

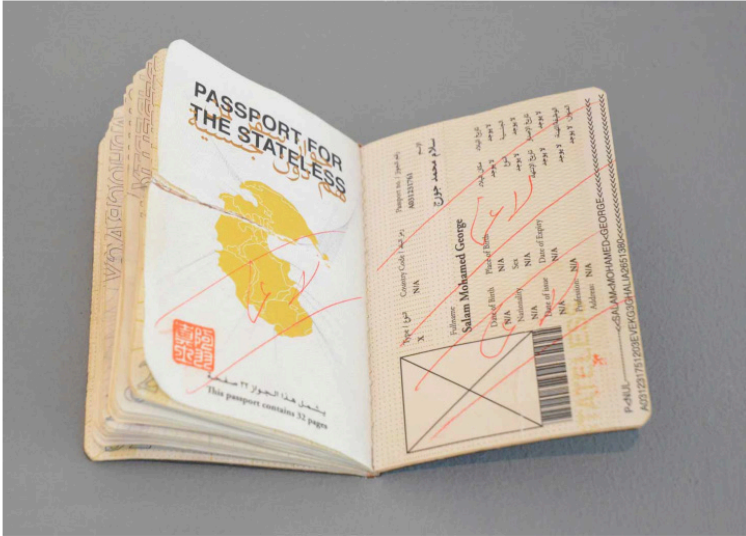
HYPERALLERGIC

EVENTS

A Guided Tour Highlights the Absence of Artists Impacted by US Middle East Policy

Middle Eastern artists who have been banned entry to the United States, or could not afford the visa application and travel costs, lend their voices to a guided tour of an exhibition dedicated to their censored and damaged works.

Hakim Bishara July 9, 2019



Ahmad Hammoud, "Passport for the Stateless" (2016) (courtesy apexart)

In 2016, Ahmad Hammoud's artwork "Passport for the Stateless" (2016) was shipped from an exhibition in Dubai back to the artist's studio in Cairo. But before it was allowed back into the country, suspicious Egyptian customs officials defaced the work with deep lines of red ballpoint pen over the booklet's and attempted to tear it in half. The customs officials did not heed to the fact that the artwork is not a real or valid travel document.

Occupational Hazards is an exhibition dedicated to artworks that have been lost, damaged or destroyed when shipped throughout the Middle East. The project addresses how and why artworks become subject to overzealous vetting systems — whether by deliberate force or through passive negligence — and in some cases, how artists are able to reclaim agency despite these circumstances.

Curated by Cairo-based, Swiss-American Alexandra Stock, the exhibition features works by artists hailing from Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Kuwait, Palestine, and Tunisia, as well as other artists with works marked by travels through the Middle East/North Africa region.

In a collaboration with [ArteEast](#), apexart will hold a "Guided Tour by the Artists in Their Absence." While their works are in the exhibition, for many of the artists, travel to the United States is severely challenged or prohibited — whether by cost, visa regulations, or current travel bans. In the guided tour, artists tell the stories behind their works and experiences and challenges of artists working in the Middle East today, in their own words.

Audio tours contributions by William Andersen (United States/Kuwait), Mohamed Ben Soltane (Tunisia), Aissa Deebe (Palestine/Switzerland), Ahmad Hammoud (Egypt), Shuruq Harb (Palestine), Alexandra Stock (Egypt), and Negar Tahsili (Iran). A reception will follow the tour.

When: Thursday, July 11, 6:30-7:30pm

Where: apexart (291 Church Street, New York, NY)

More info at apexart.org.

<https://hyperallergic.com/508332/a-guided-tour-highlights-the-absence-of-artists-impacted-by-us-middle-east-policy/>