



GONZO ARABIA

CONTEMPORARY ART FROM
SAUDI ARABIA IN ASPEN

JUNE 30 -
SEPT 1, 2016



King Abdulaziz Center
for World Culture
A Saudi Aramco initiative

GONZO **ARABIA**

ASPEN, CO



CONTEMPORARY ART FROM
SAUDI ARABIA IN ASPEN

JUNE 30 -
SEPT 1, 2016

EXHIBITION

GONZO ARABIA

CONTEMPORARY ART FROM SAUDI ARABIA IN ASPEN

DATES

June 30 – September 1, 2016

ORGANISER

King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture

King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture
A Saudi Aramco initiative



MUSEUM PARTNER

Gonzo Gallery
2nd Floor Boogie's
534 E Cooper Ave
Aspen, CO
www.gonzogallery.com/Arabia
FOUNDER DJ Watkins



PRODUCER

Culturunners
CONCEPT
Stephen Stapleton
CATALOGUE DESIGN
Kuba Rudzinski



PARTNERS

Gharem Studio
FOUNDER
Abdulnasser Gharem
CO-FOUNDER
Ajlan Gharem



The Open Mind Project
501c3 Non Profit
FOUNDER
Andrew Scott



SPECIAL THANK YOU

Ajax W. Axe, Bob Braudis, Joe DiSalvo, Steve Schille, Don Stuber, Boogie Weinglass, Bo Weinglass

COPYRIGHT

©CULTURUNNERS, 2016

GONZO ARABIA

9

A NOTE FROM THE SHERIFF

11

SAUDI ARTISTS' TOUR

13

KING ABDULAZIZ CENTER FOR WORLD CULTURE

15

ARTISTS

SARAH ABU ABDULLAH

17

NJOUD ALANBARI

19

ABDULNASSER GHAREM

21

AJLAN GHAREM

27

NUGAMSHI

31

SAEED SALEM

35

FAISAL SAMRA

39

RASHED AL SHASHAI

41

SHAWEESH

43

DHAFER AL SHEHRI

45

TELEFAZ 11

47

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

51

ABOUT GONZO GALLERY

55

ABOUT CULTURUNNERS

57

ABOUT GHAREM STUDIO

59

ABOUT THE OPEN MIND PROJECT

61

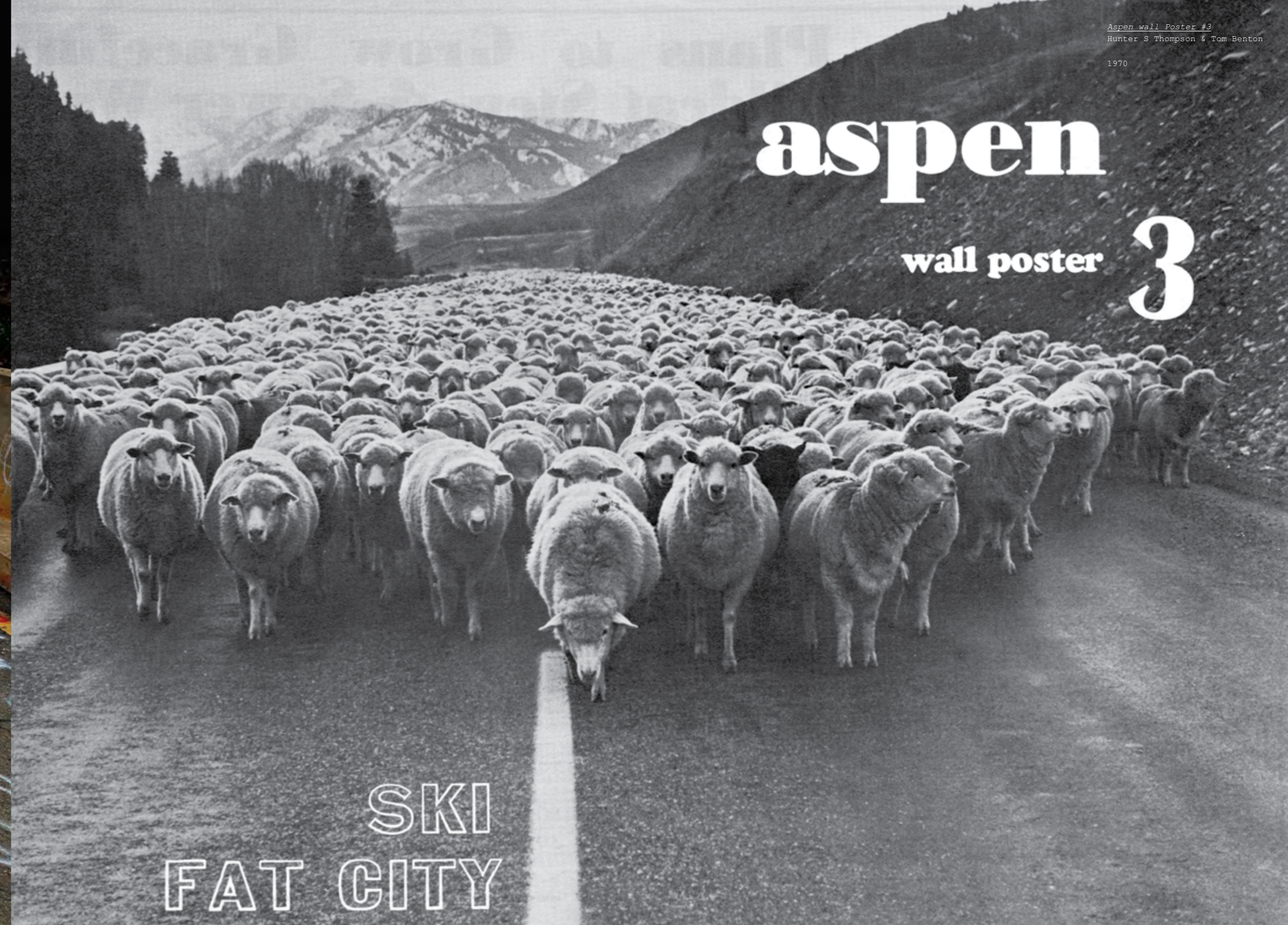
cover:
Nugamshi

frontispiece:
Ajlan Gharem
Paradise Has Many Gates
2015



Al Siraat (The Path)
Abdulnasser Gharem

2007



Aspen wall Poster #3
Hunter S Thompson & Tom Benton

1970

aspen

wall poster

3

SKI
FAT CITY

DETOUR

تجاوز



The American Dream
Tom Benton
1968
Silkscreen
Created the night
Robert F. Kennedy was
Assassinated in 1968

*Captain America -
US government urged
to take a stance
on refugees*
Shaweesh
2016
Print

GONZO ARABIA

What happens when a pioneering group of Saudi artists come to Aspen, Colorado, playground of the rich and famous, once a bastion of free thought, the long lost home of Freak Power in the Rockies, for a meeting of minds? At the confluence of art, journalism, and international affairs, stands the work of Hunter S. Thompson, inventor of Gonzo journalism and one of the great American political commentators of the 20th Century. We bring his work and its contribution to the history of counterculture movements into conversation with leading artists from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Much more than an art exhibition, we aim for this collaborative space to be a bold, experimental platform for dialogue, a canvas for the interplay of theological, cross-cultural, and transnational engagement. Everyone who walks up the stairs into Gonzo Arabia, in the heart of Aspen, will add their own unique dimension and perspective, and be welcomed to participate in a coeducational experiment.

Just as Thompson inserted a radical narrator, a caricature of himself, into his journalism, this experiment puts the artists and their context at the center of their art. We want these organic interactions to serve as a testing ground for an open-minded teaching and learning practice that acknowledges that teachers are learners; that artists,

intellectuals, and academics are also products of their social contexts, and therefore the more we interact with each other, the more we can transcend the barriers that illusively divide us.

Four different grassroots organizations came together to create this unique collaboration at the crossroads of two juxtaposed cultures: The Gonzo Gallery of Aspen, the fruit of many years' work of its founder DJ Watkins; Gharem Studio, the Riyadh-based education and art center established by Abdunasser Gharem; CULTURUNNERS, a platform for traveling artists spearheaded by Stephen Stapleton; and The Open Mind Project, an educational and social-psychological institution founded by Andrew Scott. With support from the King Abdulaziz Center for World Cultures, we have united to provide a unique and innovative installation in the heart of the Colorado Mountains, where borders are bent, and the gates of paradise are open to all. We welcome you, and look forward to the contribution that your attendance represents to this border-dissolving project.

١٩٦٨/٨/٢٤
 كَبْرُ امْرِيكَا سَعُو الْبِدْرَاةَ الْاَمْرِيكِيَّةَ بِدَحَاذِ
 مَوْقِفِ بَنَانِ الْاَلْبَحْثِيَّةِ



نعم
 وكما قلنا نعم
 نعم للحزب
 نعم للحزب
 نعم للحزب
 الاستقلال و
 نعم حزب يعيد
 المسرى ويفتح له الآ
 التقدم .. والرخاء
 .. والمساواة ..
 سياج من سيادة الله
 على الحاكم . قبل ان
 نعم للحزب الجديد
 اعضائه قيادات كل
 نعم
 في كل
 العربية والاد
 شهر رمضان
 تحديد يوم
 الاصحى اليه
 جميع أنحاء
 ولقد قدم
 والاصياد في
 العالم الاسلامي
 ومجلة ، وما
 والتشيزيون
 وفلكية في
 بكتية العلوم
 تقريراً الى
 وتوفيق ال
 الحديث
 نسبح السعوي
 رشقى الاوقات
 ان شقى الاوقات
 لاني نوزيما لير عاد
 عليها الكيسراء واه
 والنور حتى قاحت
 لا

Bob Braudis,
Pitkin County Sheriff,
1987 to 2011

"Traveling with Bob
is like traveling with Superman"

Hunter S Thompson



A NOTE FROM THE SHERIFF

Last summer, DJ Watkins and I were hanging out at the Gonzo Gallery when a stranger walked in wearing a shirt saying "Everybody vs. Detroit" and carrying a book about Saudi contemporary art called 'Edge of Arabia'. We both took an immediate liking to the stranger, Stephen Stapleton, and the Saudi artists in his book; this led to CULTURUNNERS, Gharem Studio and the Open Mind Project collaborating with DJ to create Gonzo Arabia in a building in the heart of downtown Aspen that housed Boogie's Diner, an iconic creation of Leonard Boogie Weinglass for the last 25 years.

As I watched the project evolve, I became more curious about my own questions about the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, and even art in general. I've witnessed the power of art in its "activism" and I've seen art in a fundamentally emotional universe. We have seen quality art in cold, dark retreat from war and inhumanity. So what is art? One definition is "Art is that which survives."

Saudi Arabia is mysterious to most Westerners. What will its future be after oil? How does it plan to spend its money to improve the lives of its people? How does art play a role in that vision? Education? Women? What do the highly educated upper class Saudis feel about the masses? Through dialogue with these visiting artists, we'll learn some of the answers to these looming questions about the most powerful nation in the Middle East. The mystery of the Kingdom will be illuminated through the art, art's role in cultural identification and numerous events and salons that promise answers to many of the inquiries we have of Saudis, Saudi artists, and activists.

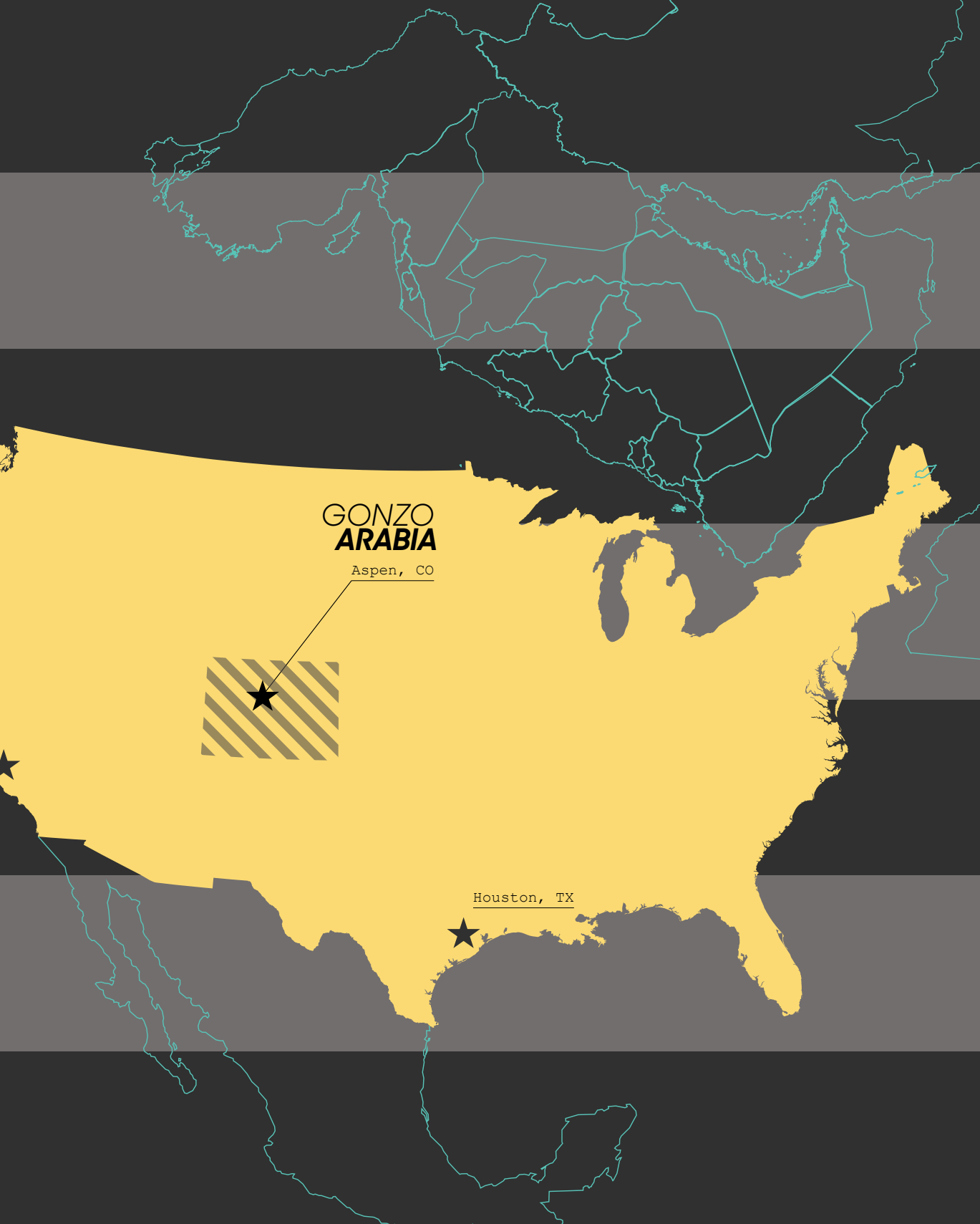
I hope Aspen takes advantage of this rare opportunity presented by DJ Watkins, Abdalnasser Gharem, Andrew Scott, Stephen Stapleton and the whole Gonzo Arabia team to learn from Saudi Arabian artists about their vision for the future of Saudi Arabia.

SAUDI ARTISTS' TOUR

Since June 2016, a group of Saudi artists has embarked on a multi-city tour of the United States to generate people-to-people dialogue and better understanding across physical and ideological borders. The tour launched in Houston, Texas with a large-scale exhibition at the Station Museum in Houston, TX before traveling to Colorado, to present this multi-faceted program in the heart of downtown Aspen. Next stops include San Francisco, CA, Bates College Museum of Art in Lewiston, ME and major cities across the United States.

The tour is spearheaded by the King Abdulaziz Center for World Cultures, Saudi's premier arts, culture and education institution, and was initiated by CULTURUNNERS, an international platform for traveling artists, and Gharem Studio, a Riyadh-based collective dedicated to arts education in Saudi Arabia. Exhibitions and events are being produced in partnership with cultural institutions and universities across the USA.

Against the backdrop of the Presidential elections, the tour is designed to create opportunities for Saudi artists to discuss common concerns with the American public; engaging them in an alternative narrative from the center of the Islamic World at this crucial time.



KING ABDULAZIZ CENTER FOR WORLD CULTURE



King Abdulaziz Center
For World Culture
A Saudi Aramco initiative

"We at the Center are delighted to connect these young Saudi artists with US audiences at this important time. The tour aims to provide a peer-to-peer platform for alternative discourse and cultural empathy between nations."

Dr Khalid Al-Yahya

Founder and Director of the Saudi artists' US Tour & Programs Director at the King Abdulaziz Center for World Cultures.

Saudi Aramco began construction on the Center in May 2008, when the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah ibn Abdulaziz Al-Saud, laid the symbolic cornerstone.

Our choice of site - near the famed Prosperity Well in Dhahran, where oil was first developed for commercial export - is not incidental. Where Saudi Arabia has long prospered from this natural resource, we seek to develop an additional source of wealth: a highly skilled and creative people who can propel the Kingdom to a bright and prosperous future for generations to come.

SARAH ABU ABDULLAH

"Painting a wrecked car like icing a cake, as if beautifying the exterior would help fix the lack of functionality within the car. This wishful gesture was the only way I could get myself a car - cold comfort for the current impossibility of my dream that I, as an independent person, can drive myself to work one day."



[Saudi Automobile](#)
2011
Video



NJOUD ALANBARI

The mural depicts a string of conservative ideals that are echoed throughout the culture and celebrated by our society. Due to the commonality of these murals, the jarring message is overlooked and takes on the role of subliminal messaging. These ideals are absorbed and later repeated, as facts, this results in a continuous cycle. In *Elementary 240* you see a society that feeds on itself and continues to recycle false ideals. The artwork attempts to examine the effect of an educational system that allows for these messages to exist, whether subliminal or supraliminal, and consider their effects on the principles of the individual throughout ones life.

Your veil is your virtue

Drugs

Porn

Idle time

Pornographic magazines



Travelling abroad

Forbidden music

Bad company

Embodying infidels

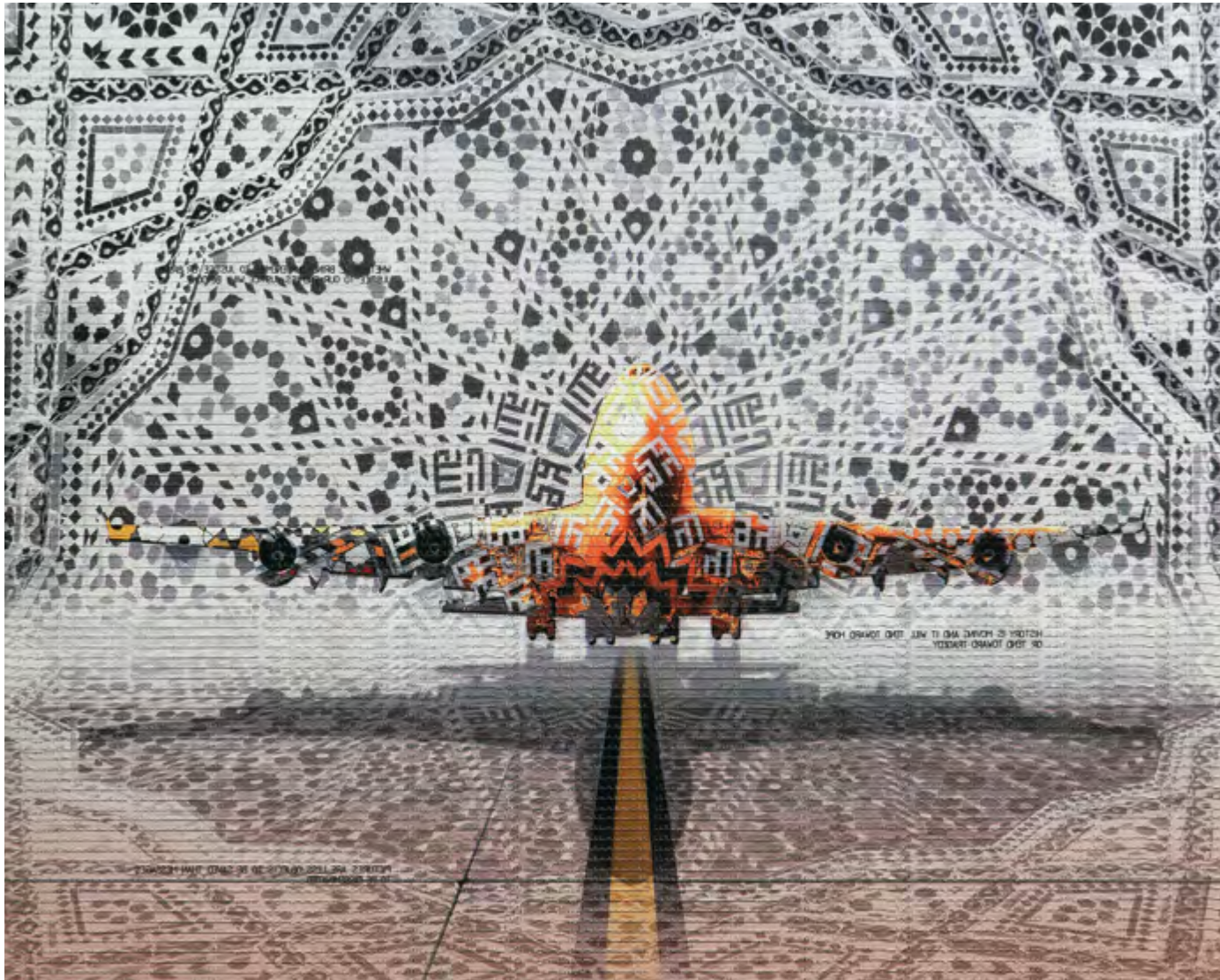
Elementary 240
2015
Mixed Media



In Transit

2013

Silk-screen print with white
diamond dust printed in 15
colours and 2 glazes
on 410 gsm Somerset Tub paper



ABDULNASSER GHAREM

Each day in Saudi Arabia thousands of stamps are slammed down onto a mosaic of official papers by bureaucrats, officials, policemen and soldiers, and together they articulate an unconscious and collective imprimatur. They spell out what is acceptable, or which is the 'right path'. As Gharem explains, 'with The Stamp I declare Inshallah, Amen, Moujaz and Have a Bit of Commitment: have a bit more intellectual rigour, more bravery, more faith in your convictions. In committing to this action, I become my own authority, and the controller of my own destiny.'

The Stamp - Moujaz

2013

Oversized hand carved wooden
stamp with embossed rubber face





The Stamp - Mujaz

2013
Silk-screen print with 4 colours
and 2 glazes on 410 gsm
Somerset Tub paper



The Stamp - Inshallah

2012
Silk-screen print with 4 colours
and 2 glazes on 410 gsm
Somerset Tub paper



The Stamp - Amen

2012
Silk-screen print with 4 colours and
2 glazes on 410 gsm
Somerset Tub paper



Men at Work I - IV

2012

Silk-screen print with 11 colours
and 2 glazes on 410 gsm Somerset
Tub paper, soldier applied with
diamond dust and collage



Paradise Has
Many Gates
2015
Video

"The older generation has more beliefs than knowledge, and our generation has more knowledge than beliefs. So we're trying to find beliefs that can be harmonized with our knowledge."

Paradise Has
Many Gates
2015
Print

AJLAN GHAREM





*Paradise Has
Many Gates 2*
2015
Print

Nugamshi's performance
in Houston
June 18 2016

NUGAMSHI



"I saw the whole world enormously dependent on oil to an extent where we breathe and drink it. However, what will happen when we run out of oil?"

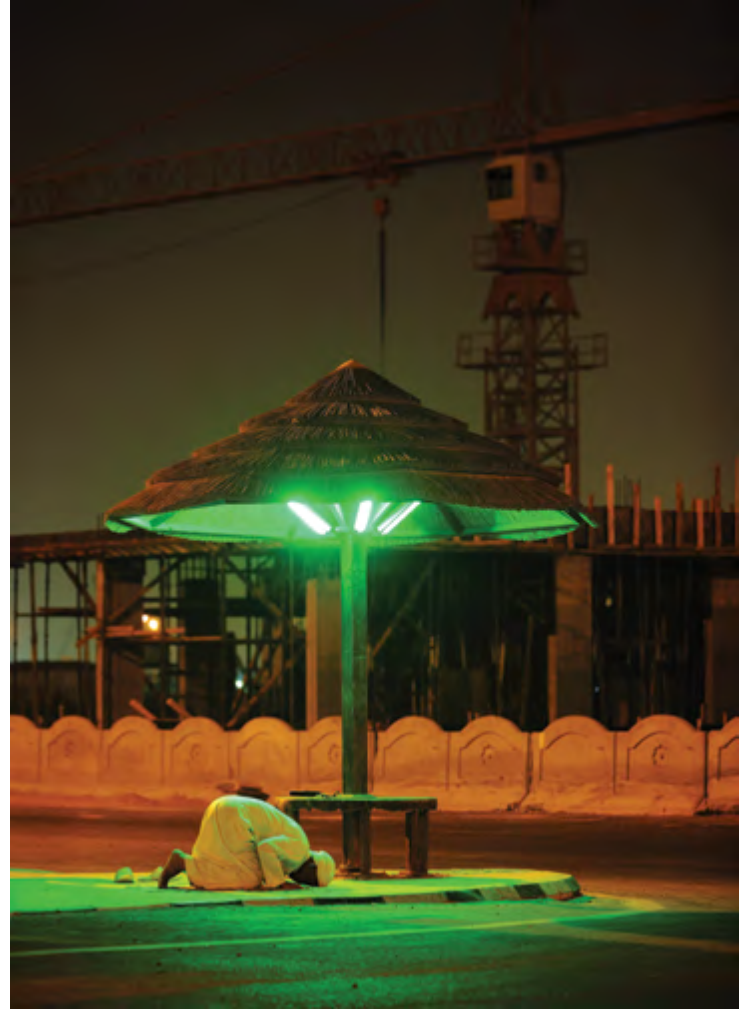


"These neon kiosks are a symbol of Jeddah... they are iconic and you only find them in this city. They are the only places open really late – 2 am, 4 am... selling Madinah mint tea and everything else: cigarettes, noodles, swimming goggles, popcorn, prayer mats ... Everything you want. Its like a mini hypermarket. To me, they symbolise something both the old Arabic culture: a place to meet and talk; as well as very futuristic. An intense ball of consumer energy."

SAEED SALEM



Neonland II
Photo



Neonland III
Photo



No Myth No Hero (red)
2014
Silkscreen

FAISAL SAMRA



*No To Only One Hero,
We Are All Heroes
(blue)*
2014
Silkscreen

RASHED AL SHASHAI



١٢ صفحة ٢٥ مليما

التوزيع : توزيعه الأجنبي ٧ شارع الصحابة بالقاهرة
تليفونه ٩٧٩٧٤٤
الاعدادات : اعدادات أوروبا ٦ شارع الصحابة بالقاهرة
تليفونه ٩٧٧٨٦٠
مكتبة الدكتور : ٣٥ شارع صفوة بالقاهرة
تليفونه ٢٠٠٠
تلكس محلي ٤١٣٧



رئيس مجلس الادارة ورئيس التحرير
موسى صبرى
مدير التحرير
احمد زين
مؤسسة اخبار اليوم بشارع الصحافة بالقاهرة
تلفونيا : اخبار اليوم - تليفونه ٩٧٧٧٧٧ (٧ خطوط)
٤٤/٩٧٩٨٤٣ - ٤٦/٩٧١٧٢٥
تلكس دولي ٩٢٢١٥ - محلي ٩٢٢٨٢

AL-AKHBAR, 3 AUGUST 1919 • العدد ٨١٥٤ السنة السابعة والعشرون • الخميس ٢٩ شعبان ١٢٩٨ - ٣ أغسطس (٢٠١٩)

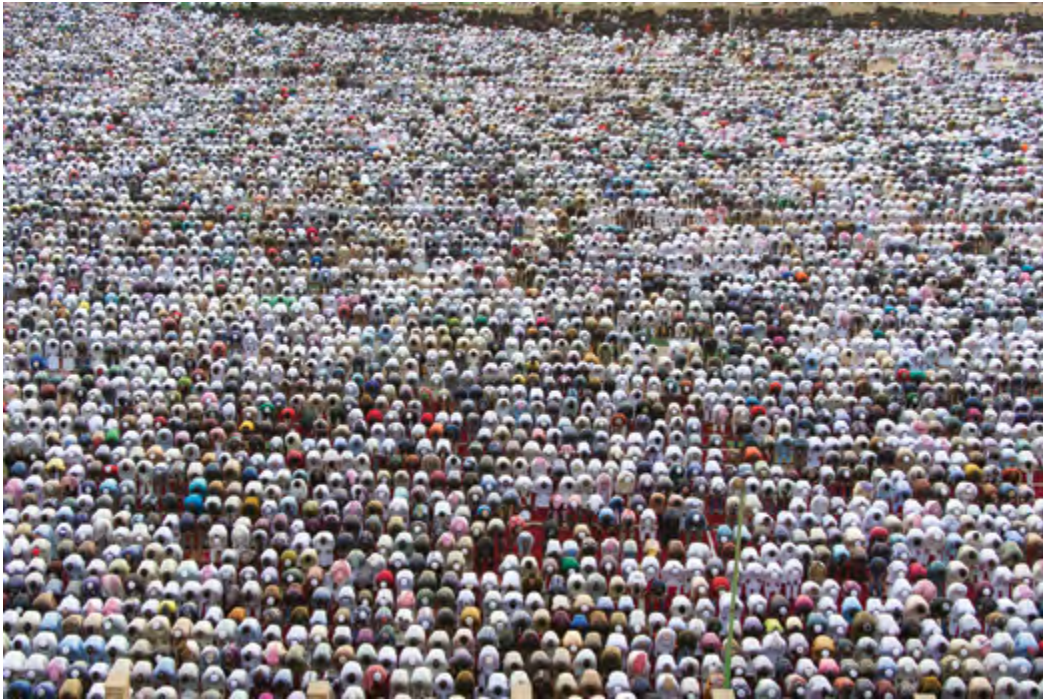
ولدت فير ضيف سرف الوفد العربي في مؤتمر الصلح بفرساي عام ١٩١٩



SHAWEESH

"My dream is to have my name be synonymous with the new generation of Saudi art."

*Darth of Arabia - Arabian
Envoy host quest of honor
during Versailles Peace Treaty
2016
Print*



DHAFER AL SHEHRI

Top:

Worshippers kneeling during Eid prayer in an outdoor mosque on the first day of Eid Al-Fitr, which is a day of celebration for all Muslims worldwide after fasting during the month of Ramadan.

Bottom:

Worshippers in the position of prostration (sujood) during their performance of Eid prayer in an outdoor mosque on the first day of Eid Al-Fitr.



Grand Mosque, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
1 Shawwal 1434 AH
8 August 2013

TELFAZ 11

Telfaz11 is a Riyadh-based internet television network that has attracted top internet talent in the Middle East.

The number 11 in Telfaz11 is an homage to the year 2011, the year where great changes occurred in our region; changes that changed not only the way the world looks at Arabs, but also the way Arabs see themselves.

Telfaz11's mission is to make sure that society's perception of local creativity changes positively and that light is shed on local creatives through entertaining online programming.

YOUTUBE SUBSCRIBERS: 9,315,000
YOUTUBE VIEWS: +140,000,000

*Logo from Telfaz 11's
Khambalah
2013*







Ajlan Gharem
[Paradise Has Many Gates](#)

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

SARAH ABU ABDALLAH

Sarah Abu Abdallah is an artist working primarily with video and film. She grew up in Qatif, Saudi Arabia and is currently pursuing her masters degree in Digital Media at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence. Her recent participations include: *Arab Contemporary* in the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark, *Migrating Forms* in New York, the Serpentine Galleries 89plus Marathon in London, the 11th Sharjah Biennial in the UAE and *RHIZOMA* in the 55th Venice Biennale. She contributed to ArteEast's recent Symposium, Arts and Culture in the Transformative Times, and the Moving Image panel on Video + Film at Palazzo Grassi in Venice.

NJLOUD ALANBARI

Njoud Alanbari was born and raised in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and graduated from Prince Sultan University, College of Architecture and Design. Njoud started working with Gharem Studio In in 2014 as a mixed media artist and then applied her art making techniques while teaching art to disadvantaged children and working with the Saudi Commission for Heritage and Antiques. Her work explores the threads that combine culture and community through crucial points of interaction such as

the topic of education for women. As a Saudi female, she hopes to fulfill a message by merging heritage into the 21st century using culture and basic humanity as her primary source of inspiration.

ABDULNASSER GHAREM

Abdulnasser Gharem is widely considered to be one of the most influential artists working in the Gulf today. Drawing on his previous experience as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Saudi Arabian army, Gharem's work reflects on themes of Islamic cultural identity and the need to remove oneself from historical shackles to embrace modern day knowledge and thought. Gharem's use of different forms of arabesques and geometric patterns are merged together to encourage unity in the Islamic world and to prevent the creation of barriers which lead to political disparity and social disruption.

Abdulnasser Gharem was born in 1973 in the Saudi Arabian city of Khamis Mushait, where he continues to live and work. In 1992, Gharem graduated from the King Abdulaziz Academy before attending the Leader Institute in Riyadh. In 2003 he studied at the influential Al-Meftaha arts village in Abha, and in 2004, Gharem and the Al-Meftaha artists staged

a group exhibition, *Shattah*, which challenged existing modes of art practice in Saudi Arabia. Since then Gharem has exhibited in Europe, the Gulf and the USA, including at The Martin-Gropius-Bau and at the Venice, Sharjah & Berlin Biennales.

AJLAN GHAREM

Born in 1985 in Khamis Mushayt in Southern Saudi Arabia, Ajlan Gharem moved to Abha to pursue an undergraduate degree in Mathematics at King Khalid University. Originally an event/project manager with Edge of Arabia, Ajlan currently teaches maths in the Al-Sahabah Public School in Riyadh. Ajlan is a co-founder of Gharem Studio, which supports artists from the Middle East.

NUGAMSHI

Nugamshi's research explores the evolution of traditional calligraphy and typography in both form and process. Born in northern Saudi Arabia in 1982, he adheres to similar traditional styles while also employing a performative and mixed discipline approach to his artmaking, using a broom or spray paint instead of a standard calligraphy brush. Frequently creating live performances throughout the Middle East and the US, he is considered a calligrapher who has adapted to contemporary forms of production by incorporating society's tastes within his art practice and further encouraging dialogue within the community.

SAEED SALEM

Born 1984 in Jeddah, Salem is of Yemeni descent. Having travelled to Malaysia for further education, he

received a diploma in advertising from Limkokwing University in 2006. In 2007, he completed his bachelor's degree in Advertising from Curtin University, Perth, Australia. Despite his lack of focus in his photography training during his studies, he was later exposed to the discipline while working at several established photography and design studios, eventually creating his own studio, 181 Degrees, in 2009. Participating in *Edge of Arabia's We Need to Talk* exhibition in Jeddah, Salem was exposed to the contemporary art world. Equipped with new design theories and processes, Salem began the project "Neonland," comprising of a series of iconic photographs capturing the essence of the cosmopolitan city of Jeddah.

FAISAL SAMRA

Bahraini-born Saudi national, Faisal Samra graduated from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He worked as an art and graphic design consultant for the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, and later as a stage designer for Saudi television. In 2004 he taught in the Fine Arts department of the Amman University in Jordan and obtained his first artist residency in Paris, at the Cite Internationale des Arts, in 2005, which he continues to be a part of today. After having lived and worked in Paris, New York, Beirut, and spending time in Marrakesh and the far-east, Samra describes himself as a 'nomad wandering through time.' The cultural amalgam of experiences has led to diversity in his artistic practice. He fuses elements of digital photography, painting, sculpture, video and performance as he tackles issues of visual culture

and imagery, incorporating references to historical and contemporary realities. His work denounces the visual culture systems of mass media, advertisements or political communication and is opposed to their large-scale manipulation.

RASHED AL SHASHAI

Born in Al Baha, Saudi Arabia in 1977, Rashed Al Shashai holds a Master of Visual Arts degree and is a prominent figure of the contemporary Saudi art scene. As a conceptual artist and arts educator, Al Shashai had an influential effect on a new generation of Saudi talent while also nurturing local artistic practices as a founding member of the Saudi Arabia Fine Arts society and the Art Education Society.

SHAWEESH BEY

Currently lives and works in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He is an independent Saudi artist associated with Gharem Studio. He works primarily with mixed media, mainly focusing on satire in the Middle East by blending historical figures and events with modern urban culture. He is currently working on a research project based on Saudi traditions and their interactions with Western pop-culture. He is Art Director and Creative Director of Telfaz11, a media collective based in Saudi Arabia.

Exhibitions he participated include: *Unity* (2015), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia *The Meeting Place* (2014) at the Fotofest Biennale, Houston, *RHIZOMA (Generation in Waiting)*, at the Venice Biennial (2013), *Young Collectors Auction* (2013), Dubai, UAE, *A Line in the Sand*, (2013) Dubai, UAE, *Create & Inspire*, (2013) London, UK, *Jeddah Art Week*, (2013)

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, *Come Together*, (2012) London, UK

DHAFAER AL SHEHRI

Young Saudi street photographer Dhafer Al Shehri lives and works in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and has won numerous international photography prizes for his ability to capture innovative designs within Saudi's diversified socio-economic fabric. Dhafer's keen eye for composition and social commentary, and in particular his depiction of traditional subjects in modern contexts, are the trademarks of his work, which bears witness to the transition of Saudi society from the old to the new.

TELFAZ 11

Telfaz11 is the first Arabic online video network based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, aimed at supporting creative culture in the region. It strives to help its society realize its creative potential through a dedicated online viewing platform. Telfaz11's online content has over 140 million views and over 1 million subscribers on YouTube.



ABOUT ^W GONZO GALLERY



The Gonzo Gallery in downtown Aspen presents and celebrates artwork by Hunter S. Thompson, Ralph Steadman, Tom Benton and William Burroughs as well as local and international contemporary artists, with a special focus on printmaking. The gallery's founder and curator, DJ Watkins, first became involved with Gonzo art through his interest in the activist art of Tom Benton. He wrote a book on Benton, *Thomas W. Benton: Artist/Activist*, which won the Colorado Book award, and he went on to start the Gonzo Gallery as interest in Tom Benton's work grew.

While running the gallery, he came across original material from Hunter Thompson's 1970 campaign for sheriff of Pitkin County. Fascinated by this overlooked part of Thompson's life, he put together his second book, *Freak Power: Hunter S. Thompson's Campaign for Sheriff*. Watkins also created a 100 piece museum show entitled, *Freak Power*, which premiered in the Gonzo Gallery during the summer of 2015. Through Liberty Salons, curated exhibits, and workshops, the Gonzo Gallery seeks to continue a creative intellectual dialogue with the local and international community.

www.gonzogallery.com

Thompson for Sheriff
Thomas Benton
1970
Campaign Poster
Screenprint



ABOUT CULTURUNNERS

★ CULTURUNNERS

CULTURUNNERS is an independent production studio which empowers and mobilizes artists across international borders. Through curatorial, media and educational production, CULTURUNNERS prioritizes direct encounters and storytelling, trusting in the power of art to inspire empathy and uncover counter narratives across the world.

CULTURUNNERS' first major project is a multiyear grassroots artists' road trip crisscrossing between the Middle East and the United States. In September of 2014, CULTURUNNERS set out in a 34ft 1999 Gulf Stream RV from The Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas on a mission to connect artists and communities between the two regions. To date, CULTURUNNERS has traveled over 15,000 miles, teaming up with over 50 artists in 25 states across America; along the way, CULTURUNNERS has produced events at Louisiana State University, the Middle East Institute, the United Nations Headquarters in New York, The Armory Show, Columbia University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, San Diego Art Institute, New Mexico State University, The Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute, The National Civil Rights Museum and now at The Station Museum in Houston, Texas.

www.culturunners.com



ABOUT GHAREM STUDIO



GHAREM STUDIO

Gharem Studio is a non-profit arts organisation dedicated to encouraging individual thought and self-expression with artists across the Muslim world. Founded in 2010, the studio offers residencies within a purpose built studio in Riyadh, as well as art education, career guidance, resources, equipment, promotion and opportunities for exhibitions both in the Middle East and the rest of the world. To date, the studio has staged exhibitions at the US ambassador's residence in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as well as working closely with the British Council on a series of workshops with Professor David Rayson, Head of Painting at the Royal College of Art, London.

Artist Abdunnasser Gharem moved to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 2013 in an attempt to broaden his professional resources and established Gharem Studio in the process. Due to the lack of proper studios for artists in the city of Riyadh, Gharem Studio began as a working space for Abdunnasser. The space attracted fellow artists, photographers and creative minds, who proved to be the first wave of a new Saudi art initiative.





ABOUT THE OPEN MIND PROJECT



The Open Mind Project seeks to shed light on the power and influence that religious, cultural and fundamental narratives have on human psychology, society, and environment. We provide educational resources, including an online database of belief systems (the Faith Portal).* We promote a broadened worldview that reinforces our identity as one human race, transcending the stories that often divide us. We connect people from different backgrounds, seeking more beneficial narratives to assist in our progression toward sustainability and equitable civilization.

Divisions between people of different backgrounds and beliefs are growing, with modern technology encouraging people to tune into websites and news networks that offer biased or one-sided information that reinforces what they already believe, starving them of alternative points of view. They are not given tools to compassionately relate to people who see the world differently from themselves. This leads to conflict, oppression, and ineffectiveness. The United States Congress, paralyzed by their partisanship, is one obvious example. Effective democracy depends on an informed population that can effectively dialogue with each other, despite their differences. Fractious relations exist between both people of differing faiths, and between religious, atheist, and scientific communities. The Open Mind Project is a bridge between these groups, bringing together people of different backgrounds, offering contextual education, providing tools for compassionate, and self-reflective communication.

Andrew Scott, Founder, Open Mind Project

www.openmindproject.com

Detail from
Grand Mosque,
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
1 Shawwal 1434 AH
8 August 2013
Dhafer Al Shehri



CONZO
GALLERY



FF

★ CULTURUNNERS

↑
GHAREM
STUDIO

○
Open
Mind
Project