



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

12/28/2021

Contact:

Heshan Berents-Weeramuni

heshan@bostonarts.org

617-417-5574

Chloe Conceicao

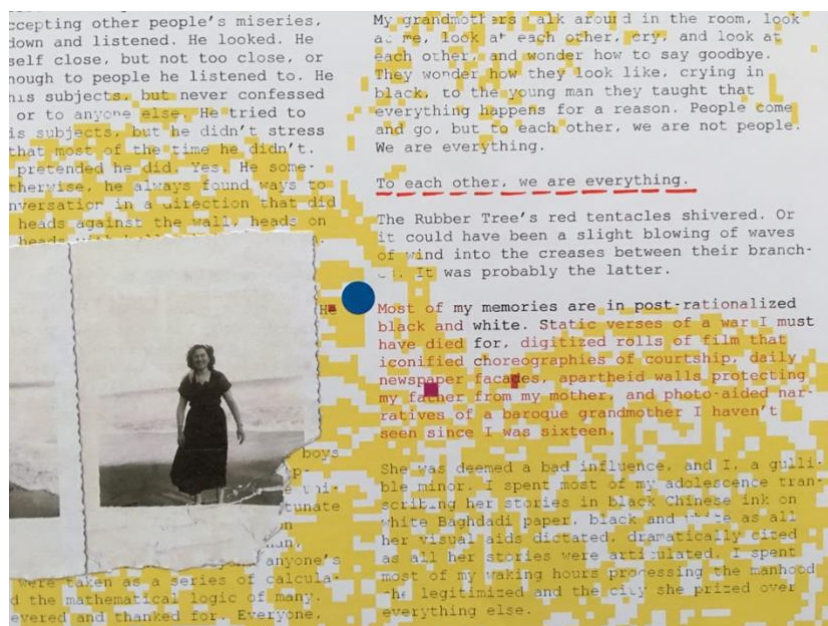
chloe@bostonarts.org

617-426-2750

Julia Ruiz Borys

julia@bostonarts.org

617-426-5002



Detail of The Khan Hotel wallpaper in Brussels.

Raafat Majzoub: GROUNDS is an invitation to reconsider truth as multiple. To change. To engage. And to share. It presents grounds for the validity of our collective fictions and creates new grounds for shared realities to come.

Curated by Artemis Akchoti Shahbazi at the Mills Gallery, Boston Center for the Arts

Exhibition Dates: 01/15—02/20/2022

Exhibition Opening & Curatorial Walkthrough: 01/21/2022, 6–9 pm

Artist Talk: TBA

In the new exhibition **Raafat Majzoub: GROUNDS**, on view at Boston Center for the Arts’ Mills Gallery from January 15–February 20, 2022, Lebanon-based artist Raafat Majzoub invites viewers into a site of action and exhibition. Majzoub’s work spans a decade of public,



539 Tremont Street, Boston MA 02116

bostonarts.org

[@boscenterarts](https://www.instagram.com/boscenterarts)

interactive projects focused on speculating another Arab world through fiction in filmic, radio, performative, sculptural and textual installations. Since 2012, Majzoub has been writing an experimental and ongoing novel titled [*The Perfumed Garden: An Autobiography of Another Arab World*](#). Published in pieces in Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Belgium, Italy, Latvia, Russia and the USA, the novel is an act of claiming grounds and agency in defiance of an increasingly homogenizing and bordered world.

GROUNDS brings together a variety of Majzoub's excerpts to weave a conversation about intimacy and collaboration, and inspire a meditation on collective futures with exhibition visitors. It presents grounds for the validity of the artist's fiction, and creates new grounds for shared realities to come.

For the duration of the show, the Mills Gallery is transformed into an interactive space, inviting visitors to add their narrative to the work and expand the grounds of Majzoub's *Perfumed Garden*. **GROUND**S can be seen as a living book chapter where the gallery, the visitors, and the artworks act as invitations to visitor participation in writing the novel. The exhibition objects will be integrated in Majzoub's ongoing research on building worlds that fit the love and dreams of their people.

[**Raafat Majzoub: GROUND**S](#) is the third exhibition in BCA's *1:1 Curatorial Initiative*. The [*1:1 Curatorial Initiative*](#) in the Mills Gallery at Boston Center for the Arts is a series of collaborative projects between one curator and one artist, launched in September 2021. Each exhibition in this series presents a collaborative project between one curator and one artist, and either introduces a new artist or highlights a new aspect of a more experienced artist.

GROUNDS is on view at the Mills Gallery, Boston Center for the Arts, 551 Tremont Street, Boston from January 15 to February 20, Wednesdays through Saturdays from 1pm—6pm. Admission is free for the duration of the exhibition and for the related programming.

Quote from the artist Raafat Majzoub

"I'm critical of how we use the terms reality and fiction. I do not see them as opposites. Reality is a form of fiction that has been activated by power structures that benefit from it. Power structures decide what you think is real. My work in fiction is positioned in this reality-making process. I am not only interested in the imagination, but also in the reification of alternate possibilities. Writing becomes a form of architecture. And fiction can be seen as a tool for collective worldmaking that is intimate, speculative and political."



“...I like the idea of interruptions. When you insert something... be it an object or a story... in a public space that doesn't necessarily fit, you invite people to go outside the rules of that space, and engage with new stories. Interruptions are windows to other possibilities. I'm curious about how these interruptions compete with agreed upon "reality" and how they can influence them. What happens when someone proposes an idea? What happens when more people subscribe to it? How can communities challenge stories imposed on them? I find all of this very exciting.”

Quote from curator Artemis Akchoti Shahbazi:

“When there is inclusion of what is happening now, almost automatically, the past is always included and simultaneously the future opens up, moment by moment. This has a major impact on my artistic practice because it determines if I am present and open to what I am creating.”

About artist Raafat Majzoub (he/him):

Raafat Majzoub is a Lebanese architect, artist, writer, director of The Khan: The Arab Association for Prototyping Cultural Practices, editor-in-chief of the Architecture Series at Dongola, and lecturer in the Architecture and Design Department at the American University of Beirut. He is the co-editor of *Design to Live: Everyday Inventions from a Refugee Camp* (MIT Press, 2021) and *What are Borders?* (AUB, 2021). He has presented papers and artist lectures focused on worldbuilding and speculative fiction in the Beirut Art Center, École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, and Kaaitheater in Brussels. His public art installations have been exhibited in Beirut, Cairo, Jerusalem, Amman, Brussels, and Cambridge, and he participated in the NSK Pavilion in the 57th Venice Biennale, Drodsera XXXVII Supercontinent, and the Nature public program in Brussels.

E-mail: raafat@the-khan.org

Personal website: www.raafatmajzoub.com

Social media: [@RaafatMajzoub](https://twitter.com/RaafatMajzoub) | [@thekhanorg](https://www.thekhan.org)

Writings: [A Lover's Discourse: Fictions \(MIT, 2017\)](#), [Scripting Stars \(Perpetual postponement, 2020\)](#), [Writing as Architecture \(antiAtlas, 2017\)](#)

About curator Artemis Akchoti Shahbazi (she/her)

Artemis Akchoti Shahbazi, an Iranian-born Swiss curator and artist, is the founder of 'The Impermanence Platform', an art and research platform which, through interviews, exhibitions, and projects, seeks insights into the artist's process of creation. "The Matrix of Human Identity" is her investigation into the untold or unseen stories and longings that collectively make our reality. She is the curator, together with Daniela Veneri, of 'Identities in Movement' for Rondó Pilot, and she designed and taught undergrad students 'Ways of seeing Iran and the Arab world,' in which students were asked to alter their gazes; to look at these worlds through the eyes of



contemporary artists. Her visual art projects explore the confluences of history, mythology, and culture.

Website: www.artemisakchoti.com

Social media: [Youtube Channel](#)

About Boston Center for the Arts:

[Boston Center for the Arts \(BCA\)](#) supports working artists to create, perform, and exhibit new works; develops new audiences; and connects the arts to community, and has for over five decades engaged the creative community for public good. While the organization's physical residence is in the historic South End, BCA touches every part of Boston's cultural ecosystem. A leading force in the city's cultural community, BCA has supported thousands of individual artists, small organizations and performing arts companies, who add depth and dimension to the Boston arts ethos. Through residencies and programming, BCA serves as an epicenter for an expanding cohort of artists working across all disciplines, and has catalyzed careers by providing fertile ground for experimentation and artistic risk-taking.

More information:

- [Press Release Images & Photos for GROUNDS](#)
- [GROUNDS upcoming event page.](#)
- [Everything—in your love—Becomes Easy \(video\)](#): with Abdulkader Mekkawi, Mahmoud Abu Lokmeh, 'Abu Khodr' & Tarek Majzoub, documents a project that invites a group of people to learn from, and produces a public landscape to host this learning process.

###

