, Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam, Al Ma'Mal foundation Jerusalem, Alhoush, Ramallah Municipality, Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans, Eltiqa group Gaza and WIELS in Brussels. The items are sold on the local market, and the Dutch based Disarming Design Foundation with a warehouse in Belgium takes care of the international distribution. Producers are paid according to fair trade standards and Palestinian artists and designers receive royalties for the sales of their products.

Disarming Design team is:

- Annelys de Vet (Co-foudner & Artistic Director)
- Mohammad Saleh (Executive Director)
- Ghadeer Dajani (Product manager)
- Sami Khaldi (Financial manager)
- Mohamed Abusal (Coordinator Gaza)
- Wisam Horani (Sales & warehouse coordinator, Belgium)
- Francis Tams (Accountant)

CREATE-SHOP

Create-shop 2016 was organized on the invitation of and incollaboration with the Ramallah Municipality. It was held in Hosh Qandah from 28th of August to 8th of September.

PARTICIPANTS

- Hadeel Qutna
- Tuqa AlSaraj
- Ibrahim Al Hindi
- Ala'a Wahdan
- Amani Jacob
- Bushra Hasonah
- Maram Sublaban
- May Marei
- Raed Hamouri and
- Floris van Driel (NL)
- Andrea Karch (DE)
- Joao Roxo (MZ)
- Biyi Zhu (CN)

INPUT, FEEDBACK AND CRITS BY

- Ghadeer Dajani (Product manager)
- Mohammad Saleh (Executive Director)
- Annelys de Vet (Co-foudner & Artistic Director)
- and
- Khaled Hourani (artist, PS)
- Reem Shilleh (filmmaker/ curator, PS)
- Mohammad Anati (handyman, PS)
- Foaad Maadi (Ramallah tourguide, PS)
- Juliette Lizotte (designer, FR)



DISARMING DESIGN FROM PALESTINE

تصاميم من فلسطين

INTRODUCTION

In the last five years we have developed the roots and conditions for the inclusive design label 'Disarming Design from Palestine'. We have structured and re-structured ourselves, registered a non-profit company in Palestine and a foundation in the Netherlands, we have conducted four create-shops and have build up a thought provoking collection of products (and prototypes, that still need to be developed to products). In 2016 we were invited for a series of exhibitions in Palestine and Europe. The exhibitions that took place in Palestine were combined with create-shops and presentations*. Autumn 2016 we were finally able to launch our new webshop, and we started with sending regular newsletters. It gained a much larger audience and new invitations for events and press.

In short 2016 has been an important folding year, from a thorough period of research & development, to a serious professional organisation, with a promising collection of products, a studio in Ramallah and in Belgium and a highly qualified and motivated team. This report gives an overview of the event, sales and press that took place in this important year.

We are grateful to the Creative Industries Fund, the Ramallah Municipality and the Lutfia Rabbani Foundation for their generous support in making these meaningful events possible. And we want to thank all the participants for their poetic and dedicated energy and ideas, and the external critics and guides for their inspirational and constructive input. We are looking forward in bringing these narratives further and further.

*Ghadeer Dajani, Wisam Horani, Sami Khaldi, Mohammad Saleh and Annelys de Vet
january 2017*

* On the invitation of Ramallah Municipality we had organized a design-create-shop in their new community center 'Hosh Qandah' from 28th of August to the 8th of September. During this course 9 Palestinian artists and designers collaborated with 5 international designers and over 16 artisans. Together they researched contemporary Palestinian identity and how to express that through useful locally made products. Over the course of 2 weeks all participants discussed and improved their ideas with each other and in conversation with visiting critics. At the end of the create-shop 18 proposals for new designs were presented.

On the occasion of Qalandiya International III – the biggest art biennial in Palestine, which carried the theme 'The Right of Return' – we organized an exhibition called 'Welcome Home' in our studio in Ramallah. In a former apartment the products developed in the past five years, along with the recent prototypes, were displayed in their intended settings. Together they presented sets of stories about current Palestinian distorted identity; while examining the potential of creative practices as forms of resistance. The show imagined welcoming the Palestinian people in Palestine and the diaspora, to a long awaited home. They could find our beautifully made local Palestinian products telling their stories and make them feel truly welcomed back.

EVENTS JULY 2016 – FEBRUARY 2017

Lectures, workshops, exhibitions, pop-up shops



28/aug–8/sep
CREATE SHOP
Hosh Qandah, Ramallah, Palestine
Create-shop with 14 participants



31/aug
DISARMING PRACTICES, POETIC FORMS OF RESISTANCE
Hosh Qandah, Ramallah, Palestine
Public lectures during createshop



7/sep–31/okt
GARBAGE ENVIRONMENT DESIGN
French-German Cultural Center, Palestine
Participation in exhibition about recycling and design in Palestine



8/sep
PRESENTATION FINAL OUTCOME
Hosh Qandah, Ramallah, Palestine
Presentation of final outcome create shop



5/okt
DE GAZA À BRUXELLES
Versaille, Brussels (B), Belgium
Project presentation and pop-up shop during evening about Gaza



8/okt–30/okt
WELCOME HOME
Disarming Design Studio, Ramallah, Palestine
Exhibition and shop in our own studio



8/okt–7/nov
GAZA IN ROTTERDAM
Nachtsmid gallery, Rotterdam
Netherlands
Show and pop-up shop in Rotterdam gallery



16/nov
STRATEGIES OF POETIC RESISTANCE
Free University Bolzano
Italy
Lecture by Annelys de Vet, about comitted design and Disarming Design



2/dec–4/dec
RAMALLAH MUNICIPALITY CHRISTMAS MARKET
Movenpick Hotel, Ramallah
Palestine
Pop-up shop in christmas market



9/dec
GIFT ART FAIR
Al Ma'mal, Jerusalem
Palestine
Pop-up shop in christmas market



10/dec–11/dec
ALL YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS
Mudam (Museum of Contemporary Art), Luxembourg
Luxembourg
Pop-up shop in christmas market



9/dec–11/dec
CHRISTMAS MARKET
Beit Sahour, Palestine
Participation Christmas Market



17/dec
GIFT ART FAIR
Disarming Design Office, Sint Pieters Leuw (B)
belgium
Gift art fair in our Belgium office



20/dec
DISARMING DESIGN
The Palestinian Art Court, Jerusalem
Palestine
Opening event for the permanent shop-installation we have



19/jan
HENRY VAN DE VELDE AWARD
Bozar, Brussels
Winning communication award
Design Price



19/jan – 31/maart
HENRY VAN DE VELDE AWARDS EXPO
Bozar, Brussels
Exhibition

CREATE-SHOP

@HOSH QANDAH, RAMALLAH 28 AUGUST—8 SEPTEMBER 2016

THE PROJECT

Disarming Design from Palestine is an inclusive design label that presents useful products from Palestine. The goods are designed by Palestinian and international designers and made in Palestine by local producers and artisans. During yearly 'create-shops', new useful products are developed out of existing production processes. The collection is presented and items are sold locally and internationally through exhibitions, presentations, mobile shops and a webshop.

VISION & MISSION

Our vision is to spread alternative narratives about contemporary Palestine and reflect upon the function of creative practices in situations of conflict. Our mission is to develop, present and sell useful contemporary design pieces from Palestine, designed by contemporary designers, artists and students in collaboration with local producers and artisans.

PURPOSE

Disarming Design from Palestine focuses on the development of local design and production capacity through creative processes. By stimulating interdisciplinary working relationships, new models of artistic practices and handicrafts are empowered. At large, the products spread alternative narratives about contemporary Palestine and reflect upon the function of creative practices in situations of conflict. In this project, art and design are deployed as powerful tools that allow serious discussions within a community about the political, social and cultural realities. How can creative practices contribute to a more sustainable society and human-centered economy?

BACKGROUND

The project started in 2012 as a project of DEVET (NL/B) in collaboration with the International Academy of Art Palestine (PS), ICCO (NL) and the Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam (NL). In 2015 it became independent and was registered as a non-profit company in Palestine, and as a foundation in the Netherlands.

THE CREATE-SHOP

The aim of the create-shop is to develop useful products that reflect upon Palestinian reality and can be produced locally. The create-shop is a collaborative process with high emphasis on creativity, collaboration, production and quality. Participants experiment and develop ideas collectively, engage in discussions and are introduced to different Palestinian craft workshops.

The create-shop was hosted in the workshop space at Hosh Qandah, and included guest lectures, screenings, visits to a variety of Palestinian artisans and workshops in and around Ramallah, a field trip to the West Bank, some collective lunches and other relevant activities. Each participant was requested to collaborate with the local producers to develop prototypes for his/her designs.

PEOPLE

The create-shop course was guided and organized by:

- Disarming Design (**Annelys de Vet** (Designer, director DDFP, NL/B), **Mohammad Saleh** (Executive Director DDFP, PS) and **Ghadeer Dajani** (Production Manager DDFP, PS))

and included presentations and critics by:

- **Khaled Hourani** (artist, PS)
- **Reem Shilleh** (filmmaker/curator, PS)
- **Mohammad Anati** (handyman, PS)
- **Foad Maadi** (Ramallah tourguide, PS)
- **Juliette Lizotte** (designer, FR)



PARTICIPANTS

We had selected 9 contemporary Palestinian designers, artists and students with an interest in crafts and production, who were able to rethink products from a conceptual approach. In addition four international master students of the Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam were selected:

- **Hadeel Qutna**
 - **Tuqa AlSaraj**
 - **Ibrahim Al Hindi**
 - **Ala'a Wahdan**
 - **Amani Jacob**
 - **Bushra Hasonah**
 - **Maram Sublaban**
 - **May Marei**
 - **Raed Hamouri**
- and
- **Floris van Driel** (Dutch)
 - **Andrea Karch** (German)
 - **Joao Roxo** (Mozambique/Portuguese)
 - **Biyl Zhu** (Chinese)

ACTIVITIES

Activities that took place as part of the create-shop varied between guest lectures, screenings, visits to a variety of Palestinian artisans and workshops in and around Ramallah, a guided tour through the old and new City, a collective hike, collective lunches and other relevant activities. These activities and visits were inspirational, empowering and significant on a number of levels. It helped to bring the group closer to each other, releasing and giving a lot of energy as well as bringing a deeper understanding of Palestinian political reality, Palestinian artisanship, culture, design and society. It also puts the participants in direct contact with artisans, directly interact with them, design, develop, and implement altogether.

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

—Week 1:

research and developing ideas, discussions and workshop visits and produce 1st prototype

—Week 2:

improve prototype and make the final prototype design

— October:

(selection of) prototypes will be exhibited during Qalandia International at the Disarming Design studio

WORKSHOP TASK FOR PARTICIPANTS

Develop a prototype for a new useful product, made in Palestine that reflects upon contemporary Palestinian life.

The product should be useful; unveil something about Palestinian contemporary life i.e. food, love, culture, habits, occupation, transport, daily life, household etc.; made in Palestine or by Palestinian producers; should preferably consist of mostly Palestinian resources i.e. textile, stones, olive wood, ceramics, recycled material, soap, etc.; made from natural or recycled materials (as much as possible; made with respect to the BDS principles; able to be taken into production (the cheaper and simpler products can be in relation to production, the better).

FEEDBACK PARTICIPANTS

May Marei: "I have communicated with my origin in Palestine in a different way; listening to the experiences of the internationals has made me reappraise the land of Palestine even more and it increased my belief in my identity as a Palestinian."

Joao Roxo: "I learned about the richness of the culture and the – at times – seemingly infinite amount of symbols, stories and crafts this place and its people have to give."

Andrea Karch: "It was super interesting to see references from Palestinian/Middle Eastern artists."

Maram Sublaban: "I was very impressed by the Palestinian industries that I've never witnessed so closely and realized the high quality of it."

Maram Sublaban: "I learned that it's not hard to think of something not necessary there, and then bring it to life."

Bushra Hasonah: "I am very happy to be part of this createshop, it taught me a lot of skills like using leather and look at design as an art work. It was a professional workshop in all levels."

Ala'a Wahdan: "I learned how I can develop an idea and make a prototype of it in a short time."

Floris van Driel: "... I found a certain humbleness in Ramallah, which I think is sometimes easy to forget when you're studying in a very western, privileged city like Amsterdam."

Joao Roxo: "I was really touched by the Palestinians as a people, as they are really hospitable and knowledgeable about Palestinian culture. Adding to this, it was impressive how everyone has been so creative and collaborative in finding the right product to develop for the project. I feel that every product is a result of the collective effort of the participants."

May Marei: "This workshop was a very good example to me on good team work, there was a kind of harmony created among the participants."

Andrea Karch: "It was super nice to see how Disarming Design has a big impact on the audience and local Palestinians."

PROGRAM 28 AUGUST — 8 SEPTEMBER

CREATE SHOP



Sunday 28 August

9.30 – 17.30 hrs @ Hosh Qandah

- Morning: Introduction Hosh Qandah by Sally Abu Bakr Briefing project by Annelys de Vet (managing/artistic director) & Mohammad Saleh (executive director), speed date sessions participants
- Afternoon: presentations by participants

Monday 29 august

9.30 – 17.30 hrs @ Ramallah

- Morning: Artisans visits in Ramallah (see map)
- Afternoon: studio visit Disarming Design & presentation by Ghadeer Dajani (production manager)

Tuesday 30 august

9.30 hrs – 17.00 hrs @ Ramallah & Hosh Qandah

- Morning: Tour through Ramallah by Foaad Maadi (Ramallah tourguide, PS)
- Afternoon: Brainstorm & Working & Feedback sessions (with Annelys de Vet)



Saturday 3 september, all day

@ Hosh Qandah or artisans workshop or other relevant location

- Morning & afternoon: Prototyping, Working, Making

Sunday 4 september, all day

@ Hosh Qandah or artisans workshop or other relevant location

- Morning & afternoon: Prototyping, Working, Making
- Visit to Hebron

Monday 5 September,

9.30 – 17.00 hrs @ Hosh Qandah

- Morning: Collective presentation and discussion of first prototypes, with Annelys de Vet, Mohammad Saleh, Khaled Hourani, Ghadeer Dajani
- Afternoon: Working & individual feedback sessions



Wednesday 31 August,

9.30 – 21.00 hrs @ Hosh Qandah

- Morning: Presentation and individual feedback sessions by Khaled Hourani (artist)
- Afternoon: Sketching & Working
- Evening: Lectures by visiting artists/ designers, including: Juliette Lizotte (FR), Reem Shilleh (PS), Annelys de Vet (NL)

Thursday 1 September, 9.30 – 17.00 hrs @ Hosh Qandah & Goethe Institute

- Morning: Individual feedback sessions with Reem Shilleh (artist / curator)
- Afternoon: Joined lunch and brainstorm/ feedback talks with international designers French German Cultural Center
- Additional worksessions

Friday 2 September, afternoon & evening @ countryside

- Country side hike organized by The Right to Movement
- 4pm hike from Mar Saba Monastery to Tal Al Qamar in Bethlehem, and BBQ



Tuesday 6 September,

9.30 – 17.00 hrs @ Hosh Qandah or artisans workshop or other relevant location

- Morning: Individual feedback sessions with Reem Shilleh
- Introduction of Mohamad Anati, handyman
- Afternoon: Working & Prototyping & Producing

Wednesday 7 September,

9.30 – 17.00 hrs @ Hosh Qandah or artisans workshop or other relevant location

- Morning: Individual feedback sessions with Mohamad Anati
- Afternoon: Prototyping & finalizing designs, titles, technical sheets, product texts

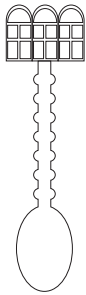
Thursday 8 September,

9.30 – evening @ Hosh Qandah

- Morning: Finalizing products
- Afternoon: collective presentation prototypes and feedback with invited guests,
- Evening: collective [rooftop] BBQ

PROTOTYPES 2016

18 DESIGN PROPOSALS THAT WERE DEVELOPED DURING THE CREATESHOP



A souvenir from Jenin

Silver spoon from a family house in Jenin
by: May Marei (PS) and Juliette Lizotte (FR)

A souvenir from Jenin imitates the spoons sold as a holy souvenir, it represents the typical windows of the family house of May, one of the oldest house that finally got restored to become the music center of Jenin. This spoon turns the family house into an emblem of Jenin to be transmitted from generation to generation to remind both the beauty of Palestinian architecture and the refined techniques of its artisans.



Bomb

leather and glass keychain

by: Maram Sublaban (PS)

Production: Al Masri, Tannous Jewellery, Hebron glass and ceramics factory

This ball of glass is so beautifully transparent, harder and stronger than it may seem, and just like any other objects when you take care of it, it stays. And that's how I see the matter of the Palestinian production and industries in its finest qualities which are not seemingly appreciated by others, or by Palestinians themselves. When in fact Palestinian products are being exported to such places as Tel-Aviv and labeled under the name of Israeli production. Bomb is Palestinian, I hope bomb gets in the way of this thinking.



Heaven and Hell

Bag in fabric printed with details of embroidery of a famous Palestinian dress

by: Hadeel Qutna (PS)

Production: Gasman Advertising

This Model is a handbag inspired by the shape of the dress Heaven & Hell in a contemporary and abstract design, so that each girl can carry her dress to anywhere.



Not Just A Bread

baby sleeping bag with the feature of Arabic bread

By: Biyi Zhu (CN)

Made by: Kamel Salous, Stars Fashion

This baby sleeping bag is inspired by the Palestinian daily cuisine. Bread is not only the essential food but also the valuable food in every Arabic country. When people share the bread with family, happiness will appear unconsciously. The same as when the family has a new born baby, the entire family would be cheerful just because of a new life. The Bread is not only a sliced bread, it represents the thinking of the awareness of how we could create a better future for our next generation.



Now you seed me, Now you don't

Plantable recycled paper

by: João Roxo (MZ)

Smuggle seeds embedded on recycled paper! In Palestine, it is illegal to export seeds (one of many imposed restrictions found). This paper is made from recycling paper waste.



Palestinian mountains (Mahroon) bags

Khaish bags for herbs to dry in the kitchen

By: May Marei

As any Palestinian family we are used to the hills and forests around my town, usually we go to a mountain named Mahroon near Qabatya village. An important part of this picnic, was to walk around and pick up some fresh wild herbs such as Za'tar, Ize'aitmaneh, and Mayrameyyeh. Then we leave it for a couple of days to dry at home, it is like a Palestinian permanent habit. You would find these herbs in any Palestinian kitchen. I thought of these bags as a basic element of the Palestinian kitchen; having a place to dry these herbs. I used the Khaish material, which is the material used to keep the wheat and the seeds inside for months, it let the air in which can preserve the herbs form rot.



Mendeel Um Muqawama

Tissue Box in rusted iron

by: Andrea Karch (DE)

Produced by: Mustafa Abu Jameel (Blacksmith), Sabah Zhou (Embroidery)

A Palestinian friend described life in Palestine as "beautiful but hard". I suggest this tissue box as a metaphorical translation of the struggle and beauty of everyday life in Palestine into an object. The box itself is heavy, rough and produced out of rusted and flawed iron plates. In stark contrast the collection of handkerchiefs feels fragile, almost dove-like. The handkerchief might remind you a Palestinian grandmother crying, or the sound of someone sneezing a nose. This modern version of the 'mendeel' is a reinterpretation that is not in dispute with our environment but adapts to every day life.



Matchbox

Matchbox ornamented with arabic calligraphy

by: Hadeel Qutna (PS)

Prototype by: Abu Ibrahim

The matches factory in the city of Nablus used to manufacture matches in Palestine. Until 1967. Due to the current situation, where political conditions are preventing the entry of this type of materials for manufacturing, ever since it is not allowed to produced them in the Palestinian territories.

This empty matchbox reminds us of this industry and the restrictions Palestinian live under. The text on the box says: on this earth there is what makes life worth living.



More than love

Calligraphed stencil for bread

By: João Roxo (MZ) and Juliette Lizotte (FR)

Calligraphy: Mohammad Omar. Laser cut: Fairouz

More than love is a stencil made in collaboration with calligrapher Mohammad Omar. In the drawing Mohammad developed a pattern around the word "Ahwak" which could be translated into "more than love". This stencil can be used to decorate bread with za'tar or other spices and herbs before sharing it with the loved ones.



Pieces of my heart

wood form for Maamoul with only a part of the cookie

by Amani Yaqob (PS)

Prototype: Abu Ibrahim

It is a tradition that for Eid you contact and visit every member of your extended family. Because of the occupation, we are separated. The whole family can never be all together. So it became an habit that every holiday morning you contact everyone that can't be with you before celebrating with the ones close to you. Pieces of my heart is a form of only a part of a Ma'moul, the missing piece represents the missing people.



Another Quartet

Set of 16 cards with portraits of artists, poets, musicians and actors from Palestine

by: Ala'a Wahdan (PS)

It is a game with four fields of different kind of Palestinian arts (Artists, Poets, Musicians and Actors) who are based and grew up in Palestine. The game is here to remind Palestinians of their rich contemporary culture and for the outside world to discover it. Those artists, poets, musicians and actors are the ones who are able to imagine a different future beyond the harsh limitations of politicians. In this game should be four players and the cards distribute them randomly (1 by 1) to have four cards each. Players should exchange the cards with other players until one has four cards and wins.



Re; light

Cotton fabric wearable, off-white with red thread along seams

by: Floris van Driel (NL)

made by: Sabah Al' Asal

Burning with the same color as the sun, cleaning the air at the same time while helping with allergies and asthma a candle made of organic beeswax tries to symbolize the permanent state of temporality in contemporary Palestine. Lasting two to five times longer than regular candles the waiting becomes a long process that none the less needs to be tended to by relighting the various hidden strings inside of the candle.

WELCOME HOME

EXHIBITION INCLUDING THE PROTOTYPES
DISARMING DESIGN STUDIO, RAMALLAH, SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016



Right to Movement
Cotton fabric wearable, off-white with red thread along seams
by: João Roxo (MZ)
made by: Star Fashion

It is time. I have to go now. Rethinking liberation, distinct from the hardly attainable concept of freedom, this garment aims to represent feelings of deprivation of movement. All over Palestine I saw maps that reflect the segregational aspect of constantly mutating roads and cities, with references to checkpoints and other restrictive mechanisms characterising the infrastructure. In a very simple way, the red thread follows the seams of the garment, symbolising both paths and obstacles. One thread deviates from this preset, instituted pattern, leading to a future out in the open, still waiting to be written.



Rumallah (Rumanah+RAmallah)
Lampshade in the shape of a pomegranate made out of pierced metal
By: Biyi Zhu (CN)
Made in the blacksmith street

I asked a girl if she wanted to choose a shape to define Palestine. She answered that it would be pomegranate. Pomegranates presents the meaning in fruitfulness, luck and prosperity. That's also maybe the heartfelt wishes of the people who live in this miraculous place.



Shared Destiny
Silver chicha cap with arabic letters engraved
by: Juliette Lizotte (FR)
made by: Mister Silver

Smoking chicha is part of everyday life in Palestine, despite the complex situation people take time to share a relaxing moment together around a narguile. Shared Destiny is a silver cap to replace the disposable ones that you get at the cafe. It works as a talisman to keep all the time, as a tool to share a chicha with friends and is a poetic reminder of our humanity.



The Story of Light and Shadow
A candle holder made of black cardboard that is laser cut to the shape of the old city of Jerusalem
by: Ibrahim Hindi (PS)

The light is always coming from within and from there it lights up the surroundings. The effect of the light bouncing off an object creates the shadows, areas of light and darkness: a life in a nutshell. These areas of lights and shadows are reflected in our everyday life and affects it. This candle holder is a strip of a number of silhouettes from spaces that affect our lives, one of them being the old city of Jerusalem. The strip is bent in a way to form a cube. A candle is placed in the middle of it to light up Jerusalem model and thus cast it's shade along the way.



The Temporary
Brown leather bracelet with silver letters on the inside
By: Amani Yaqob (PS)
Produced by: Rahallah Shoes, Bank al Fadda

We use our bodies to give certain statements. We tattoo our skins with permanent marks for permanent ideas. As Palestinians, we believe that the occupation is temporary and will end soon or later. Hussein Al Barghouti said "The borders that stopped us in front of it were borders made by others, we have no borders." This describes a common feeling among the Palestinian diaspora all over the world. The Temporary is a bracelet that engraves letters on the skin for a short time, after a while it fades away, representing this idea that the borders will soon disappear.



Womb bag
Rope bag
by: Bushra Hasonah (PS)
made by: Al masry for leather, the straw by an old lady in Naze

Present this bag to Palestinian law, for them to know how they play with the relationship between mother and daughter. They decide to snatch the teenage girl from her mother lap to extent unknown. The bag represents a woman's womb as the motherhood relationship absolute that is manipulated as the go go toy just like the waves playing with a piece of wood. The Al Hanon flower works as a pain killer to cure that womb and reminds how the great Arabian King defended arab women's honor after which Al Hanon flower was named.

'Welcome Home' was the first exhibition to take place at the new studio of Disarming Design From Palestine. It takes the domestic reality as a context to address issues that define the Palestinian plight and the reality of living under occupation. In a Ramallah apartment the products developed in the past five years, are displayed in their intended settings. Together they present sets of stories about current Palestinian fragmented identity, while examining the potential of creative practices as forms of resistance, hence contributing to social innovation and alternative forms of circular economies.

This exhibition and shop had been organized on the occasion of the 3rd Qalandia International and the launch of our new website. All products in the exhibition are developed in the context of Disarming Design, all furniture has been recycled or upcycled. The show also includes prototypes of the createshop that was organized summer 2016 in collaboration with the Ramallah Municipality.

Exhibition team: Ghadeer Dajani, Juliette Lizotte, May Marie, Mohammad Saleh, Annelys de Vet, with great support of Mohammad Anati and Raed Hamouri

Participating artists and designers included: Mohammed Al Hawajri, Ali Aldeek, Mohamed Alzamer, Ayed Arafah, Areej Ashhab, Abdullah Awad, Tessel Bruhl, Dina Daher, Vida Daher, Ghadeer Dajani, Monika Grutze, Bushra Hasonah, Shayma Hassanein, Nadya Hazbunova, Ibrahim Hindi, Raed Issa, Mark Jan van Tellingen, Khaled Jarrar, David Juan Ortiz, Andrea Karch, Dina Khalil, Juliette Lizotte, May Marei, Florian Mecklenburg, Ibrahim Muhtadi, Mohammed Mussallam, Ahmad Nassar, Majdal Nateel, Hadeel Qutna, João Roxo, Omar Sahla, Vivien Sansour, Maher Shaheen, Helen Underhill, Floris van Driel, Mirte van Duppen, Tommi Vasko, Alaa Wahdan, Amani Yacob

This exhibition has been made possible with the generous support of: Creative Industries Fund, Lutfia Rabbani Foundation



'Welcome Home' by Raed Hamouri

WELCOME HOME OPENING WEEKEND, 8 OCTOBER 2016



PRESS OVERVIEW

Several press releases and newsletters were sent out to the network of DDFP and to the mailing list of Ramallah Municipality to invite them to the public events and the create-shop exhibition that took place at Hosh Qandah on the 8th of September. The press release is included as an attachment.

Ook ontwerpster Annelys de Vet benadrukt dat kunst het menselijke aspect in de schaal kan leggen. Zij creëerde het design label **Disarming Design from Palestine**, met ontwerpen van Palestijnse kunstenaars en ambachtslui.

Voor de Vet is het cruciaal om mensen zelf te laten spreken over hun eigen producten. Heel vaak gaan westerse ontwerpers naar Palestina met vooropgezette ideeën en staan ze nauwelijks open voor de kracht van de Palestijnen zelf. 'Je moet de producten van onze design collectie niet kopen omdat je de Palestijnen zielig vindt, maar omdat je wordt aangetrokken door hun kwaliteit, kracht en poëzie.'

Met haar collectief streeft ze ernaar om via kunst en cultuur bij te dragen tot economische zelfstandigheid en de veerkracht van Palestijnen. Kunst is voor haar geen pleister op het slachtofferschap. 'Kunst biedt de kracht om een andere toekomst te verbeelden.' En dat is precies wat jonge kunstenaars in Palestina beweegt: verbeelding om te ontsnappen aan de verdrukkende realiteit, als een manier om hun vrijheid af te dwingen.

1/feb
POPUSSHOP DISARMING DESIGN FROM PALESTINE
print
Kwintessens

16/feb
KUNST MAKEN ONDER BEZETTING
article
Rekto Verso (by Brigitte Herremans)
<http://www.mo.be/analyse/kunst-maken-onder-de-bezetting>

24/feb
MAKING & SHARING
weblog
HOPE
<http://www.hope-foundation.nl/weblog/>



8/okt
REPORT OPENING WELCOME HOME
video
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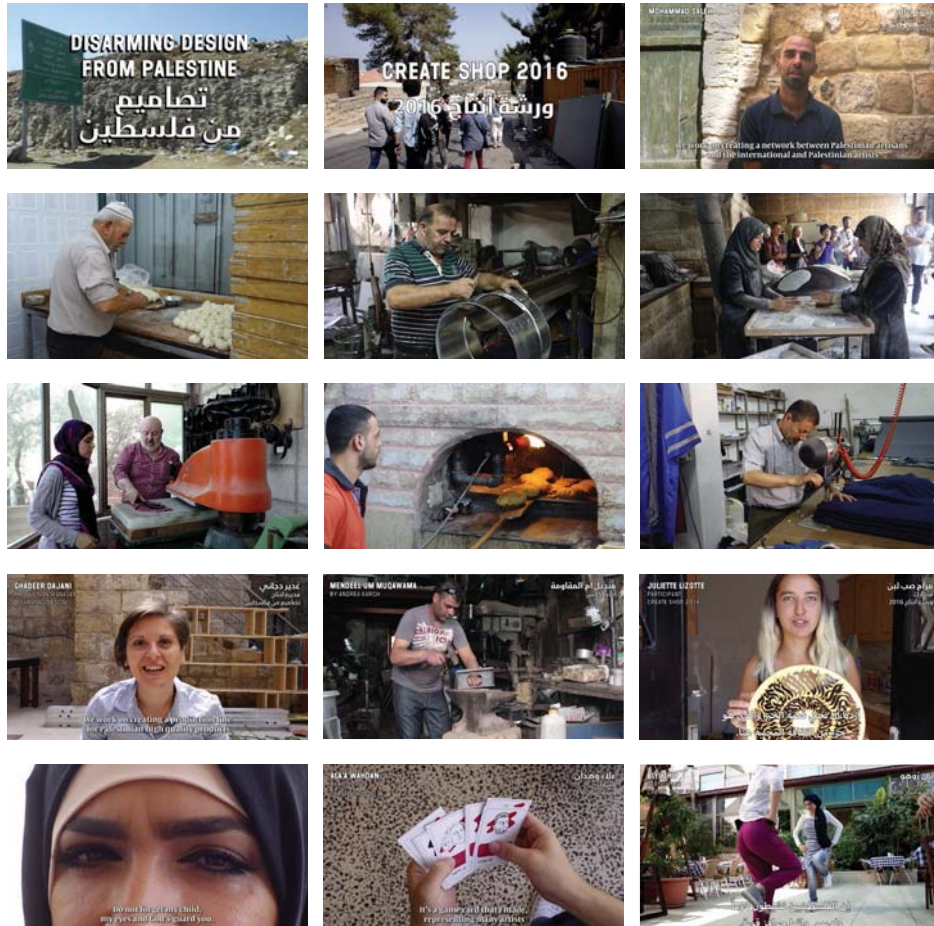
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THE SEA IS MINE, QALANDIYA INTERNATIONAL, PALESTINE
article
Metropolis M (Jelle Bouwhuis)
http://www.metropolism.com/nl/reviews/29429_qalandiya_international

VIDEO

CREATE-SHOP 2016, A VIDEO-IMPRESSION BY JULIETTE LIZOTTE
[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/186233759](https://vimeo.com/186233759)

Juliette Lizotte made a short documentary about the create-shop, witnessing the tours, artisans, interactions and the development of new proposals for useful objects with a story.



DESIGN AS A FUNDAMENTAL TOOL TO LEARN

BIYI ZHU (CN, SANDBERG INSTITUUT MASTER STUDENT IN DESIGN),
 PARTICIPANT CREATE-SHOP, ABOUT HER EXPERIENCES

I rethink the two weeks of the create-shop with great passion. I continued working on the prototypes that I made in Palestine and started to organize almost 100 gigabyte of pictures and videos that I took during the journey. Browsing them, they bring me back to Ramallah through the people vividly smiling and the shining streets during sunset. It was my first time to visit the Middle East, and I came to Palestine without any expectation. I relied on my curiosity to capture every single moment in this on many ways also magic place. But the thing I did first, was to disarm myself from the media-images and to re-learn from the Palestinians.



Curiosity is the key to understanding, I comprehend the meaning of benevolence. It teaches me about the world and provokes me to think in different angles. With my curiosity and humbleness, it turned out to be relatively easy to work with the craftsmen in Ramallah, even though their English was often very limited. One of the participants of our create-shop, a woman called Bushra, attracted my attention particularly. She is only one year younger than me but is already a mother of two kids. A bit to my surprise, we have pleasant conversations all the time. For both of us, these moments become the happiest ones. We seem to have a lot of similarities, but the daily reality she is confronted with is shaping her conditions beyond my imagination. Her biggest worry that perplexes her for a long time relates to the Palestinian law. Because she is divorced from the father of her children, Bushra, will lose her fostering rights of her six-

year-old daughter after she turns thirteen. According to Palestinian law, her daughter is then obliged to move to her former husband, while their son has the right to choose between parents. This means that Bushra can no longer take care of her daughter then, and possibly hardly even see her. And since it's the law, she cannot appeal this. If this is the reality, this must also influence many other mothers, and thus society.

During the createshop, we kept sharing our ideas about the rights of women and also how we can adapt our own stories towards useful designs. We questioned how to transfer Bushra's experiences to a new product, which became a challenge and impetus. After some days, Bushra came with a beautiful idea to make a bag using the concept of a children's game, presenting the separation of a mother and daughter. The bag is made by a Palestinian traditional way of wicker.

Together with other participants, we eat and play together, and even celebrate my birthday. I have the best, unforgettable and incomparable experiences. Everyone is bright and energetic, and it makes me forget about an occupation. Meeting an individual makes it impossible to see reality black and white. However, isn't that also the effect that art and design provide us? Art and design won't present how we can live easily, rather they make us aware of how complicated our worlds are. I assume this is also what Disarming Design from Palestine wants to pass to the public through their products. Via local designed goods they focus on individual stories. This makes us understand the value and strength of our differences and avoids us thinking in black and white. Definitely, it is one of the most valuable lessons in my life; it has taught me to use design as a fundamental tool to learn from the world.



FRAGMENTS FROM RAMALLAH

ANDREA KARCH (DE, SANDBERG INSTITUUT MASTER STUDENT IN DESIGN), PARTICIPANT CREATE-SHOP, ABOUT HER PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND OBSERVATIONS

I must say that writing about personal experiences, emotions, especially when connected to traveling, is nothing that I find easy. It is even more difficult when writing about a first-time visit — to Palestine. A people, officially a non-state, a country in constant conflict. I do not want to make empty assumptions about a culture, a way of living or about politics that are not part of the reality I live in. Neither do I want to sound cheesy describing how great of a time we have had as tourists, artists and visitors (which we did indeed). I also do not want to romanticize living in an, to me, intensely beautiful Middle Eastern capital like Ramallah, which tends to immediately put a spell on foreign senses. On vision, smell, audition and taste. The most honest thing I can offer at this point, probably, is a story of fragments, observations, memories that I have taken back to Amsterdam with me.



Everything I thought I had learned, read or known about Palestine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict got more complicated with each conversation we had in the group of international and Palestinian visual artists. Just like the cityscape unfolded in its multifarious layers with each walk I took, the conflict grew more complex, personalities exposed strength and weakness, geo-politics, human destinies and diverse, cultural realities intertwined to a complicated mesh of impressions. It is an emotional conflict in every way.

On the other hand though I realized once again how much we, as human beings, have in common regardless of where we grew up or where we currently live. Let me tell you about a chain of associations that came to my mind on a thirty minute

walk from Al-Bireh back to city center of Ramallah.

I went along the main street, finally down-hill. It was hot. Everyone I passed by smiled at me. The police man seemed proud and polite. He probably wanted to show off a little, posing next to his car in his uniform, no gun.

A teenager cut my way. He might have been in a hurry. Or he simply didn't want to be seen. He seemed insecure. A boy, of 15 or 16 years, that was covered in a thick cloud of mens deodorant, "Smells like Teen Spirit", well — "Axe Anarchy". He might have been about to meet a girl he liked or his boy gang on their scooters. He smoked a cigarette. Let's say he pretended to smoke, while he actually only puffed. Pulling one drag after the other, roughly,

too fast, amateurish. He wore skate shoes and a dark blue Eastpak backpack that was hanging low until the back of his kneecaps. He wore the New Era Baseball cap backwards and made sure to keep the "59Fifty" logo on it. He looked exactly like me and my friends when I was a teenager, only that I was a girl.

He made me wonder about the image of me walking down a street in the West bank, that my parents would probably have had on their minds if only they would have known I was there in the first place. They might have had the image of people staring at me, gruesome Arab men with long beards wearing slippers, boys covering their faces in Kufiyas throwing molotov cocktails, poor veiled women sitting on the sidewalks begging with their poor babies wrapped in checkerboard textiles, donkeys, ruins and trash, decay, the Israeli flag with that star, military boots and machine guns, Yasser Arafat and the PLO jumping down that building opening fire on me. I don't know. Anything that would have looked more like setting foot on a battlefield would probably have been closer to their imagination than that boy in front of me.

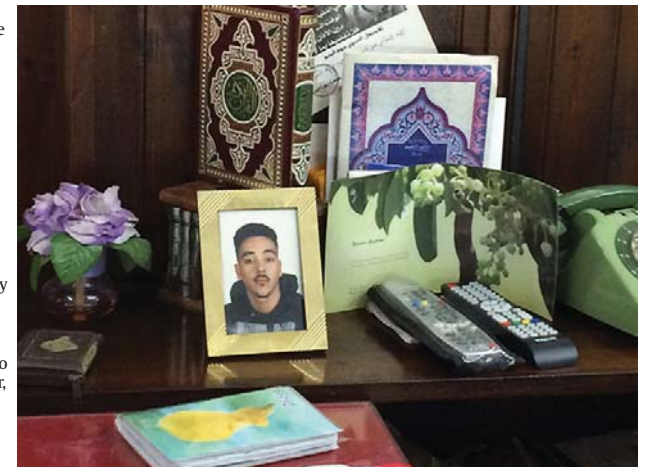
I walked into an embroidery shop. A tiny space, cramped with the most beautiful handcrafted textiles and ceramics. Red, green, white thread on black fabric, a pattern made out of little pink crosses and flowers, bags, a collection of olive oil soaps, Muslim and Christian home accessoires. I was alone in there. It was literally deserted. Someone just left his or her shop open and trusted the neighbors or passerby's not to steal, not to vandalize. The shop owner might have gone out to grab a coffee with a hint of cardamom or to have a talk with the man from the flower shop. I stood in a store — all by myself. I took nothing. Later that night the guy from the hostel asked me surprised, slightly shocked, "What do you mean you never got a key to your room?" A week later I left my bag at the luggage shelf a few seats away from where I was sitting on a German train — someone opened it and realized that there was nothing valuable inside.

Half-way to Ramallah center though I spotted a bright red neon sign. Two guys waved at me, yelled something. They stood next to their pimped BMW in front of that store — an H&M. "Take a photo of him, take a photo," craving attention, wanting to get in touch just because this was the moment to do so. "Is that an original H&M, guys?" I asked. "Sure, what do you think? You think we don't have H&M in Ramallah?" They laughed and held the door open for me. It was the most beautiful H&M store, indeed not a fake, I have ever been in. Two small rooms,

walls and ceiling covered in natural, light wood, an assorted array of clothes neatly positioned on hand-made wooden shelves. The Aircon was blasting. "Do you at least get percentages?" I asked the cashier. "No," she said and laughed "but I should ask for it, shouldn't I? I love the fashion." Capitalism — the only structure that does not know geographical borders.

I continued and came to a halt at an unbuilt-on property with a picturesque view. Although I was already late — the value of taking your time. I stood there for a while. It appeared strange to me that this spot, in between two houses, was completely unused. There was tall grass, dried out bushes. Almost as if something had been burnt down. The mostly smaller family houses and partially bigger residential buildings in front of me were white and squared with flat rooftops, carrying the black water tanks with the white arabic writing on them. In between, trees, dark green and beige, a grey-blue sky. Some families had their pink and blue laundry outside on their roofs. It looked like there was still a lot of construction going on. The buildings seemed rather new, some were yet unfinished, roof and window-less. A few red-tiled roofs in between. Arabic advertisement. Further in the background but not really far, a slight hillside. The typical terracing of earth. Something that looks like a long, high fence of several meters. Behind it the tips of red-tiled rooftops. I guessed it was a more recent extension of the Israeli settlement that was next to it and was very clearly visible on the top of the hillside. I counted five big apartment buildings of maybe five stories, topped in red and unmistakably in Israeli uniformity. Next to these five big buildings around 20 smaller, multi-family apartment buildings. Two high towers that were striped in red and white, electricity, navigation, or satellites? Right in the middle of my view, a modern architectural building with a monumental wall all around it.

Especially if you squint your eyes a little, the beige and brown space in-between a Palestinian neighborhood and the Israeli settlement on top of this or that hill visually appears like a buffer zone. Empty land. A weird spot. A weak spot. The hills have eyes. Surveillance. Fragmentation. Division. Apartheid. Control. Power. "I wouldn't say I'm pro-violence, I actually don't like violence, I personally would never hurt anyone physically with my own hands — but if someone else does it... you know. Then they get hurt — fine. What do you expect me to say now?" someone told me. Hatred and revenge. Deeply rooted. I have never seen that notion so alive, aware and burning in someones eyes that felt so close to my own.



Back at night in Ramallah we went out to get some Kebab sticks and vegetarian Mezze. Lamb kofta, shish tavuuk, chicken hearts, crispy liver, freshly grilled, smoked from the small barbecue place at the corner. Another foreign traveller joined us and told us a story about how lonely traveling outside of the West Bank was. "I mean in general, who just walks up to you on the street and says 'hey should we become friends'?" It's hard to get to know people, in Tel Aviv."

Just a minute later a Palestinian guy greeted us, shook our hands, did some smalltalk and invited us to a party where he was going to deejay at that seriously hip 'Snow Bar' later that night.

Sometimes there is no point to a story, no end to a journey, no need for convenience, no solution to a conflict and no logic to life. Sometimes you simply realize, you don't need a reason — to be, to travel, to question, to feel, most importantly to share. May it be moments, impressions or worries, consent or discontent. I value these weeks because of the people that were willing to share themselves and their time with me and hope to see ignorance replaced by reason, starting with myself.

USAGE AS RESISTANCE

FLORIS VAN DRIEL (NL, SANDBERG INSTITUUT MASTER STUDENT IN DESIGN), PARTICIPANT CREATE-SHOP, GIVES A RECAP OF 2 WEEKS RAMALLAH

Let me tell you about my trip to Ramallah. I traveled to Brussels airport from Amsterdam where I got checked by very cranky police men, who probably aren't really afraid of a terror attack but just painstakingly doing whatever it is that they have been told to do. In this case I had to empty my very inventively packed backpack. This process repeated itself a couple of times, as might be normal at airports.



After a four hour flight I arrive in Tel-Aviv where a couple of things get my attention particularly. Most prominently is the sheer massive architecture of power that is the airport. The reception hall is surrounded by glass like a panopticon that allows you to look over everyone in the departure hall – like a guard. There is a massive wall that feels very imposing when you walk past it, but then there are these quite silly looking little cubicles that then apparently represent 'The Border'. I lie about the fact that the workshop I participate takes place in Tel Aviv and not Ramallah, and with relative ease the cranky police officer lets me go through. The Palestinian taxi driver that holds a plate with my name, drives me to Ramallah. We pass by several checkpoints and I'm shocked by the controlled infrastructure.

The next day in Ramallah seemed the complete opposite. People were walking all over the roads, with cars not being able to get through. People were criss-crossing each other, zig-zagging between cars trying to make their way to wherever it is they wanted to go. However no one seemed to mind and this is 'just the way things are' here – at least I suppose.

Things just seemed to function well this way. You must understand that for me as a person living in Amsterdam, where everybody literally freaks out if pedestrians start walking on the street that is meant for cars, this was quite a sight to behold. Especially in contrast to what I encountered in and around the airports.

So after a couple of days, well no, more after a few hours, I started doing the same; at first a little hesitant, with my neurotic Dutch fear of actually getting hit by a car still very much in the back of my brain. Soon I felt that everything – from the non-stop honking of a horn to whole families crossing in between cars – is a form of community. Sometimes it even seemed that drivers would honk their horn just not to be quiet, and let people know that he was here at this moment, driving this car in Ramallah. This idea of expression of being here, notifying your existence, seemed a crucial one throughout the places we visited in the Westbank.

Fast forward two weeks later when we're planning to go back to Amsterdam. We're supposed to be picked up by a Palestinian cab driver from Jerusalem who will take us to the Tel-Aviv airport. However, this turns out to be easier said than done. It is just a couple of days before a big holiday and everyone is out and visiting or receiving family, or doing the holiday shopping. Bakery's are packed with huge amounts of sweets filled with dates, chocolate and figs. It's taking us forever to get past the large amounts of people walking in the streets, not to mention the insane amount of cars that are trying to find their way through the narrow streets of Ramallah. For the amount of traffic, Ramallah's streets are really small, in stark contrast when we finally arrive to the Israeli roads. From a fluid system to a rigid one. There are no potholes in the road, no honking of horns, no dirty cars and no people walking onto the streets. It feels like any Western European city. Only the palm trees prove otherwise.

At the airport there was a shuttle that was supposed to take us from terminal 3 to terminal 1, where very thorough security checks were done. But because it was Sabbath the shuttle only ran once an hour. We asked a couple of cab drivers instead, but no one seemed to care. After a lot of nagging, convincing and a fair amount of luck we found one driver who was willing to take us to the other terminal. We ended up getting a lot of hassle by the security control because we arrived so late.

So you may wonder at this point. Ok, this was a nice little story about differences in infrastructure, and if you thought so let me be the first to say: "Thanks". But for me this illustrates a point. Something which became abundantly clear over my past two weeks in the West-Bank, is that even though there is a lack of possibilities to move around freely, the way Palestinians use their roads can be seen as a counter reaction to the lack of movement. With pedestrians being able to walk straight over the same roundabout where cars drive in the opposite directions simply because it is shorter to get there, all the while the a-rhythmic song car horns honking all over the city blows loud and clear. Dealing with all the checkpoints every day, having to answer the same question time after time, or just plainly being confronted with a wall right where someone has decided your movement ends. Choosing to oppose this rigidity with a seemingly ultra chaotic and complex beehive-like behavior, I read it as a way to resist all the limitations of movement. To ignore the sidewalks for walking and seeing the cars accepting this, can also show that there is an acceptance between both.

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