



EAST LONDON WELCOMES CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS FROM THE EDGE OF ARABIA

#COMETOGETHER marks a milestone return to London for the pioneering Middle East arts initiative, Edge of Arabia.

After four years building Saudi Arabia's first independent platform for contemporary art, and reaching out to new audiences across Europe and the Middle East, Edge of Arabia presents a groundbreaking exhibition of Arab and Islamic World artists in the heart of creative, multicultural East London. The exhibition is held in a 2000 square metre warehouse situated on Brick Lane from 7th-28th October 2012.

#COMETOGETHER features over 25 established and emerging artists that go beyond the periphery of the Gulf to Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen, including **Farhad Ahrarnia, Sarah Al Abdali, Manal Al Dowayan, Khalid Al Gharaballi, Fatima Al Qadiri, Salwa Aleryani, Musaed Alhulis, Hala Ali, Sama Alshaibi, Mohammed Alshehri, Ahmad Angawi, Kader Attia, Fayçal Baghriche, Muzamil Choudhury, Mohamed El Mahdaoui, Mounir Fatmi, Sirine Fattouh, Simohammed Fettaka, Abdunnasser Gharem, Babak Golkar, Hassan Hajjaj, Chourouk Hriech, Mouna Karray, Yazan Khalili, Maha Malluh, Ahmed Mater, Larissa Sansour, Lantian Xie, and Ayman Yossri Daydban.**

Stephen Stapleton, Founder and Director of Edge of Arabia, comments, *"In bringing these artists together at this time, we want to explore the frontiers of ideology and technology that are shaping the contemporary borderland between East and West. #COMETOGETHER presents glimpses of a worldview that is incredibly connected, with artists drawing from a myriad of influences across religion, history and geographies. By hosting the exhibition in the Olympic borough of Tower Hamlets, we aim to inspire a conversation between the diverse communities of East London and these extraordinary and inspiring artistic voices from the Middle East."*

#COMETOGETHER is a deliberate reference to social networking channels, which have transformed the nature and power of individual voices and expression in the Arab World in recent years. The exhibition incorporates raw film footage, live internet-based installations, a library and platforms for performance and interventions, reflecting the unconventional contemporary art language being embraced by the new generation in the Arab world.

The exhibition is accompanied by an **education programme** including workshops, topical discussions, film screenings, and guided exhibition tours. The programme is aimed at engaging the local community and developed in partnership with the Crossway Foundation, and Morocco-based Dar al-Ma'mûn Foundation, as well as local organisations including the Mile End Community Project, and Future Shorts. The majority of the programme's activities happen at and through a dedicated Education Room within the exhibition. The Education Room has the form of a tent, which in itself is an artwork conceived by artist Ayman Yossri Daydban and will be open for the duration of the exhibition.

#COMETOGETHER

Old Truman Brewery, 81 Brick Lane, London, E1 6QL

Open to the public: 7th-28th October 2012; every day 11am-6pm | Thurs 11am-9pm

Press View: Friday, 5th October | 10am-12am // Private View: Saturday 6th October | from 6pm

Education Day: Thurs, 11th October | 10am-8pm

Admission free // www.edgeofarabia.com

For all press enquiries please contact: Klara M. Piza, press@edgeofarabia.com or +44 7838 505 654



NOTES TO EDITORS

EDGE OF ARABIA

Edge of Arabia is an independent arts initiative developing the appreciation of contemporary Middle Eastern art and culture with a particular focus on Saudi Arabia. As a social enterprise Edge of Arabia is committed to reaching new audiences and improving understanding through touring, non-commercial & free exhibitions, through publications, and through education programs. Following its launch in London in 2008, this grassroots initiative has travelled to Riyadh, Berlin, Istanbul, Dubai, twice to the Venice Biennale, and most recently Jeddah, where it presented the largest ever exhibition of contemporary art in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In late October 2012, Edge of Arabia, EOA.Projects and The Crossway Foundation will open its new London headquarters, education centre and gallery space at 33 Parkgate Road, Battersea. www.edgeofarabia.com

EXHIBITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ahmed Al Omran (Saudi blogger and multimedia journalist), Ibrahim Badawood (CEO, Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives), Nurull Islam (Co-Founder, Mile End Community Project), Rabina Khan (Cabinet Member for Housing, Olympic Borough of Tower Hamlets), Rania Khan (Cabinet Member for Culture, Olympic Borough of Tower Hamlets), Redha Moali (Founder, Dar al-Ma'mûn Foundation, Marrakech), Venetia Porter (Curator of Middle East Department, British Museum), Oliur Rahman (Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families, Olympic Borough of Tower Hamlets), Sara Raza (Editor for ArtAsiaPacific Magazine), Fabien Riggall (Founder, Secret/Future Cinema, London), Ahmed and Rashid Bin Shabib (Founders, Brownbook Magazine) and Diana Wiegiersma (Curator, Nadour Collection).

EDUCATION PARTNERS:

THE CROSSWAY FOUNDATION

The Crossway Foundation is a London-based charity delivering arts and education initiatives for young people between the UK and the Middle East. A core aim of the Foundation is to create a legacy of cultural understanding and invest in genuinely 'global citizens' of the future. The Foundation focuses on delivering the following activities: creative expeditions to and from the UK and Middle East, educational resources, residencies for artists from the Arab region and educational outreach programmes. www.crossway-foundation.org

DAR AL-MAMUN FOUNDATION

Dar al-Ma'mûn is an international center for artistic residencies located 14 km from Marrakesh in the village of Tassoultante (Ourika valley). The project emerged as a cultural platform aimed at providing support to artists and at promoting Moroccan and African cultural identity beyond borders by working towards intercultural exchange. www.dam-arts.org

FUTURE SHORTS

Future Shorts Festival is the world's biggest pop-up film festival featured in 6 continents, 65 countries and over 350 screenings worldwide. The Festival showcases the most exciting short films and filmmakers from around the world and continues to build a massive screening network and powerful community. Its parent company Future Cinema has become world renowned for re-imagining the cinema-going experience for productions including: Secret Cinema, The Other Cinema, Secret Screenings, Secret Restaurant and Secret Swimming. www.futureshorts.com

MILE END COMMUNITY PROJECT

Established in 1995, the Mile End Community Project (MCP) is a multi award winning youth innovation agency specialising in creative youth empowerment through innovation and engagement. Hoodforts, one of MCP's creative projects founded in 2010, allows young people a platform to express themselves via art and other creative mediums. In 2012, the Hoodforts project won four awards for its innovative work including the Adobe Film Awards, the Adobe Aspire Award and two awards at the limelight film awards 2012. www.hoodforts.com