

# Palestine – Palestine

The struggle for the liberation of Palestine is rooted in the struggle against its settler colonial context [1], and is part of a wider network of anti-colonial resistance. [2] In this issue of *FUSE*, guest-edited by Nasrin Himada and Reena Katz, we highlight the shared structures and contemporary effects of settler colonialism brought to bear on communities in Palestine and on Turtle Island. As the Idle No More movement continues to thrive, it is clear that its goals are to undermine the numerous colonial policies and procedures that are crucial to the current operation of the Canadian state. [3] Similarly, Palestinians, in their struggle against the Israeli state since its inception in 1948, take aim at a colonial history that is not past but perniciously in the present. The Nakba persists in every second that passes. [4]

*Palestine – Palestine* is the fourth in the *FUSE* series States of Postcoloniality. Launched in the fall of 2011, the series has taken a distinctly artlike approach to cataloguing present symptoms of colonialism and the challenges mounted against them. The regionally themed issues (Egypt, Inuit Nunangat and Lithuania thus far) have mainly featured knowledge produced in and around the industry of contemporary art. But the thing that most squarely places the series within the universe of an artist's magazine is the editorial insistence on telling the truth but telling it slant. [5] Designed as a critical intervention into the contemporary art discourse in southern Canada, where most of our readers are located, the series has not addressed colonial realities in our immediate communities but looked elsewhere, hoping to be a part of collectively breaking the public fiction that Canada is not a settler state. In the process, we have also had the opportunity to articulate solidarity across disparate geographies and histories. With *Palestine – Palestine*, we affirm the necessity of understanding the commonalities and differences between the settler colonialism of Israel and Canada. As we worked on this issue, we began toying with the series name; post become post while coloniality stayed put. We are not in a post-colonial world, and we are not complicit with a history that forgets the ways in which colonial violence has shaped and formed our present. As Patrick Wolfe puts it, settler colonialism is a structure not an event. [6]

[1] Colonialism and settler colonialism operate under different structures, processes and procedures but are driven by two principles—increased labour production and to eliminate the native. However, settler colonialism is marked by its permanence, in the sense that it seeks its own future demise—to be permanently settled. See Lorenzo Veracini, "Introducing Settler Colonial Studies," in *Settler Colonial Studies* 1.1 (2011), 1-12.

[2] Omar Jabary Salamanca, Mezna Qato, Kareem Rabie and Sobhi Samour write in "Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine: "As for other settler colonial movements, for Zionism, the control of land is a zero-sum contest fought against the indigenous population. The drive to control the maximum amount of land is at its centre." in *Settler Colonial Studies* 2.1 (2012), 1-8.

[3] Idle No More is a grassroots movement that began with four women. Nina Wilson, Sheelah Mclean, Sylvia McAdam and Jessica Gordon in December 2012. The movement asserts Indigenous sovereignty and aims to protect the lands and waters that are under threat with the passing of eight federal bills such as omnibus C-45. A bill proposed by the Canadian conservative government led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. C-45 aims to dissolve the

sovereign powers First Nations have over their reserve land. This paves the way for the Canadian government to gain control over territory for resource extraction and exploitation.

[4] 15 May 1948 marks the Nakba for Palestinians, the Arabic term for catastrophe, the day the Israeli state was established. During the production of this issue Gaza was brutally attacked and bombed by what Israel termed, Operation

Pillar of Defense in November 2012. See Eyal Weizman, "Short Cuts," *London Review of Books* (6 December 2012; online).

[5] Emily Dickinson, "Tell All the Truth," *Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1955).

[6] See Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Studies*, 8,4 (2006): 387-409.

This issue of *FUSE* takes a precise position: that decolonization and autonomy are at the heart of the struggle for Palestine. We have avoided rehearsing redundant polemics, or outlining ready-made histories. With this collection of work, we offer up fresh forms of expression in the face of what's already been said about Palestine, its position in multiple imaginaries, its history/ies, its current state of affairs and the infinite possibilities for standing in solidarity with global uprisings. We do not propose "solutions to the conflict" but present projects that challenge the insidious structure of colonization from within cultural forms such as film, architecture, food and art.

Our title, *Palestine - Palestine* refuses the liberal discourse of equating Palestine and Israel as two equally functioning entities. It also refuses to frame Palestine as the counter to Israel, as its eternal Other. *Palestine - Palestine* liberates فلسطين from its colonial perpetrator, releasing it from the false dichotomy that masks the violence of settler colonialism with the language of "conflict" or "war." In thinking through *Palestine - Palestine* in conversation with anti-colonial movements across the world, we position it as an homage to the revolutionary struggles that began in the 1960s, in the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon. Palestinian revolutionaries, the Fidae'en, called for anti-imperial forms of struggle alongside the Third World International movements across continents in Africa, Asia and Latin America. There is no room within *Palestine - Palestine* for state-sanctioned forms of "peace-making" that are encapsulated by neoliberal ethics of position placing. There is no room for the referent war. This is occupation. And the struggle continues.

In this issue, we showcase the physical and literal formations of occupation that are compounded by material forces. Kamal AlJafari, Nishat Awan and Cressida Kocienski, and Kandis Friesen illustrate "politics in matter"[7] through the fields of cinema, architecture and visual mapping. Aljafari gives a poignant demonstration of cinema's role in the destruction of Jaffa, referencing the history of what he terms "cinematic occupation." Awan and Kocienski describe their recent experience working with the art and architecture collective and residency program, Decolonizing Architecture, on their *Common Assembly* project in the Abu Dis neighbourhood of Jerusalem. They engage the complicated terrain of art systems and cultural production within the context of occupation. Friesen offers up a precisely-wrought documentation of the many corporations involved in producing and maintaining the apartheid wall, fostering awareness of the global networked capital of the Israeli military industrial complex.

*Palestine - Palestine* circulates and unpacks perspectives critical of settler colonialism, proposing instead strategies for mobilizing against structures of occupation. Zainab Amadahy discusses her involvement in Palestine solidarity work in Toronto, the limits she faced in terms of Indigenous inclusion, and the

continuity of shared struggle. Jodi Voice, the co-founder of Dallas-based 7th Generation Indigenous Visionaries, reflects on the group's 2009 visit to Palestine as part of the Indigenous Youth Delegation to Palestine. Haneen Maikay examines her work with Jerusalem-based alQaws, a group mobilized around sexual and gender diversity in Palestinian society.

This issue highlights the relationship between modes of cultural production and direct dissent, self-determination, and autonomy. Haitham Ennasr's analog proposal for a participatory video game hails readers as activators in a fractured, half-forgotten Palestinian folk tale. Mike Hoolboom's discussion of Nadim Mishlawi's haunting documentary, *Sector Zero* (2011) highlights how film can activate spectators, producing desire not just to receive, but to dynamically shift oppressive structures. Basil AlZeri discusses his use of food and performance as an investigation of power and resistance associated with gendered labour, cultural preservation and the pleasures of eating.

Over the months of production on this issue, we found ourselves putting many of the words and images we were working with in conversation with current events and movements. In November 2012, Palestine was voted in as non-member observer state in the UN and this year's World Social Forum focused on Palestine. We will be launching this issue into the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), now in over 215 cities across the world. Rwayda (Rod) Al-Kamisi addresses the impulse behind IAW with an outline of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement and its recent achievements. Etienne Turpin writes a timely review of Israeli architect Eyal Weizman's recent book, *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza* (2011), which outlines the violence implicit in humanitarian interventions. The review addresses the significance of what Weizman terms, the "humanitarian paradox," "wherein humanitarian relief can simultaneously increase political oppression." [8]

We are pleased to announce a number of exciting events, partnerships and developments alongside the release of *Palestine - Palestine*. *FUSE* staff and board of directors are proud to announce that we have officially endorsed the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against the Israeli occupation of Palestine. We're launching *Palestine - Palestine* during Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) Toronto, 1-8 March, with a presentation at their opening event on 1 March, and we'll be tabling at each event throughout the week. On 15 March, *FUSE* and IAW Toronto will co-present AlZeri's performance, *The Mobile Kitchen Lab: beit Suad*, as part of FADO's Emerging Artists Series, *.sight.specific.*, curated by Francisco-Fernando Granados. The performance will take place at Xpace Cultural Centre. Finally, with this issue, we're pleased to announce two brand-new columns. From Richard William Hill, you can expect critical close readings of contemporary Indigenous art. Maiko

[7] See Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (London; New York: Verso, 2007).

[8] This issue of *FUSE*, 53.

Tanaka's column will consist of attentive assessments of the political economies of contemporary art as revealed and reproduced through specific discursive programming and events.

As we go to print, Israeli occupation forces are removing Palestinian and international solidarity protestors at the Canaan village camp, near Yatta in the West Bank. This symbolic village, erected to protest Israel's plans to expand nearby illegal settlements has now been razed twice in a week. Over 150 activists were attacked with wastewater, stun and tear gas grenades, then arrested. The Canaan village actions are aimed at illustrating local farmers' direct relationship to the land and its history, and the increasing dispossession they face by expanded settlement construction. Indigenous custodial rights form their demands, and the language with which they describe their struggle: "We declare that it is our natural right to develop, reclaim, improve, use, and live on all our lands free and without threats from occupiers/colonizers." [9]

Nasrin Himada, Reena Katz and Gina Badger

This issue is dedicated to Mustafa Abu Ali (1940–2009), prolific Palestinian documentary filmmaker, and co-founder of the Palestine Film Unit.

Nasrin Himada is a writer, independent film curator and teacher residing in Montreal. Her writing appears in venues such as *Montreal Serai*, *West Coast Line*, *Inflexions*, and *FUSE*. She teaches in Geography, Urban Planning and Environment, and is currently completing a PhD in the Interdisciplinary Program in Society and Culture at Concordia University. Himada's research focuses on the militarization of urban space through prison infrastructure and police surveillance. She sits on the editorial board of the journal *Scapegoat: Architecture/Landscape/Political Economy*.

Reena Katz uses live and recorded sound to consider bodies as sites of knowledge, and communication as social practice. Her sound work spans the fields of aesthetics, cultural production and movement building. She has won many awards for her audio work, including the 2012 Social Justice Fellowship from Eugene Lang College and the Third Coast Audio Festival's Emerging Artist award for can you say haa?, a radioplay about the Hebrew re-naming of Arabic Palestine. Katz is co-founder of Just Peace Radio Feminist, Students for Justice in Palestine, and Dykes and Trans People for Palestine.

[9] "Call for participation in direct action: South West Bank Committee," press release (9 February 2013; online).

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*FUSE* is published quarterly by Artons Cultural Affairs Society and Publishing Inc., a non-profit artists' organization incorporated in 1984. All inquiries and return of undeliverables to the following address:  
454–401 Richmond Street West  
Toronto ON M5V 3A8 Canada

EMAIL: info@fusemagazine.org  
TEL: +1 (416) 340-8026

Printed in Canada by Dolco.

*FUSE* is indexed by Alternative Press Index and ARTbibliographies Modern, and is distributed by Magazines Canada +1 (416) 504-0274 and Ubiquity +1 (718) 875-5491. *FUSE* is grateful for the many hours of volunteer and modestly paid labour performed by those listed on our masthead, in our table of contents, and elsewhere.

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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:**  
Within Canada: \$24 per year;  
Institutions \$36 per year. Outside Canada: \$36 per year; Institutions \$48.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40022162  
Registration No. 8623 / ISSN0838-603X

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Cover image  
by Reena Katz.  
Layering of magnified  
details from multiple  
drawings and photographs  
in *Palestine–Palestine*.