

apexart

2013-14 Franchise Proposal by
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Franchise location: Ramallah, Palestine

SUBMISSION:

The apexart Franchise Program in Palestine will initiate a rare encounter between the conventions of television news broadcasting and experimental moving-image work by local and international artists.

Located in Ramallah, Wattan TV is the only independent broadcasting station unaffiliated with any political agencies in Palestine. The station has been shutdown five times by the Palestinian Authority and raided twice by the Israeli Military after it began broadcasting in 1996, targeted mainly for its investigative journalism and incisive talk shows. Despite having been subjected to a destructive raid in February 2012 that reduced the facility to a quarter of its capacity, the station continues to broadcast daily coverage of the latest news in politics, sports and world events.

Our exhibition takes the form of a weekly artist film program broadcast on-air and online from Wattan TV over the course of one month. The date, time and duration of the individual screenings will depend on the available slots towards the beginning or end of the regularly scheduled news program. Each segment will present an individual short film introduced by a guest anchor, artist, filmmaker or critic from the region. Wattan's general director and project collaborator, Muamar Orabi is providing additional assistance in gathering these participants. The group of international artists involved in the screening will include Simon Gush, Tamar Guimarães, Mark Lewis, Johanna Billing and Shahryar Nashat, among other Palestinian artists.

The films all share a mutual investment in narrative and cinematic conventions without the use of any spoken dialogue, voice-over or text. This will ensure a broader range of accessibility while contrasting with the parlance of news reporting. Each work will inevitably be affected by Wattan's tenuous broadcasting conditions, which have been downgraded from a modestly outfitted station to an ad-hoc production facility. These circumstances will alter their image quality as they are reframed within the station's graphics package, transmitted into thousands of homes and eventually archived on the Wattan's website. The recontextualisation of both image and content through this filtering process is central to the project, producing a secondary edition of each artist video bookended with the news items of the day in which it was broadcast.

The long-term goal of this project is to create a regularly scheduled artist film program on Palestinian television. While initially exploring the medium of TV broadcasting under precarious circumstances, it is our hope that this show will generate new conversations about the moving-image work being produced in Palestine today. We also believe this will challenge the claim that television is a dying medium by highlighting how it continues to provide a vital means of communication in this specific region. This exhibition is inspired in part by similar programs such as Screening Room with Robert Gardner, 10 vor 11 by Alexander Kluge and Stan Douglas' Television Spots and Monodramas. The production of this franchise will draw upon our previous experience organizing unconventional, artist-run film exhibitions in the US and abroad, as well as our connection with artists currently working in Palestine.