

For Immediate Release

June 16, 2017

Art Gallery of Guelph welcomes Hiba Abdallah on World Refugee Day

The Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG) is pleased to welcome contemporary artist Hiba Abdallah on Tuesday, June 20 at 12 pm for an artist talk presented in conjunction with World Refugee Day. Every year on June 20, World Refugee Day provides an opportunity to focus our attention on raising awareness and showing support for refugees and displaced persons globally. The AGG acknowledges the importance of this day by inviting Abdallah to share her recent work that has led to her current exhibition at the AGG, *Th'an*, through which she activates Arabic culture within the Guelph community.

In Arabic, the word *Th'an* means to be suspicious and, simultaneously certain, of something or someone. Abdallah uses this dichotomy within the exhibition to transform the gallery space into the headquarters for a fictional firm called "The Arabic Consultants." The firm's function is to embed the Arabic language in public and private spaces through site-specific projects involving the community's participation. Abdallah uses the consultancy as a means to undo, re-envision, and document the various dispositions of how Arabic is encountered across the local landscape. *Th'an* both simplifies and complicates our relationship to Arabic at a time when the language and culture are so heavily contested.

Artist's Biography

Hiba Abdallah has lived most of her life in Windsor, Ontario, a city that has heavily influenced her interest in the convergence of art and social practice. She is part of the artist collective Broken City Lab, which was long-listed for the 2011 Sobey Art award. She completed her BFA at the University of Windsor in 2012 and her MFA at the University of Guelph in 2017.

About the Art Gallery of Guelph

The Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG) is one of Canada's premier public art spaces, engaging audiences with innovative artists and ideas from around the world. Through a rigorous and collaborative artistic program that positions visual culture in an ever-changing cultural landscape, the gallery supports social exchange and shapes public discourse. Located in one of Canada's most innovation rich and socially-engaged urban environments, AGG offers compelling artistic encounters and contributes to a thriving national artistic climate through global connections that foster and proliferate creativity and imagination. For information about all of our programs, please visit www.artgalleryofguelph.ca.

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