

Suspended Accounts

Within the thematic framework of the 2014 Qalandiya International (QI) of "Archive", artists applying for the YAYA 2014 are requested to submit proposals for projects that will respond to the curatorial concept as set out below.

The curatorial concept focuses on the issue of artists' use of self-historisation through an archival methodology. The proposal consists in creating a long term project and a final exhibition based on the pro-active engagement of the artists and the curator: the result should be an open *laboratory* of the archive grounded on a retrospective understanding of the use of archive within contemporary art from the 1990s till nowadays as a tool for creating history. The project will have the dynamic of an archive in itself: looking back and looking forward both in its curatorial development, artistic creation and final formalisation.

The source of inspiration for this concept lies in an exhibition curated by Zdenka Badovinac at Moderna Galerija in Ljubljana in 2006, entitled *Interrupted Histories*. The exhibition presented the art projects of twenty-seven artists and groups and also offered these works as instruments for new processes in historicising art. This exhibition is an example of a *new relationship between art and its history* which consequently creates a new function of art in the way it involves searching for answers above all within spaces outside the canonised history, spaces Badovinac calls spaces of *interrupted histories* and that in this project are called *suspended accounts*.

Suspended Accounts will follow the questions addressed within the exhibition *Interrupted Histories*: *what are the implications of the absence of systematised historicisation in spaces outside the Western world or on its margins? What sort of methods are needed to accelerate the processes of such historicisation?*

The curatorial starting point itself is related to an archival curatorship approach, inspired by what Barbara Vanderlinden defined as "the laboratory

years” of curating, under which exhibitions were made explicitly referring to previous ones: *Suspended Accounts* will be a process based exhibition and project made clearly referring to the *Interrupted Histories* exhibition and expanding it thanks to the contribution of both the artists and the curator.

After passing the selection, the artists will discuss their proposals both individually with the curator and collectively with the rest of the group. Parallel to this, they will be provided with information concerning a collection of other artistic archival projects from various geo-political areas. These materials will give the selected artists a better understanding of different approaches utilised around the world to address contributions to and subsequent changes of historical construction. The curator together with the artists will explore previous examples of both exhibitions and artists’ works related to the concept of self-historisation and archival formalisation as a point of departure for the *laboratory* they are going to create.

Self-historisation is a strategy assumed by artists to manage their history in situations when the act of writing and analysing history is not being led by institutions. It is a way for the artists to assume responsibility and personally take control of narrative in their own context. The idea stands on the fact that many different narratives are continually forgotten, excluded or forbidden by those engaged in the act of writing history. Even assuming the limits of subjectivity in the act of writing and archiving history, this act can be of great relevance to re-introduce missing links of a picture that would otherwise remain fragmentary.

This process-based project will provide an opportunity to connect the local concerns present within Palestine and may bring participants to an understanding of broader international concerns. Despite the difference in specific contexts, the intention of artists creating archival work is similarly motivated. Even if the format is not overtly declared to be an archive, the concept of revising history through collecting, studying, and revisiting documents is used as a means to re-experience history.

The invitation for this YAYA 2014 open call is for the artists to become

Full Curatorial Concept

authors and observers of a narrative, an episode or a character of their choice that they would like to document and consequently share with a broader audience. This act will convert them into historians and archivists.

Possible practices could involve found material connected with personal or official (/historical) archives, ephemera or immaterial anecdotes. The artists are invited to experiment with different formats to present the documentation, found and archival material. By entering this process, they become co-producers of the discourse/ narrative they choose.

The exhibition will display the works of art in several locations around Ramallah, and at same time will be available online during the exhibition period and further on. The exhibition will in fact be structured as a laboratory, an open structure, which will invite more practitioners and the general public to add and contribute to the lab even after the exhibition will be closed.