

PRESS RELEASE

An Arts Program on the Human Impact of the Syrian Conflict

Organized by the Middle East Institute's Arts and Culture Program, The Jerusalem Fund Gallery Al-Quds and the Goethe-Institut

Opening Thursday, April 20, 2017

www.goethe.de/washington

Download Dropbox images [here](#).

(Washington, DC, April 11, 2017) – To highlight the urgent humanitarian crisis created by the conflict in Syria, the Middle East Institute's Arts and Culture Program, The Jerusalem Fund Gallery Al-Quds and the Goethe-Institut have organized an arts program which opens on Thursday, April 20, 2017. It features works by Berlin-based photographers Kai Wiedenhöfer and Daniel Sonntag, who portray the human impact of the Syrian conflict from different points of view in exhibitions at the Goethe-Institut and Gallery Al-Quds, alongside complementary programming.

Exhibitions:

[FORTY out of ONE MILLION: The Human Cost of the Syrian War](#)

Kai Wiedenhöfer

April 20 – June 15, 2017

Goethe-Institut

German photographer Kai Wiedenhöfer took portraits of forty Syrian war-wounded in towns, villages and refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon between spring 2014 and 2015. By showing the genuine aftermath of this war, he seeks to raise awareness about the people for whom the war will never end.



Iman Refaie, Mohammed Sweidan and Raya Mohamad, from FORTY out of ONE MILLION © Kai Wiedenhöfer

Kai Wiedenhöfer (b. 1966) studied photography and editorial design at the Folkwang University of the Arts Essen and Arabic in Damascus. Since 1989 his work has primarily focused on the Middle East. He has received numerous awards, including the Leica Medal of Excellence, the Alexia Grant for World Peace and Cultural Understanding, World Press Photo awards, the Eugene Smith Grant in Humanistic Photography and the Carmignac Gestion Photojournalism Award. Wiedenhöfer has published four books with Steidl:

Perfect Peace (2002), *Wall* (2007), *The Book of Destruction* (2010) and *CONFRONTIER* (2013). Solo exhibitions include WALLONWALL, which covered 364 meters of the Berlin Wall with works from *CONFRONTIER*, and the 2015 WARonWALL - The Struggle in Syria, which is accompanied by *Syrian Collateral* (2016).

Opening at the Goethe-Institut on Thursday, April 20, 6-8 pm with artists Kai Wiedenhöfer and Daniel Sonntag.

RSVP at www.goetheinstitutwashington.eventbrite.com

[They Have Names: Portraits of the New Kids in Berlin](#)

Daniel Sonntag

April 21 - May 31, 2017

Gallery Al-Quds, 2425 Virginia Ave. NW



Angel © Daniel Sonntag, Eifrig Publishing

Berlin-based Daniel Sonntag's photos of Syrian, Palestinian, Iraqi and Afghani displaced children in Berlin, *They Have Names* address the individuality of the single person, their characters or stories, strengths or weaknesses, and their dreams or nightmares, beyond the stigma of being a refugee.

Daniel Sonntag (b. 1982) grew up in a West Berlin neighborhood with one of the city's highest populations of immigrants. He began his career in 2007 as a photographer and videographer shooting commercials and actor portraits. In 2015, he began volunteering at the ICC Berlin refugee camp, where he met the young subjects of his photography project *They Have Names*. His ongoing involvement with the camp inspired him to focus his photographic work on the social issues of immigrant integration and cross-cultural communication.

Opening on Friday, April 21, 6-8 pm with artists Kai Wiedenhöfer and Daniel Sonntag.

To RSVP, contact Dagmar Painter at dpainter@thejerusalemfund.org or 202-338-1958.

[Necessary Things](#)

Helen Zughaib

April 21 - May 31, 2017

Gallery Al-Quds

Lebanese artist Helen Zughaib has been engaged in reminding her viewers about the price of conflict since before the Arab Spring. "I think of myself as somebody who's talking about the people who end up paying the price for war. It's women and children." For this exhibition, she has created objects in mixed media - plates, shoes, tiles, wooden boxes, recalling the ways of life left behind or destroyed by war.

Opening on Friday, April 21, 6-8 pm with the artist.

To RSVP, contact Dagmar Painter at dpainter@thejerusalemfund.org or 202-338-1958.

[Ta'sheeq \(Dovetail\)](#)

Saturday, May 13, 7 pm

Gallery Al-Quds

A multi-media collaborative project between Syrian poets, musicians and visual artists, featuring readings and art with musical accompaniment.

Panel Discussions:

[The Growing Role of Empathy in the Arts](#)

Thursday, April 20, 12:30 – 2 pm

Gallery Al-Quds

A panel conversation on the power of the arts to foster understanding and build empathy. Preceded by a light lunch at 12 pm.

Speakers:

Rashwan Abdelbaki, Syrian visual artist, awarded a 2016 IIE - Artist Protection Fund Fellowship, currently in residence at ArteEast NYC, through September 2017

Elif M. Gokcigdem, Islamic art historian, scholar and editor, *Fostering Empathy through Museums* (Rowman-2016).

Daniel Sonnentag, Berlin-based photographer and videographer

Kai Wiedenhöfer, Berlin-based photographer

Helen Zughuib, Washington, D.C.-based visual artist

Dagmar Painter (moderator) curator, The Jerusalem Fund-Gallery Al-Quds

[The Arts in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation: Emerging Perspectives](#)

Wednesday, May 24, 12:15 – 1:45 pm

The Middle East Institute, 1319 18th St. NW

A panel conversation on the role and impact of creative and arts-based initiatives in conflict resolution, as well as in relief and public awareness campaigns. Speakers to be confirmed. Preceded by a light lunch at 12 pm.

Short Films:

[Stories of Syria](#)

Wednesday, May 17, 6:30 pm

The Middle East Institute, 1319 18th St. NW

Short films by Syrian filmmakers, in collaboration with Art from Exile and Hawa Films.

Q&A to follow the screenings with Karin Kitsman, co-founder of Art from Exile.

Program:

Shakespeare in Zaatari (2016, 34min) Director: Maan Mouslli

Filmed in one of the largest refugee camps in Jordan, this film chronicles the story of the production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *King Lear* by the children in the camp.

Suleima (2014, 15min) Director: Jalall Maghout

Based on a true story, *Suleima* shares the story of a woman who supported the Syrian revolution from its beginning. An animated film, it starkly tells the story of the days and years leading up to 2011.

Jalila (2014, 22min) Director: Adnan Jetto.

A documentary about the courage and resilience of Syrian women involved in the uprising. *Jalila* is about women standing against the many injustices and horrors of war.

About the Middle East Institute's Arts and Culture Program:

Founded in 1946, the Middle East Institute is the oldest Washington-based institution dedicated solely to the study of the Middle East. The Middle East Institute's Arts and Culture program facilitates cross-cultural understanding by promoting the work of emerging Middle Eastern artists, hosting them in conversation, and connecting them with American counterparts.

About The Jerusalem Fund Gallery Al-Quds:

Gallery Al-Quds is the art and culture program of the Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development in Washington, DC. The Gallery specializes in the work of contemporary artists whose art centers on issues in the Arab and Islamic worlds, with special emphasis on Palestinian and Arab-American artists. Its mission is to introduce these artists and their concerns to an American audience, promoting comprehensive cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of the language of art.

About the Goethe-Institut:

Mutual understanding among nations by promoting international cultural dialogue: this is the ambitious mission of the Goethe-Institut. On behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, cultural institutes around the world provide cultural programs, language courses, support to educators, and up-to-date information on Germany in the context of Europe. Founded in 1990, Goethe-Institut Washington, DC is a center for German culture and language. From its location downtown, the Goethe-Institut Washington reaches out to both individuals and organizations in the community, bridging the past, present, and future with a variety of high-quality events.

The Middle East Institute's Arts and Culture Program

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