

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

SHAWARE3NA

An art in public space project in Cairo and Giza

18 Jan – 23 June 2012

A partnership project presented by Mahatat for contemporary art in cooperation with the
Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute (DEDI)

ARTISTIC CONCEPT

Shaware3na is the title of Mahatat's launching project and the Arabic term for 'our streets'. The very simple and ordinary word 'street' is used by people hundredfold on a daily basis. But in combination with the personal pronoun 'our' and in the plural form a different and very symbolic meaning emerges. Foremost it indicates an affiliation: The streets belong to us. And then it wakes memories and inspires to dream. 'Our Streets' are the streets in which we meet, commute, gather, stop and look, bid farewell, and meet again. Sometimes we run errands, we head towards a certain place, and sometimes we simply stroll. 'Our streets' are part of our daily life, we have to cross them and they take us somewhere else.

For many decades the Egyptian streets did not entirely belong to the citizens. Reportedly due to security reasons people were not allowed to gather on the streets on a large scale. A couple of people sitting on a square or underneath a tree meant a threatening crowd. Cultural and artistic events on the streets were challenging. Here and there a concert in a semi-public space, but rarely on the streets, on a square, along the Nile.

But the political and social changes after the revolution of 25 January have opened new 'stages' for performers and artists: streets, squares, and other public spaces that are under esthetic and artistic transformation. Art is becoming vivid and interactive and has the potential to become an essential part of the daily life of the citizens of Egypt.

Shaware3na will take place in the streets of Cairo and around popular street institutions such as local coffee shops, famous buildings and yards, and the Cairo Metro. Those places are meeting points; they invite to gather or to move together.

Artistic performances of various media will revolve around these diverse and popular street institutions. "Shaware3na" invites all of us to get drawn into artistic performances and to participate in unique artistic encounters out of the ordinary, though always in reference to their surroundings.

Shaware3na will transform 'our streets' into art spaces that invite all citizens to express themselves, to be part of a cultural event or to simply enjoy 'their streets'.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Art of Transit

Art of Transit turns metro wagons into stages for all kinds of performers. Passengers are sent on a journey with storytellers, clowns, a pantomime, actors and musicians and can enjoy short artistic performances on their way from one station to another.

Performance Timeframe: January 20 to March 7, 2012

Participating artists: Amr Abdel Aziz (Pantomime), Aly Sobhy and Ahmed Mostafa (Red Tomato/Clowns), Hani Taher, Dina El Sayed, Maha Monieb, (Hara TV/directed by Nada Sabet, produced by Sally Sami), Mona El Shimi, Sondos Shabayek (Bussy), Sherif El Kadi (Music).

Project Manager: Astrid Thews

Cinema Sky

Cinema Sky invites entire neighborhoods to watch Egyptian short movies and video art in the streets. The aim is to both support the filmmakers by presenting their works to a larger and a new audience and to present artistic films in an unconventional setting.

Curator of Film Nights: Bahaa Talis

Curator of Video Art Nights: Yara Mekawei

Screening Locations and Dates

- March 11, 7 pm
Mounira Str, close to Midan Lazoghly, next to Bank Misr, Mounira
- March, 18, 7 pm
Alfi Str., Downtown
- March 25, 7 pm
Mesaha Square, Dokki
- April, 1, 7 pm
Gamaet El Dowal Str., btw. Batal Ahmad and Geziret El Arab Str., Mohandeseen

The film program will be available beforehand on Mahatat's website and facebook page. Printed programs will be distributed in the screening area before and during the screening.

Stop and Dance

Stop and Dance is an inter-cultural contemporary dance project. Karima Mansour (Egypt), Paulina Almeida (Portugal) and Birgitt Bodingbauer (Germany) are introducing professional and non-professional Egyptian dancers to contemporary dance and performance in public space. The outcome of this workshop will be presented in different stations of the Cairo Metro within the first two weeks of April. The group will surprise metro passengers at popular stations with short and mobile dance interventions in a flash-mob style and with an interactive approach. Egyptian dance groups will perform breakdance, capoeira and parkour in the same time frame.

Workshop dates: March 17-31, 2012

Performance timeframe: April 1 – 15, 2012

Performers: Birgitt Bodingbauer (Germany), Karima Mansour (Egypt), Paulina Almeida (Portugal) and the participants of the contemporary dance workshop. Mohamed Tiger, Gamal Bassyoni (Gemy), Nour Mohamed (Neo) and Abdelmaged Tarek (Gaed) of T.K Capoeira, Mohamed Tiger, Mohamed Sobhey, Abdullah Hussein and Khaled Mohamed (Keko) of Egy flow, Mohamed Soliman (Catogy), Sherif Hussein (DJ), Ahmed Antar (Clash), Ahmed Hanafy (Koky).

Project Manager: Mayada Said

The Tree Project

The Tree Project is a participatory art project that takes place in Dokki. The Egyptian artist Yara Mekawei and the Danish artist Nanna Guldhammer, along with Egyptian art students, will offer a workshop to the youth of a particular neighborhood in Dokki. Residents and artists will work together on artistic designs for the trees of the neighborhood. The material will range from eco-friendly paint over cloth to light and sound. The project will close with a one-day tree festival where the entire neighborhood and other pedestrians can enjoy the designed trees.

The exact festival location will be announced prior to the event on the Mahatat website, fb page and blog.

Workshop Dates: May 25 – June 8, 2012

Festival Date: June 8, 2012

Project Manager: Yara Mekawei

The Conference

Shaware3na will conclude in a two-day conference and celebration with all of those who were involved in the project. All contributing artists will be invited to share their experiences in performing in public space. Also the artists contributing to Mahatat's season 2012/2013 will be invited to join. Selected video and photo documentation of Shaware3na will be screened during the event and Egyptian and international artists will be invited to share their experiences in presentations and a joint discussion.

Conference Organizers: Astrid Thews and Mayada Said

ORGANIZER

Shaware3na is the launching project of Mahatat, a multi-cultural mobile art initiative, founded in 2011 by five individuals from different national and professional backgrounds. Triggered by the post-revolutionary spirit in Egypt, the collective arose from the passion, conviction, dedication and vision of these individuals to encourage the mobility of art in public space.

Mahatat's vision is a world where contemporary art is an essential and visible part of everyday life. In this world Art connects and makes people meet and appreciate their social, cultural and other differences. Individuals and groups explore their creativity. Art moves people and encourages individuals to take part in artistically shaping their neighborhood, their city, their country, and their world.

PARTNERS

Main Sponsor

Sponsors

Stage Manager

Partner



Shaware3na is a partnership project between Mahatat for contemporary art and the Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute who is the main sponsor. Further sponsors are the British Council and the German Embassy. All funds by the German Embassy are for the Stop and Dance workshop. The Cairo Jazz Club Agency is the stage manager of Shaware3na. In cooperation with Lichter Filmtage Frankfurt, Mahatat is presenting parts of Shaware3na in Frankfurt, Germany.

For more information on Shaware3na please contact:

Mayada Said: 0020 127 20 100 22

Astrid Thews: 0020 109 51 706 90

E-Mail: info@mahatatcollective.com

www.mahatatcollective.com

<http://mahatat-collective.tumblr.com/>

facebook: Mahatat for contemporary art

twitter: @MahatatCairo