



CALL FOR APPLICATION

TRANSLATION RESIDENCY – ENGLISH to ARABIC
Marrakech – Summer 2012

Context

Edge of Arabia and Dar al-Ma'mûn are launching a new partnership involving artist residencies and translation projects. The first steps in this collaboration are a residency at Dar al-Ma'mûn for Saudi artist Abdunasser Gharem, as well as an Arabic edition of Henry Hemming's monograph on his work, published in English by Edge of Arabia in 2011.

Edge of Arabia and Dar al-Ma'mûn invite translators working from English into Arabic, to apply for a month-long residency at Dar al-Ma'mûn in order to translate the monograph, *Abdunasser Gharem - Art of Survival*.

General conditions

Genre of the text: biography of Saudi artist Abdunasser Gharem and commentary on his work. More information at <http://edgeofarabia.com/publications/abdunasser-gharem>

Size of the text: 22,000 words

Conditions of stay: the selected translator will benefit from a return flight to Marrakech, single accommodation on site, meals included, a well-stocked and staffed library, and a US \$ 2,800 stipend.

The translator will have an opportunity to converse with both the artist and the author of the monograph during his or her residency.

The translator is expected to finish the translation by the end of his stay at Dar al-Ma'mûn, and to remain available after the residency period for revisions to the Arabic text.

Application procedure

The application should consist of:

- A curriculum vitae
- A translation into Arabic of the text below, "Flora & Fauna", excerpted from *Abdunasser Gharem – Art of Survival*
- An indication of the translator's earliest availability for a month-long residency in Marrakech, knowing that the residency should start no later than September 1st, 2012.

The applicant's CV should list publications as well as previous translation work. Previous experience in writing or translating art criticism is appreciated, though by no means required.

Applications should be sent no later than June 21st, to the following email address: edge@dam-arts.org

The successful applicant will be notified by July 1st.

Further information

Dar al-Ma'mûn is an international residency center for visual artists and literary translators located in the Ourika Valley 9 Miles from the city of Marrakech, in Morocco.

Dar al-Ma'mûn is a non-profit platform for art and knowledge production, which aims at encouraging mobility and intercultural exchange. On top of its residency programs, it offers year-round cultural programming, a free library, as well as educational activities for children and adults from the neighboring area. For more information please visit www.dam-arts.org

Edge of Arabia is an independent arts initiative developing the appreciation of contemporary Arab 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 a variety of platforms including exhibitions, publications and education programs targeting schools & universities. For more information please visit <http://edgeofarabia.com>

Abdulnasser Gharem was born in 1973 in the Saudi Arabian city of Khamis Mushait, where he continues to live and work today. In 1992 he graduated from the King Abdulaziz Academy before attending The Leader Institute in Riyadh. In 2003 he studied at the influential Al-Meftaha Arts Village in Abha. In 2004, with other Al-Meftaha artists, he staged a group exhibition, Shattah, which challenged existing modes of art practice in Saudi Arabia. Since then Gharem has exhibited in Europe, the Gulf and the USA, including at Martin Gropius-Bau and at the Venice, Sharjah & Berlin Biennales. He recently made history when his installation Message/Messenger sold for a world record price at auction in Dubai, establishing Gharem as the highest selling living Gulf artist. Gharem donated the proceeds of this sale to Edge of Arabia to foster art education in his native country.
<http://abdulnassergharem.com>

"I have no studio so my studio is where I can find people. When I see the opportunity I go. That is my way of thinking about art."

Additional information may be requested from:

<http://www.dam-arts.org> <http://edgeofarabia.com/>

Email : edge@dam-arts.org

Omar Berrada, co-director Dar Al-Ma'mûn

Mob Ma. : +212.(0)6.76.65.15.48

Mob Fr. : +33.(0)6.68.28.99.53

Miriam Lloyd-Evans, Head of Curatorial and Publishing Programme

Edge of Arabia

Mob U.K. : +44 (0) 7762 054991 / UAE Mob: +971 554647456



Sample text to translate into Arabic as part of the application

FLORA & FAUNA

Back in the 1980s the municipal authority for Abha and Khamis Mushait learnt about a drought-resistant tree called the *conocarpus erectus*. It came from Australia and had a lovely, bushy crown. Better still, it seemed to need very little water.

Abha and Khamis Mushait were popular domestic holiday destinations. The chief selling-point for this part of the country was climatic. There was more rain here than anywhere else in the country and in theory, the introduction of the *conocarpus erectus* would only add to the lush, well-watered feel of the place.

Soon after Gharem had moved to Khamis Mushait the municipal authority had thousands of *conocarpus erectus* saplings planted down the main streets. They flourished, and, as promised, their leaves remained a vibrant shade of green all year round. But as the *conocarpus erectus* reached maturity a strange thing happened. Nearby cottonwoods, willows and other indigenous trees started to die off. Nobody knew why. The afflicted trees were not too old and there was no evidence of disease.

It turned out that these trees were dying of drought. Most had compact root balls that sought moisture deep in the ground. The *conocarpus erectus* has a different strategy. Its roots shoot out in horizontal veins that keep close to the surface, drinking up water before it can reach the roots below. In short, the balance of the local ecosystem in Abha and Khamis Mushait had been upset by the introduction of these imported trees. Abdunasser Gharem planned to stage a performance that would highlight what had happened.

He began by looking for a suitable tree with Ali. After one false start they agreed on a *conocarpus erectus* towards one side of a busy commercial street in the heart of Khamis Mushait. The shopkeepers were agog as Ali and Gharem proceeded to cover the tree with a broad and transparent sheet of plastic. Having secured the corners to the base, Gharem stepped inside this plastic cocoon in his pristine white thobe and shemagh, while Ali began to take photographs.

It was an extraordinary sight. For the critic Ana Finel Honigman, the addition of plastic made “the full-grown greenery look as inconsequential and uninviting as a grocery store’s shrink-wrapped broccoli.” It offers, she goes on, “an eerily apocalyptic vision of a world where trees are so precious and odd that they are preserved like artefacts, barred from attaining the natural existence they crave.”

In Khamis Mushait the performance was met with curiosity and perplexity. A crowd gathered around Gharem and Ali. Cars slowed to a crawl. A traffic jam ensued. There was honking, questioning and all-round confusion. Nobody knew what to make of it.

[...] Gharem called this performance and photographs of the event *Flora & Fauna*. With it, he positioned himself for a moment in real and symbolic equilibrium with nature, so that neither he nor the tree suffered. In other ways *Flora & Fauna* was about received wisdom and when to question it. Some of the passersby who saw Gharem wrapped in plastic thought he would not be able to breathe. They had not accounted for the oxygen produced by the tree.