

M o M R t A

MUSEUM OF MANUFACTURED RESPONSE TO ABSENCE

Intervention at the Museum of Modern Art, Kuwait

Under the patronage of the National Council for Culture, Arts,
and Letters, State of Kuwait

May 22 - June 11, 2012

Kamel Abu Yahya, Mohamed Abusal, May Batt, Pieke Bergmans,
Bilal Chrif, Cevdet Erek, Bruno Fantoni, Khalid Al Harban,
Mohssin Harraki, Zyad Hilai, Raed Ibrahim, Hakim Jamain,
Bengü Karaduman, Rebecca Joselyn, Katharine Morling, Paul
Riboldi, Amin Tbakhi, George Vlosich, Khadijeh Yosef, and
Nabeel Younis.

Curated by Ala Younis

MinRASY PROJECTS





A RULER
BUICK
HISTORY
DRESS
GATHERING
HAWALLI
CELEBRATION
HOME
MEMORY
RETURN
OLIVE
NECKLACE
RECORD
SOAP
LIGHTBULB
TOUZ
CONDITIONS
AL ARABI
ABSENCE
FILS
ARRIVAL
CACAO
HOMELESS
MUSEUM
COPY
TROPHY
PATCH
YALAZRAG

Historically, the State of Kuwait was exceptionally receptive to large waves of Palestinian immigration due to its support for the Pan-Arab movement and its adoption of the Palestinian cause. Palestinians first arrived in Kuwait as visitors involved in educational missions around the time that oil was discovered in the Burgan Field in 1938. As a result of the 1948 and 1967 wars, more Palestinians settled there, and by 1990 Palestinians in Kuwait numbered 400,000. As Kuwait's development plans were set into motion, Palestinians found themselves players in the golden era of the construction of the Kuwaiti nation. Prior to the age of armed struggle, Palestinians in Kuwait strove to persist in an environment striding steadily towards progress and change while expectantly awaiting the materialization of a state of their own.

The **Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence (MoMRtA)** questions the impact of the presence or absence of minority communities and subcultures on the nations they take residence in. In specific, MoMRtA investigates the unchronicled impact of the unique Palestinian society that emerged in Kuwait, one that contributed to and lived the modernization of Kuwait and the pioneering projects undertaken in this vein. Its exploration is conducted through a collection of twenty-eight commissioned objects that purposefully conjure the fading of, and thereby recall, the golden era of Kuwaiti and Palestinian-Kuwaiti society. In light of the lack of collective images, narratives, and archives, memory is taken as the main point of reference for the museum's objects. Fragile and fragmented, this is a memory that has been accumulated, dismantled, reassembled, and at times lost. The museum's objects conflate pieces from this recollected past in order to recognize and make sense of the present, an act that bestows them with an appearance of being at once real, impossible and unreal, and that addresses, imagines and reclaims the story and legacy of Palestinians in Kuwait.

The collection is an independent authority that poses questions on who possesses the right to produce a museum like itself. It is a collection of objects similar to those required by any museum, inextricably and uniquely linked to the existence of Palestinians in Kuwait as much as to the universal, collective, personal, and arguable nature of all museo-artifacts. There are no real images or archives in this museum as all of its objects are in actuality fabricated. The museum employs crafts, art, and memory to build an exhibition project that is presented as an intervention at the Museum of Modern Art in Kuwait in 2012, under the patronage of the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Literature, Kuwait.

The museum's collection proposes a specific narrative for the social history of Palestinians in Kuwait. Its objects fall somewhere between fragile selective nature of memory, and the inaccurate, thus impossible translation, or retranslation of memory into objects. They are too elaborate to be contained but also potentially impossible to use.

The museum project attempts to free its objects from the confines of a specific structure or site for permanent display, favoring the rotation of its collection in exhibitions hosted by other museums and spaces both inside and outside of Kuwait. The place and time of an encounter with the museum's collection continuously change thus local audiences who can't access it in a permanent, periodic, or fixed way. Instead, a multiplicity of audiences eventually becomes familiar with the museum's collection through its travels and in its varied forms of display. Its first exhibition, however, undoubtedly had to take place in Kuwait.

One of the major challenges in inviting artists to take part in it was the lack of documents and accessible information. This then became the method to explain this history for the commissioned work, while at the same time explaining the museum's specific conditions: The collection in its whole, is a museum documenting Palestinians in Kuwait. The objects contained are of a collective community. The objects root themselves in a source of history of concerning the Palestinians in Kuwait, whose population decreased drastically in 1990. All objects appear brand new and museum specs observed. Objects should be produced for MoMRtA, from conception to display; therefore they will have no presence as they appear, prior to the first installation of MoMRtA. An element within them verges on the impossible or unimaginable. In the absence of documentation, memory became the document.

Each fabricated object from this nomadic museum's collection lies somewhere along a timeline that connects two points derived from Palestinian history. The appearance and material makeup of these objects are without a doubt linked to this period. Gold is a formative material and not just an encasing in **Ruler** (Cevdet Ereğ), which takes the shape of a golden time line that begins and ends with two Palestinian calamities: 1948 and 1990.

Necklace (Muhannad Abboud) is also carved in gold and reads 'We are all for Kuwait, and Kuwait is for us', a famous contractual phrase pronounced by the Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah and reiterated throughout the age of the **Ruler** by nationals. It is impossible to don this necklace; its chains are two stiff, parallel cylinders that refuse to bend in order to connect the links.

The objects in this exhibition are produced from the margins of an existence of which they are an integral element. The viewer must look closely at the decorative details of **Dress** (Raed Ibrahim) to see how its usual Kuwaiti patterns have been replaced with designs from traditional Palestinian cross stitch. The neck opening of this Palestinian/Kuwaiti dress has also been considerably shrunk so much so that it becomes impossible to wear and leaves one only with the possibilities of remaining outside or lying beneath its cover.

Today, Palestinians also reside outside of the history book of Kuwait rather than in its midst. The pages of the history book of Palestinians in Kuwait are blank and fading. Their unrecorded history is in the process of dissolving and so too its blank book within the pool of undocumented events in **History** (Mohssin Harraki). The elements of time wear away at the work while the production of other books that might give proof for or refute the existence of Palestinians in Kuwait continues to be deferred. The museum then embodies another direction, a first-time display, a proposal, a critique of a reading or chronicling of events in a certain light, a document for an unrecorded narrative that slips further and further into oblivion.

The disappearance of this history is not unlike the inevitable vanishing of traces inherent in the fragile surface of **Memory** (Min Rasy). Formed from Kuwait's dust, any impressions left behind shift and change at the slightest touch. Memory dares to willingly acknowledge and enable the impossibility of the fixing of a memory of a place. Images that affirm the existence of Palestinians in Kuwait necessitate memory, narrative, and personal archives. One can piece together the parts of the story through the interpretation of the museum's objects in whatever order one might choose. A box of **Cocoa** (Kamel Abu Yahya) boasts pictures of Kuwait, but on close inspection these images are not an accurate depiction of Kuwait. Imagination, it seems, is what is added to a story so that images become a translation of its words.

A section from the heart of the local currency, the **Fils** (Mesrop), is cut out and sent to Palestine. Five percent of salaries were given by Palestinians in Kuwait to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as support, with other amounts donated to maintain varied projects for the sustainable development of Palestine, for the building of the nation and the human development of the people. These percentages and donations were in addition to all that was spent in the local milieu of Kuwait on living needs. The Kuwaiti *Fils* is in some way also a Palestinian *qursh*. And while many Palestinians in Kuwait did not live meagerly or minimally, the Kuwaiti government itself was generous in its spending on ambitious Palestinian projects that grew from initiatives within it. Unions of students, workers, farmers, athletes, women, family care, and a range of political parties (until 1990), the PLO, and various committees were formed by Kuwaitis for Palestine and the Palestinian people. Year after year Kuwait supported Palestinian athletic teams that played for fourteen clubs, each of which was named after a Palestinian city. In the map **Hawalli** (Mohammad Abusal), indicated lines of movement emphasize the circulation embodied by projects, facilities, housing developments, and schools in the area of Hawalli, the once heavily Palestinian populated area in Kuwait. These lines emerge from Hawalli to connect with other areas in Kuwait ... and then extend to link with projects outside of Kuwait from schools, universities, and mosques in Palestine to refugee camps, houses, and educational projects in Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt and even as far as international

sporting events such as the 1984 Olympics in California. The work **Yalazrag** (Khalid Al Harban) references the five minutes that daily preceded the 8am news segment on the local Kuwait radio station of the Palestinian league games that were played out in Kuwait's stadiums. The fourteen Palestinian clubs competed in various athletic in Kuwait, and the results of these games were announced in local newspapers side by side with the results of the Kuwaiti league and other local competitions.

During the production of this project, reincarnations of the stories of Palestinians in Kuwait became apparent. The stories, tools, gifts, fears, occasions for joy and for sadness, heroes, worries, and circumstances of a generation reappear in time and are shared and relived by another generation. Each time I spoke to Rana (Sadik), she would finish the story I am telling without any of us specifying about who it was to begin with. The story starts with the first sentence that appears in the notebook **Copy** (Bilal Chrif) for elementary writing 'Hamad has a pencil'. In this museum, Hamad can be seen with a pencil, accompanied by fellow student, Humus, carrying a pen, in three drawings printed on 35mm transparencies installed in slide viewers. Between 1967 and 1976, many of Kuwait's public hosted evening shifts for large numbers of Palestinian students who had arrived in Kuwait following the 'Naksa', the defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war. In the school grounds of 'Abdallah Al Salem School' annual celebrations commemorating the establishment of the PLO were held. No doubt that Hamad and Humus' comradery dates back to when they shared a classroom bench at school. At that time, Hamad and Humus might have also read and collected issues of the magazine **Al Arabi** (Min RASY, Uwe Wruck and Nabeel Younis), the only magazine that managed to feature topics that were suitable for publishing in all Arab countries, overcoming material and news obstacles and fulfilling the promise of Arab unity that transgresses the temporality of borders and regimes. The special edition of this magazine, published in the form of a light box rather than in print, announces the news of the completion of a bridge that connects Failakah to Kuwait City, resuming travel between the two that had been halted since 1990.

Within the collection, **Museum** (Nabeel Younis) is the museum's architectural model, made from Lego bricks, which we know from the Al Arabi magazine is situated on Failakah Island. Failakah received the first wave of Palestinian educators to arrive in Kuwait in the 1930s. Once again, proximity, separation, chance encounters, the provocation of memory, and exalted recollection are apparent **Buick** (Bruno Fantoni), a mirror carved from marble and engraved with the commonly present warning: 'Objects in mirror are closer than they appear', distracting the vision of the user. The farewell phrase of Kuwaitis, Don't Forget Us, pleadingly warns those departing from forgetting them. This single phrase, etched onto **Soap** (Amin Tbakhi), is inherently threatened by dissolution in new instances of use. In the collection also is another

object that intentionally disintegrates in space and time of the exhibition. It is a giant orange cake, **Celebration** (Zyad Hilal), that brings to mind images of celebrations of lives, births, graduations, marriages, celebrations by people. In **Gathering** (Paul Ribolotti), miniature wax figurines feast on a bread bun. The entomology box **Olive** (Katharine Morling), on the other hand, contains samples of olives, like those that would have reached Kuwait. Also included is a real-size reproduction of an oil tank presented as a **Trophy** (Rebecca Joselyn, created from sterling silver and bearing English silver hallmarks. The collection of stamps entitled **Arrival** (Bilal Chrif / Bengü Karaduman) portray various transport vehicles, many of which were used by Palestinians to either legally or illegally enter Kuwait. The most well known of the pictured vehicles is the water tanker that is a central character in Ghassan Kanafani's novel *Men in the Sun*. The aesthetics of the stamp's drawings are inspired by elements from Palestinian art that boomed from the seventies until the early nineties.

The environment of Kuwait forms the backdrop for the museum's collection among which is a sandglobe. Museum visitors may view this as an interactive element, shaking the globe to see the sand rustle around. Atari was popular during this period in Kuwait's history and very much an integral part and reflection of the technological particularities and living **conditions** (Khadijeh Yosef) afforded by inhabitants. "Yatna Bug'at el Zait" (the oil spill is approaching) is one of the songs that overtook the country to raise awareness among locals in a humorous fashion of the possible incoming threat. Hanging from the ceiling of the museum is an electrically charged glass lighting fixture in the shape of an oil drop that becomes a **Lightbulb** (Pieke Bergmans).

Questions continue to circulate among those who experience the impact of the museum's age pertaining to responsibility, outcomes, accomplishments, and recognition. This museum's collection does not question if Palestinians in fact had **No Home** in Kuwait but rather asks if this home in Kuwait was formed and connected to the memory of entire generations before it was connected to their destinies. An updated version of Zakaria Tamer and Muheiddine El Labbad's story revisits the shapes and types of houses that appeared in Kuwait during the era of the golden ruler. Architectural plans of houses, almost identical to those inhabited by Palestinians and others, are etched out in the work **Home** (George Vlosich) using the game Etch-a-Sketch, encased in its famous red frame. And while the keys to doors, closets, and cars owned by these houses' inhabitants are recreated in a large size from transparent acrylic, the key of return, of possessions in Palestine, is bestowed with another impossibility in the collection **Return** (Hakim Jamain). The key to return is a button on a keyboard that functions to follow a period by beginning on a new line each time.

May 2012

MUSEUM TEAM

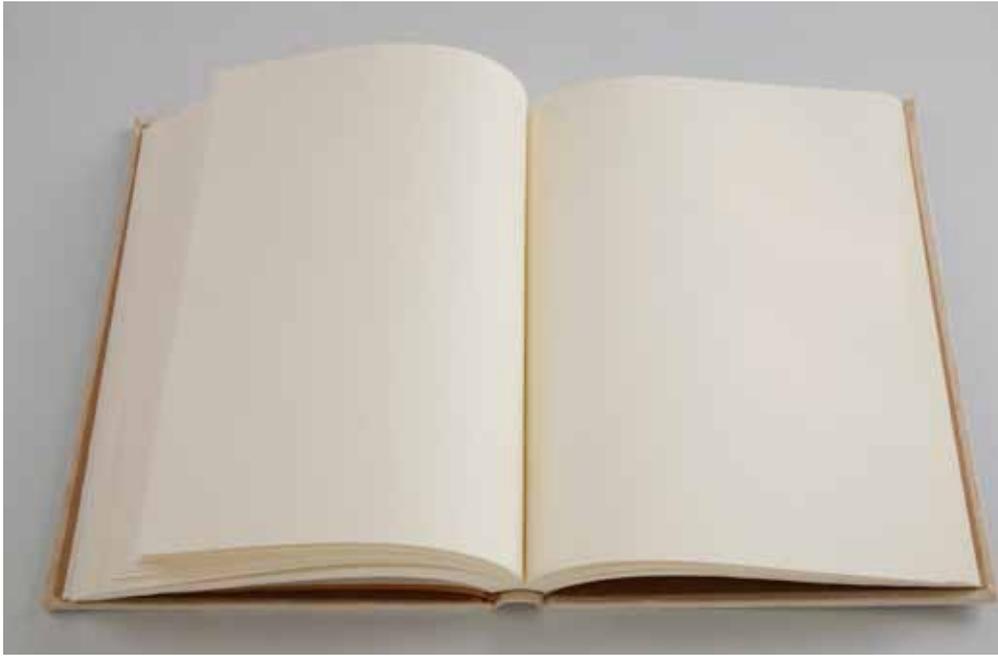
Muhannad Abboud, goldsmith, lives in Amman
Kamel Abu Yahya, designer, born in 1986, lives in Amman
Mohamed Abusal, artist, born in 1976, lives in Gaza
May Batt, designer, lives in Amman
Pieke Bergmans, designer, lives in Amsterdam
Bilal Chrif, artist, born in 1982, lives in Tetouan
Michael Dixon, glass designer, lives in Kent
Cevdet Erek, artist, born in 1974, lives in Istanbul
Bruno Fantoni, sculptor, born in 1947, lives in Florence
Khalid Al Harban, sports commentator, born in 1944, lives in Kuwait
Mohssin Harraki, artist, born in 1980, lives between Paris and Tangiers
Zyad Hilai, chef executive at Le Notre, Kuwait, born in 1969, lives in Kuwait
Raed Ibrahim, artist, born in 1971, lives in Amman
Hakim Jamain, artist, born in 1965, lives in Cairo
Rebecca Joselyn, silver designer, lives in Kent
Bengü Karaduman, artist, born in 1974, lives in Istanbul
Mesrop, goldsmith, lives in Amman
Katharine Morling, ceramist, lives in London
Paul Ribolotti, sculptor, lives in Rome
Amin Tbakhi, 3D modeling specialist, lives in Amman
George Vlosich, artist, lives in Ohio
Uwe Wruck, photographer, lives in Kuwait
Khadijeh Yosef, designer, born in 1965, lives in Beirut
Nabeel Younis, lego designer, born in 1997, lives in Kuwait

Ala Younis, artist and curator, born in Kuwait in 1974, lives in Amman. Between 2006 and 2010, Younis successively held the positions of assistant director, acting director and artistic director of Darat al Funun in Amman. In 2011, Younis curated 'Maps, Timelines, Radio Programmes' for La Galerie, Contemporary Art Center in Noisy-le-Sec (Paris), 'Out of Place' with Kasia Redzisz for the Tate Modern (London) and Darat al Funun (Amman), and 'Momentarily Learning from Mega-Events' for Makan (Amman).

Produced by MinRASY Projects
www.minrasyprojects.com



OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE
CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR



MUSEUM COLLECTION

28 objects commissioned for MoMRtA, in alphabetical order as per the objects' Arabic names.

A RULER

Cevdet Ereğ. Gold 18k, 10 x 1 x 0.2 cm

Cedvet Ereğ's ruler measures time, from 1948, the year of the Palestinian exodus, to 1990, the year of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The ruler defines the entry and exit points of the large Palestinian community that existed in Kuwait, numbering 400,000 by its dissipation in 1990.

BUICK

Bruno Fantoni. Marble, 20 x 15 x 12 cm

In an attempt to move forward, and away from the ruler, the driver will always have to look back. A cycle is established until, just like the book in the Aquarium,

at some point, the driver is no longer looking at the original starting point, something new appears and occupies his driving process. Objects in the mirror appear closer than they are, only to the driver.

HISTORY

Mohssin Harraki. Glass, water, paper, 50 x 33 x 35 cm

This object references the time that the ruler measures. There is no documentation of this measurement, and as more time passes undocumented, it erodes.

DRESS

Raed Ibrahim. Textile, embroidery, 125 x 85 cm

A hybrid of a traditional Kuwaiti dress with Palestinian cross stitch.

GATHERING

Paul Ribolotti. Wax, 4 x 3 x 1.2 cm



HAWALLI

Mohamed Abusal. Plastic, print, stitching, 50 x 50 cm
Kuwait was host and sponsor to many social, economic, cultural and religious initiatives and programs relating to the Palestinians both in Kuwait and around the globe. In the summer of 1984, a Palestinian Olympic mission participated in the Los Angeles Olympics, the budget for this was carried by the State of Kuwait.

CELEBRATION

Zyad Hilai. Cake, 60 cm diameter
Celebrating the countless stories of births, marriages, graduations, successes and joys during the years of the ruler, this cake is an object challenging time.

HOME

George Vlosich. Etch a sketch, 21 x 21 x 3 cm
Carefully drawn on the Etch-A-Sketch are floor plans

of a typical apartment in Kuwait. Just a slight shake of the Etch-A Sketch and plans must be redrawn.

MEMORY

MinRASY Projects. Concrete, dust, air condition, time, 28 x 28 x 2.5 cm
Memory is fragile. With the stroke of a finger, memory is transferred, changed, reaccumulated and forgotten.

RETURN

Hakim Jamain. Acrylic, 18 x 5 x 0.5 cm, 18 x 3 x 0.5 cm, 13 x 6 x 0.5 cm, 18 x 3 x 0.5 cm
Palestinians arrived in diaspora, Kuwait with keys of the homes they thought they would return to. However as time on the ruler progressed, incomes and lifestyle demands did too. Keys to new homes and cars in Kuwait were now the status quo. The return key to Kuwait became their preoccupation, after the



ruler ended. The return key arrow is from left to right, as used on an Arabic keyboard. Basic computer was Arabized in Kuwait by a Kuwaiti company, Sakhr.

OLIVE

Katharine Morling. Ceramic, 40 x 25 x 10 cm

Specimens of the olives that would have appeared across Kuwait. Hamad was a naturalist and collected these.

NECKLACE

Muhannad Abboud. Gold 18k, 11 x 16 x 0.15 cm

In his 1986 speech, on the occasion of Kuwait's 25th year of Independence from the British, the Amir H.E. Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah stated, 'We are for Kuwait, and Kuwait is for us.' During those same years, it was in vogue to make custom name tag necklaces. This would have been our choice in retrospect.

RECORD

MinRASY Projects. Acrylic, dimensions variable
Inspired by the fresh faced Abdullah Ruwaished in 1982 in the group Kuwait Quartet's 'Chance meeting', who sings about a chance meeting with friends while walking down Jahra street on his way to the then newly open (1982) and modern luxury goods mall, Salhiya. The montage of the music video uses mirror images, parallel images.

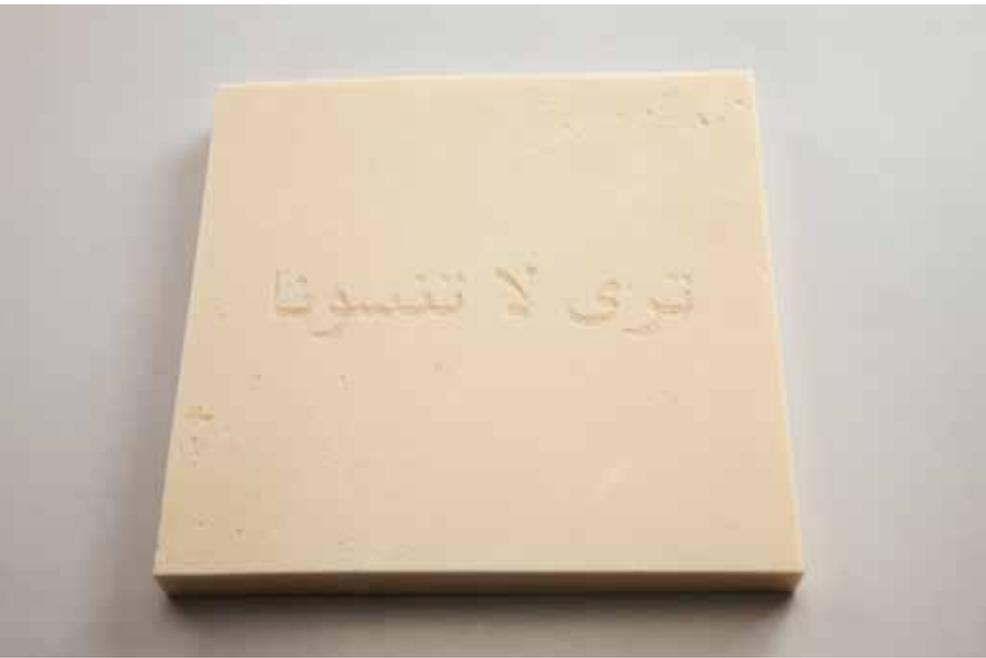
SOAP

Amin Tbakhi. soap, 28 x 28 x 2.5cm

Inscribed on an exaggerated version of the traditional olive oil soap is a Kuwaiti saying at partings, 'Don't forget us'.

LIGHTBULB

Pieke Bergmans. Glass, light, metal, 120 x 50 x 50 cm



Oil was discovered in Kuwait in 1938 at the Burgan Field. With this discovery began an influx of immigrants to participate in the national development process this fortunate discovery ushered. In 1983, an oil spill originating at the top of the Arabian Gulf from the Norwuz Oil Field, reached Kuwaiti shores. The Kuwaitis did not find this problematic, as they, affectionately, were sure the Palestinians would dip their zaattar (dried thyme and sesame) in the oil, clearing the spill.

TOUZ

Michael Dixon. Glass, sand, 20 x 27 cm

Touz, is an abrasive and harsh sandstorm, sometimes orange in color and creating low visibility. Waves of Palestinian immigrants bore these harsh conditions, during travel and settlement, to create a new life for themselves in Kuwait.

CONDITIONS

Khadijeh Yosef. Canvas, thread, 50 x 50 cm

Elements of Kuwait's landscape appear: Water Towers, Old Gate of Kuwait City, Kuwait Towers and Palm Trees. Space Invaders is one of the most popular games ever. Released to the public in the late 1970s, the aliens in the game were originally designed to be soldiers.

AL ARABI

Uwe Wruck and Nabeel Younis. Lightbox, 24x17x1cm
Al Arabi magazine was founded in 1958, an initiative by the Kuwait government (Ministry of Telecommunication) seeking to propound the ideology of Pan-Arabism. This special Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence edition, features an image of the museum, and announces a bridge to Failaka Island. Finally the museum is connected to the mainland.



ABSENCE

Michael Dixon. Glass, 30 x 14 cm
Sans-sand clock refers to the absence of time.

FILS

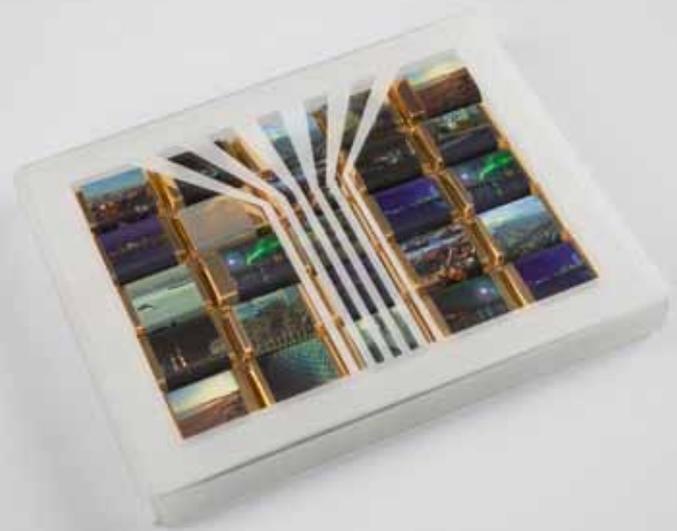
Mesrop. Gold 18k, 4 cm diameter
Few coins in modern history have a hole in the middle of it, Palestinian coins did. The Palestinian community in Kuwait sent some remittance, but spent a large portion of their income in the local economy.

ARRIVAL

Bital Chrif / Bengü Karaduman. Digital prints, 5.5x4cm
This edition of stamps commemorates the modes of travel used by Palestinians to reach Kuwait.

CACAO

Kamel Abu Yahya. Bronze, digital prints, 24x19x1.2 cm



Visits from relatives in Kuwait always came with gifts of coffee and chocolates. The images that appear on these bronze chocolates illustrate Kuwait, as imagined by relatives of those living in Kuwait.

NO HOME

MinRASY Projects. Ink on paper, 9 x 9 cm
Recreation of "Al Bait" (Home) short story, looking into the emergence of another home, in Kuwait.

MUSEUM

Nabeel Younis. Lego bricks, 40 x 35 x 35 cm
This model was built using the building designed by IM PEI, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art. IM PEI did design some buildings in Kuwait. What if he had designed the Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence on Failaka Island. Islands are fashionable venues for museums.



COPY

Bilal Chrif. Digital drawings printed to 35mm color slides, 5 x 5 cm

Hamad has a pencil. Humus has a pen. Hamad likes Humus. "Hamad has a pencil" was the first sentence elementary students would practice from the Kuwait Ministry of Education curriculum. This sentence remained unchanged through the history of the ruler. Hamad and Humus both received the same state funded education. Education in Kuwait dominated the Palestinian strive during the ruler years, whether getting it or disseminating.

TROPHY

Rebecca Joselyn. Sterling silver, 24 x 24 x 36 cm

In the years before, during and after the ruler, Palestinians carried/imported olive oil from Palestine. The English Hallmarks are a reminder that the

Palestinians starting trickling into Kuwait, because of their common colonizers, the British.

PATCH

May Batt. Embroidery, textile 15 x 11 cm

Kuwait's television test pattern preceding broadcast. Hamad and Humus were anticipating the programs.

YALAZRAG

Khalid Al Harban. Sound 40min, mp3 player

Radio and television audiences would be tuned to sports games to listen to Kuwait's prominent sports commentators, not for game descriptions, but for the distinctive style of delivering comments. Every morning on the local Kuwait Arabic radio station, an update was given on the games and results of the 14 Palestinian sports clubs in Kuwait, these clubs were funded by the State of Kuwait.





Sound installation by Tarek Atoui, conceived and produced by MinRASY PROJECTS

Unplified is a work commissioned for Kuwait. This project started in March 2011, inspired by Ghassan Kanafani's novella, *Men in The Sun*. The novella relates the story of three Palestinian men attempting to make an illegal immigration into Kuwait via Basra, by being smuggled through, inside an empty water tanker, in the late 1950s. This novella is part of Palestinian literature in Kuwaiti consciousness.

Atoui researched his work, in December 2011, by the same means that the men took. He boarded a water tanker in Kuwait and made the journey from Basra to Kuwait. Atoui's observations of the desert had been drastically different from Kanafani's description of 50 years ago. Signs of modernity had set in. Atoui's experience encompassed a desert inhabited by telecommunication antennas, factories and oil pumps, certainly more signs of life than men in the sun experienced. By closing his eyes, through sound, the desert manifested itself; an immense acoustic void where all sounds lose their spacial qualities, absorbed and not reflected. For Atoui Kanafani's characters' pleas, in the empty water tanker, would have been unplified; quietened and swallowed by the desert. Did the sound conditions in the vastness of the desert seal their fate?

Atoui builds a special audio feedback device for this work; a computer software for microphones to capture the ambient sound of a space and amplify its sonic and acoustic properties. Sounds then overlap producing distortion as though the space is playing and listening to itself at the same time.

The work is installed in two connected unairconditioned, blinding white rooms of a portacabin instated at the Museum of Modern Art, Kuwait. Room 1 is an audio and visual recording of the desert's sound amplified by Atoui's feedback system.

Room 2, which has the opposite sound qualities of the desert, the feedback system is installed, amplifying the listener's presence in this space. The listener is now navigating between the two radically different sonic experiences of room 1 and room 2; crossing the thin border that separates them from each other.

Atoui poses the question: Can human intervention amplify the desert and change its sonic quality? He parallels this with the paralysis of the Palestinian condition.

Tarek Atoui was born in Lebanon in 1980 and moved to France in 1998 where he studied sound art and electro-acoustic music. In 2006, he released his first solo album in the Mort Aux Vaches series for Staalplaat Records, and in 2008, he served as artistic director of the STEIM Studios in Amsterdam, a center for the research and development of new electronic musical instruments.

Atoui is a sound artist who initiates multidisciplinary interventions, events, concerts and workshops in Europe and the Middle East, and specializes in creating computer tools for interdisciplinary projects and youth education. He has presented work internationally including the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2010); the Ninth Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates (2009); La Maison Rouge, Paris (2010); the Mediacity Biennial, Seoul (2010), the Haus Der Kunst, Munich (2010) and Performa 11, NYC (2011).



Unplified

SOUND INSTALLATION BY TAREK ATOUI

Conceived and produced by MinRASY PROJECTS

Museum of Modern Art, Kuwait

Under the patronage of the National Council for Culture, Arts
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