





Make yourself at home: radical care and hospitality

Emergency relief residency program for artists from Beirut
October 09 – November 14, 2020 | Brazil

With support from the Goethe Institut, the Brazilian consulate in Beirut and private donors.
A collaboration with Kaaysá Art Residency, Brazil

www.togetherwetap.art

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Curator: Amanda Abi Khalil

Temporary Art Platform (TAP) announces **Make yourself at Home: Radical Care and Hospitality** a fully-funded program safely* bringing seven Beirut-based artists from Lebanon to Brazil, to take part in a five-week relief residency at Kaaysá Art Residency located in the heart of the Mata Atlantica Forest (São Paulo, Boiçucanga).

*The residency will adopt strict health regulations and measures to mutually protect participants, staff and residency guests from the widespread Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil.

Artists taking part in the residency are Lara Tabet (Visual Artist and Medical Doctor), Omar Mismar (Visual Artist), Maxime Hourani (Visual Artist), Panos Aprahamian (Filmmaker), Nour Sokhon (Sound Artist), Betty Ketchedjian (Visual Artist) and Nour Osseiran (Visual Artist and TAP team).

Make Yourself at Home: Radical Care and Hospitality was conceived to provide immediate support to artists and cultural practitioners who were impacted by the Beirut Port explosion on August 4, an event that is the consequence of thirty years of endemic state corruption and negligence in what many believe today to be a non-country.

Artists in Beirut have been enduring multiple crises following the commencement of the Lebanese Revolution on October 17, 2019, including the sudden 80% devaluation of the local currency, the illegal capital control imposed by private banks on people's current and savings accounts, as well as the total halt of cultural life due to the economic collapse worsened by the coercive Covid-19 restrictions in Lebanon.

Togetherness drives our organization and continues to shape its programs and ways of operating. For the last year, our planned programs were suspended, postponed, and re-shaped, however the attack (yes, it is an attack) brought us together.

For the fourth iteration of our residency format (the first outside of Lebanon), we will experiment with curating (from Latin *curare*) practiced through radical forms, gestures and propositions addressing (un)conditional hospitality, listening, mutual aid strategies, coalitional exertions and guest-host relations (*philoxenia*). Beyond self-care and welcoming rituals, we will look at care and hospitality as driving forces for collective solidarity, togetherness, generosity and hope in a context of the suffocating deadlock we are facing globally, and especially as Lebanese and Armenian citizens at the moment.

Forms of exchange, guest-host relations and collective care are inherent to the format of artists residencies. For TAP, residencies have constituted key formats which prompted great earnings and contributed to knowledge production in the realms of art and social practice.

The residency will take place within a rich and generous natural environment which will hopefully provide direct relief to our artists. The activities and discursive program geared towards listening to each other, to nature and to the clamor of this moment will be accompanied by two guest psychoanalysts **Denise Berruezo Portinari** (Psychoanalyst and Professor at the Department of Art and Design, Puc Rio de Janeiro) and **Tania Rivera** (Psychoanalyst and Curator).

Participants will learn about hospitality while studying the forms of hostilities historically inflicted upon Brazilian society and nature. Black and indigenous voices struggling against century-long oppression will inform participants engagement with the two politically and socially fragilized contexts we are connecting. The aim will be to move beyond fantasized narratives surrounding the Lebanese (and Arab) Diaspora in Brazil as well as the reciprocal relations these two countries have been sustaining since the late 19th century.

The program will be punctuated with workshops and open propositions by invited guests including **Gabriel Bogossian** (Independent Curator), **Patrick Pessoa** (Critic, Playwright and Professor of Philosophy at UFF, RJ), **Marcos Chaves** (Visual Artist), **Hena Lee** (Independent Curator), **Bianca Bernardo** (Curator of Kaaysá Residency) and **Gui Mohallem** (Visual Artist) amongst others.

Residency participants were selected from a group of thirty nominees put forward by colleagues and institutions from Beirut including **Beirut Art Center**, **Beirut Art Residency**, **Ashkal Alwan**, **Zoukak**, **Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts**, **Haven for Artists**, **Culture Resource** and **Marfa' Gallery**.

Make yourself at home is part of a larger cross-cultural research and touring exhibition project curated by **Amanda Abi Khalil** and commissioned by the **Goethe Institut** since 2017 and produced by **Patuá**, to foster a South-South dialogue between Lebanon and Brazil on the theme of migration and hospitality in collaboration with **Cultures of the Curatorial**, **HGB**, **Leipzig**.

Temporary Art Platform in collaboration with Kaaysá thank the **Goethe Instituts** Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Beirut for their precious support during these difficult times, as well as the **Brazilian Consulate in Beirut** and the community of friends and colleagues

who privately donated and made this project possible despite the dire economic and health-related challenges we are facing.

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Temporary Art Platform (TAP) is an international curatorial platform founded on para-institutional modes of operating, that critically responds within shifting and dynamic social contexts. TAP is concerned with the development of the fields of contemporary art and social practice from the Global South.

In times like these, we need support for our small organization to survive and thrive. We (still) believe in the potential of social art practice to contribute to progressive societies, help us take care of our community of artists!

Reach out to together@temporaryartplatform.com for donations.

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Kaaysá Art Residency is an independent organization, dedicated to the development of the artistic practice through residencies and public programs. Founded by the Lebanese-born Lourдина Jean Rabieh, Kaaysá is situated 160 km from São Paulo, in the heart of the Atlantic Forest. Kaaysá's activities began in October 2017 and since then has hosted more than 200 Brazilian and international creators as visual artists, musicians, writers, filmmakers, dancers among others.

<https://www.kaaysa.com>

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Telefone: +55 21 98143 6609

meet the artists:



Nour Osseiran
Visual Artist
& TAP team

"I knew I had to drive back to Beirut; because something horrible had happened, and even if I didn't know what it was exactly yet, I prepared my bag, and checked my Red Cross ID in my pocket. I couldn't make it to Beirut due to the traffic. I made it there the next morning. Not to my home. I made it on-site."



Maxime Hourani
Visual artist

"I think this retreat with other people who live in Lebanon will create an opportunity to find ways to connect with peers and develop a collective imaginary outside of the reaction to the continuous events that we have been enduring."



Omar Mismar
Visual artist

"To be invited to make myself at home somewhere else, bounded by forest and sea, surrounded by artists and cultural workers who have experienced the same with a difference, and away from the incessant micro-triggers of the trauma, is a precious gift of care and community-building so crucial to tread such times."



Betty Ketchedjian
Photographer

"The storms that came our way this past year were many and they were catastrophic. The pinnacle being the blast that hit Beirut on August 4th. It's interesting how your perspective changes when you realize that even the smallest of choices (a decision to move away from the glass windows after seeing smoke coming from the port) can have major implications, and save your life."



Nour Sokhon
Sound artist

"For a moment I was convinced that every living being I knew in the country had been turned to ash. I believe that this opportunity shall provide me with the privilege to reboot and regain a sensation I fear I may be losing; hope."



Lara Tabet
Visual artist

"I imagine this residency to be a safe space where I can regroup, reset, and slowly reacquire the ability to think about the (near) future."



Panos Aprahamian
Writer-filmmaker,
media artist

"Such an opportunity will provide me with the possibility of temporarily leaving Beirut that has become an emotional and psychological toll to navigate and reside in. It will help me recollect my thoughts and participate in a collective endeavour with other cultural practitioners from Lebanon, Brazil, and elsewhere."

الخارجية الأميركية: بومبيو بحث ونظيره الفرنسي تأثير "حزب الله" في لبنان وجهود أميركا لتشكيل حكومة مستقرة تركز

لا ح

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حسن الساحلي



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أميركا تقوّض محاولة فرنسا تعويم حزب الله وباسيل.. بواسطة ...



بيتي بيتك: رعاية وضيافة راديكالية" أطلقت الشهر الفائت "منصة الفن المؤقتة" TAP إقامة فنية في البرازيل تمتد بشارك فيها 7 فنانين لبنانيين من الذين تأثروا بانفجار مرفأ بيروت (بدعم من Kaaysa Art Residency، معهد غوته، لية في بيروت وجهات مانحة خاصة).

ولى من نوعها، في سياق برامج الدعم الإغاثي التي استهدفت المؤسسات والعاملين في الفن خلال الاشهر الثلاثة الماضية. مة على اساليب تعزيز الصحة النفسية والعقلية لمساعدة الفنانين على تخطي المرحلة الحالية وإعادة ترتيب حياتهم بعيدا نيائية التي تواجههم في لبنان، عوضاً عن تقديم الدعم المادي المباشر لهم.

مج، المنسقة الفنية أماندا أبي خليل التي انتقلت إلى البرازيل قبل سنتين من أجل العمل على مشروع فني وبحثي يتألف ض وإقامات فنية وتكليفات في مدينتي ساو باولو وريو دي جانيرو، تتمحور حول مفهوم الضيافة والعلاقة بين المضيف وية التاريخ المعقد للمهاجرين اللبنانيين في البرازيل (تم تأجيله عدة مرات اولا بسبب احتجاز اموال المشروع من قبل احد نان ثم لاحقا بسبب انتشار فيروس كورونا).

يل هنا مشروعها الفني الأساسي، حيث تحوّل القالب التقليدي للإقامة الفنية الذي يطلب عادة من المشاركين انهاء منتج ن فترة زمنية، إلى قالب جديد يلغي الإلتزام الفني ويبقي فقط وسائل الراحة والتطوير الذاتي.

لسبعة من بين 30 اسماً رشحتهم مؤسسات فنية مختلفة عاملة في بيروت، والمفاجئ وفق ابي خليل أن نصف الاسماء المشاركة في الإقامة بالرغم من كل الإغراءات، وهو ما برره البعض بمخاوف متعلقة برحلة الطيران الطويلة، او الخوف وس كورونا.

على سبب رفض المشاركة في حديث إحدى المشاركات في الإقامة نور سخن التي تخبرنا عن "الذنب الذي شعرت به لى في البرازيل عندما فكرت أن هناك آخرين، لا بد يستحقون أكثر منها التواجد في هكذا مكان عوضا عنها"، مع العلم انها لا



خليل تعبیر "الضيافة الراديكالية" في وصف الإقامة الفنية، وهو مفهوم متعدد المستويات، يستخدم في الفن المعاصر منذ ضمن سياقات مختلفة، بعضها يشير إلى المجال الخاص مثل البيت وغرف الضيافة، التي تتجلى داخلها تراتبيات السلطة ضيف اللين يشاركان الطعام والمشاعر والكلام خلال طقوس ضيافة محددة، أو ضمن سياقات مرتبطة في المجال العام الذي تستخدمه أبي خليل في مشروعها الأصلي المرتبط بالمجتمع البرازيلي، المتشكل من اندماج مهاجرين في الأساس، الضيافة بينهم بالإعتماد على عوامل مثل العرق والطبقة واللون.

ايضاً أن علاقات الضيافة هي جزء من بنى اجتماعية أكبر تكون في حالات كثيرة قسرية، وليست كما توصف كجزء من أو حقيقته الطيبة". كما يمكن أن تكون أيضاً "عرضاً أمام الذات أو المجتمع لإظهار كم الكرم والحب والقدرة على العطاء لمضيف"، وهو الشخص الذي بالإضافة لاستعداده لتقديمه التنازلات لضيفه، يمتلك الأفضلية التي تسمح له بممارسة نوع ي تجاهه، والتحكم بمصيره خلال فترة الضيافة.

تخدام تعبیر الراديكالية في الإقامة، أتى بشكل أساسي للتأكيد على حقيقة أنها غير تقليدية وهي تعيد التفكير بمعنى هذا الفني، ودوره في عالم الفن اليوم من نواح مختلفة، من بينها مساءلة قدرته على تقديم مكان آمن للفنان وإمكانية ناته الآنية، من دون زيادة الضغط عليه لإنتاج عمل معين. تعتبر الإقامة اليوم عنصراً أساسياً في عالم الفن، وقد أصبحت اضية جزءاً من مسيرة أي فنان للترقي داخل الوسط الفني، مع أن وجودها في عالم الفن يعود إلى القرن التاسع عشر ساتية وغالباً بقيادة فنانين يرغبون بتنظيم حياتهم بشكل مشترك).

ي يثير التساؤل ضمن برنامج الإقامة هو اضافتها جلسات اختيارية مع أطباء نفسيين، إلى جانب الجلسات الأسبوعية مقين الفنيين والفاعلين الثقافيين البرازيليين (التي تهدف لتوسيع شبكات المشاركين الفنية). الخطر من هذه الجلسات هو ها توجيه الإنتاج الفني للمشاركين نحو مكان يختصر تجربتهم بالجانب المتعلق بالصدمة النفسية، وأن يعزز من موقع نان ويمنع بالتالي من قراءة الجوانب الأخرى المتعلقة بعمله. يعيدنا ذلك إلى المعضلة التي واجهها الفن اللبناني خلال حرب، والتي انتقدها فنان مثل وليد صادق الذي رأى أن نظرية التروما سجت الفن اللبناني في مرحلة ما بعد الحرب، إن لإنتاج أو التلقي، وهذا خطر يهدد الفن اللبناني في الفترة الحالية بما أن هناك اهتماماً لسماع وجهات نظر الفنانين الناجين



يـث الفنانة نور سخن (فنانة صوت وأداء) لـ"المدن" عن تجربتها مع الإقامة الفنية:
يت لأسابيع شبه "مهسترة" واستغرق يومياً. كانت افكاري مشوشة واسمع خشة في اذني، ما أثار هلعي لأن جزءاً كبيراً من جور حول الصوت. في الوقت نفسه، كانت آلات الصوت أيضاً، لا تعمل بشكل جيد. بقيت كل تلك الفترة غير قادرة على بالقلق الكبير حول المستقبل وما أريد القيام به.

هنا لم استوعب أنني خارج لبنان. بقيت العوارض نفسها موجودة، خاصة تلك المتعلقة بالأصوات المحيطة الشبيهة بصوت انفجارات. لكن مع الوقت بدأت الأمور تتغير. ساعدني وجود أشخاص مروا بتجربة مشابهة لي، على التأقلم بشكل أفضل مع م أكبر لما أمر به.

لث أصبح ذهني صافياً أكثر وصرت قادرة على التركيز في مشاريعي الشخصية وانتهاء عملي المعلق بشكل أسرع. طبعاً المرتفعة قادرة على تحفيز مشاعر الخوف السابقة كما ان الكوابيس لم تتوقف ليلاً، ولو ان مواضعها تغيرت واصبحت الجديد. مثلاً حلمت ان الغرفة الموجودة فيها كانت تحترق، ويدي بدأت تذوب امامي بسبب النار. الغريب ان احد لإقامة معي حلم في الليلة نفسها انه فقد يده ايضاً!"

لآخرين في الإقامة المخرج بانوس أبراهميان الذي بدأ العمل خلال الاسابيع الماضية على مشروع يتمحور حول شخصية رازيلي من اصول سورية - لبنانية، يقرر الذهاب للمرة الأولى في حياته إلى سوريا من اجل المحاربة إلى جانب صفوف أبراهميان: "ولد هذا المشروع بسبب تقاطع اهتمامات مختلفة عندي، منها دهشتي أمام وجود هذا الكم من البرازيليين من تجاه حقيقة انتقال يساريين للقتال في سوريا او في ليبيا ضد الأنظمة القمعية. نحن اليوم في مرحلة تراجعت خلالها للمشاركة في الصراعات العالمية، والظاهرة بأكملها لم تعد موجودة بشكل واضح سوى عند الإسلاميين. وجدت أيضاً فترة عند اليسار الراديكالي البرازيلي مثل الروحانية، التي يراها اليساريون عندنا كقيمة رجعية خاصة بين الأجيال الأكبر

367 مشاهدة



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اشترك معنا في نشرة المدن الدورية لتبقى على اتصال دائم بالحدث

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INITIATIVE

« Faites comme chez vous », à mille lieues du désastre... au Brésil

Quitter Beyrouth et tout ce qu'elle charrie de tristesse, de colère et de traumatismes pour rejoindre une résidence d'art et de... quiétude à São Paulo. Un rêve réalisé pour sept artistes visuels grâce à la dynamique solidaire de Kaaysá Art Residency et du réseau de Temporary Art Platform (TAP).

OLJ / Par Zéna ZALZAL, le 04 novembre 2020 à 00h03



Dernières infos

20:45

France L'auteur de l'attaque du Thalys en 2015 reconnaît "l'ensemble des faits" puis se rétracte

20:04

Pays-Bas Tirs sur l'ambassade saoudienne à La Haye : Le suspect aurait eu un but "terroriste"

20:00

Coronavirus L'Eglise grecque juge déplacée la polémique sur la communion

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Le groupe d'artistes libanais participant à « Make Yourself At Home: Radical »

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installés dans les quartiers périphériques du port, ont vu leur maison, leur atelier, leur studio et tout ce qu'ils avaient construit soufflés par la terrible double explosion du 4 août – quand ils n'ont pas été eux-mêmes blessés –, un large réseau de solidarité s'est tissé autour d'eux. Globalement initiées par des Libanais de l'étranger, diverses formes de levées de fonds ont été lancées pour les aider à reconstruire leurs espaces de vie et de travail. Mais qu'en est-il de l'aide à leur rétablissement physique et psychologique post-traumatique ?

C'est à ce volet que s'est attelée la Temporary Art Platform (TAP). Fondée en 2007 par la commissaire d'exposition Amanda Abi Khalil, cette petite organisation fait preuve « d'activisme artistique en soutenant des pratiques d'art social et en élaborant différents projets de résidences ». Estimant qu'il fallait d'abord aider les artistes à « se » reconstruire après le choc, la plate-forme a ainsi déployé le maximum d'efforts pour concevoir un programme offrant à un groupe particulièrement touché par l'explosion du port de Beyrouth, l'opportunité de s'en éloigner temporairement, le temps de recharger leurs batteries et de dépasser le traumatisme vécu.

Grâce à son réseau collaboratif international et à l'appui du Goethe Institut, du consulat du Brésil à Beyrouth ainsi que de donateurs privés, la TAP a conçu, en partenariat avec Kaaysá Art Residency, « Make Yourself At Home: Radical Care And Hospitality » (Faites comme chez vous : soins radicaux et hospitalité), un programme de cinq

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Les sept artistes posant devant la Kaaysá Art Residency à São Paulo. Photo DR

Réacquérir la capacité de se projeter...

C'est en immersion en pleine nature, au cœur de la forêt atlantique bordant São Paulo que Lara Tabet, Omar Mismar, Maxime Hourani, Panos Aprahamian, Nour Sokhon, Betty Ketchedjian et Nour Osseiran se sont plongés le 9 octobre à leur arrivée à la Kaaysá Art Residency. Généreusement accueillis par cette structure de résidence, mêlant hospitalité, écoute, échanges interdisciplinaires, stratégies d'entraide et

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des expéditions qui apportent à certains le
dépaysement nécessaire au renouvellement de leur
inspiration et à l'élargissement de leurs pratiques et à
d'autres un champ propice à leur rétablissement
émotionnel.

« Un lieu préservé et sûr pour se remettre du choc et
lentement réacquérir la capacité de se projeter à
nouveau dans un avenir proche », assure, avec
bonheur, l'artiste visuelle et biologiste de formation
Lara Tabet. Tandis que le jeune cinéaste Panos
Aprahamian, qui explore dans son travail la présence
spectrale des passés traumatiques dans les corps, les
espaces et les relations sociales, et l'artiste du son
Betty Ketchedjian voient dans cette résidence
l'opportunité de participer à une entreprise collective
avec d'autres praticiens culturels du Liban, du Brésil
et d'ailleurs.



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Petit déjeuner collectif au premier jour de la résidence. Photo DR

Idem pour les artistes plasticiens Omar Mismar et Maxime Hourani qui se réjouissent d'être « loin des micro-déclencheurs incessants du traumatisme », pour poursuivre tranquillement leurs travaux de recherches centrés, pour le premier, sur « l'intrication de l'art et de la politique à la lumière de l'esthétique du désastre » et, pour le second, sur « l'exploration du lien entre nature et soins, dans le contexte des forêts ».

Ou encore pour Nour Osseiran, photographe et membre de l'équipe curatoriale de la TAP, qui les accompagne, et qui met à profit ce sursis bienfaisant pour rassembler ses esprits, ses idées et s'atteler à la finalisation de son projet de thèse universitaire.


Une belle initiative en somme que cette résidence où se conjuguent hospitalité, art et apaisement... Un séjour qui ne pouvait mieux tomber qu'en ces temps d'impasse suffocante auxquels nous sommes confrontés dans le monde en général et particulièrement au Liban.

COMMENTAIRES (1)

Serait-il possible de savoir comment ce voyage a pu être réalisé en ces temps de pénurie de devises, de vols limités, de confinement au Brésil ?

Michau François

15 h 00, le 04 novembre 2020

From: e-flux info@mail.e-flux.com 
Subject: Temporary Art Platform launches Make yourself at home: radical care and hospitality
Date: 2 November 2020 6:04 PM
To: info@temporaryartplatform.com

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November 02, 2020



Temporary Art Platform



at home

Make yourself at home: radical care and hospitality.
Courtesy Temporary Art Platform.

Make yourself at home: radical care and hospitality

Emergency relief residency for
artists from Lebanon
October 9–November 14, 2020

togetherwetap.art

[Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#) / [Vimeo](#)

Participating artists: Lara Tabet, Omar Mismar, Maxime Hourani, Panos Aprahamian, Nour Sokhon, Betty Ketchedjian, and Nour Osseiran

Curated by: Amanda Abi Khalil

Temporary Art Platform (TAP) announces **Make yourself at home: radical care and hospitality**, a fully-funded program safely* bringing seven Beirut-based artists from Lebanon to Brazil, to take part in a five-week relief residency at Kaaysá Art Residency located in the heart of the Mata Atlantica Forest (São Paulo, Brazil).

The program was conceived to provide immediate support to artists and cultural practitioners who were impacted by the Beirut Port explosion on August 4.

Artists in Beirut have already been enduring multiple crises following the commencement of the Lebanese Revolution on October 17, 2019, the total economic collapse, the total halt of cultural life, and the worsening Covid-19 pandemic.

Togetherness drives our organization and continues to shape its programs and ways of operating. For the last year, our planned programs were suspended, postponed, and re-shaped, however, the attack brought us together.

For the fourth iteration of our residency format, we will experiment with curating (from Latin curare) practiced through radical forms, gestures and propositions addressing (un)conditional hospitality, listening, mutual aid strategies, coalitional exertions and guest-host relations (philoxenia). Beyond self-care and welcoming rituals, we will look at care and hospitality as driving forces for collective solidarity, togetherness, generosity and hope in a context of the suffocating deadlock we are facing globally, especially as Lebanese and Armenian citizens today.

The activities and discursive program geared towards listening to each other, to nature and to the clamor of this moment will be accompanied

by two guest psychoanalysts **Denise Portinari** (Psychoanalyst and Professor at the Department of Art and Design, Puc Rio de Janeiro) and **Tania Rivera** (Psychoanalyst and Curator).

Participants will learn about hospitality while studying the forms of hostilities historically inflicted upon Brazilian society and nature. Black and indigenous voices struggling against century-long oppression will inform participants engagement with the two politically and socially fragilized contexts we are connecting. The aim will be to move beyond fantasized narratives surrounding the Lebanese (and Arab) diaspora in Brazil as well as the reciprocal relations these two countries have been sustaining since the late 19th century.

Guests include **Gabriel Bogossian** (Independent Curator), **Patrick Pessoa** (Critic, Playwright and Professor of Philosophy), **Marcos Chaves** (Visual Artist), **Hena Lee** (Independent Curator), **Bianca Bernardo** (Curator) and **Gui Mohallem** (Visual Artist) amongst others.

Residency participants were selected from a group of thirty nominees put forward by colleagues and institutions from Beirut including **Beirut Art Center, Beirut Art Residency, Ashkal Alwan, Zoukak, the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts, Haven for Artists, Culture Resource and Marfa' Gallery.**

Temporary Art Platform thanks Kaaysá and the Goethe Instituts Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Beirut for their support during these difficult times, as well as the Brazilian Consulate in Beirut and the community of friends and colleagues who privately donated and made this project possible despite the dire economic and health-related challenges we are facing.

Temporary Art Platform (TAP) is an international curatorial platform that was founded in 2014 to commission projects, residencies and site-specific artworks concerned by social practices and public spaces in Lebanon and abroad, with a particular focus on the Global South.

TAP's structure and its para-institutional modes of operating give way to a deeper engagement with the context in which it unfolds, focusing on critical responses within shifting and dynamic social contexts.

In times like these, we need support for our small organization to survive and thrive. We (still) believe in the potential of social art practice to contribute to progressive societies.
Help us take care of our community of artists from Lebanon and **visit our website for direct donations.**

*The residency is adopting strict health regulations and measures to mutually protect participants, staff and residency guests from the

'Make Yourself at Home' someplace else

BEIRUT: "Things are very bad here," curator Amanda Abi Khalil says, "but very calm."

These days, you might be envious of anyone invited to spend five weeks in a forest village on the coast of Sao Paulo state. As Lebanon descends into the winter of the worst year in recent memory, who wouldn't jump at a working holiday in springtime Brazil?

That's been the premise of "Make Yourself at Home," a residency for Lebanese artists organized by Abi Khalil's Temporary Art Platform, in partnership with Brazil's Kaays? Art Residency.

This tropical escape, which wraps Saturday (Nov. 14), has had a caveat or two.

First, Bolsonaro's Brazil has reported over 5.5 million cases of COVID-19 recently. These numbers are bested by those of Modi's India (8.5 million) and Trump's USA (over 10 million), but Brazil still has the second-highest number of recorded deaths, over 160,000 of them.

Then there's that other thing. To participate in this residency, you must have had your life and work seriously upended by the Beirut Port blast of Aug. 4.

TAP launched its residency program for international and local artists in 2014, the first three being located in different Lebanese villages. The platform's first overseas residency, "Make Yourself at Home" was conceived in 2017 but the port explosion radically altered its priorities and the artists invited to participate.

"Giving these artists a place to live was no longer an accessory," Abi Khalil recalls in the residency's final days. "It was a necessity."

This is how "Make Yourself at Home" acquired the second part of its name: "Radical Care and Hospitality."

By now the term "hospitality" has been emblazoned upon late capitalism's tertiary sector. From supper at that little place around the corner, to the luxurious exclusivity offered by an archipelago of discreet haute touristic enclaves – both embody forms of hospitality more or less compromised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Hospitality" also has resonance in these days of mass migration compelled by armed conflict, climate change, and conflicts exacerbated by environmental disaster. Internment camps and criminality, bureaucracy, despair and

opportunity offer an ironic counterpoint to the hospitality trade.

With its handful of artists, eroded by a year of economic collapse and traumatized by the ammonium nitrate explosion, "Make Yourself at Home" has briefly occupied a space between these two extremes.

"We're considering each artist not only as an artist but as a person who needs to rest," Nour Osseiran explained. "It's about giving them time and support, whether it's curatorial or otherwise."

Osseiran has taken part in "Make Yourself at Home" in two capacities – as a TAP co-coordinator and a participating artist. She was joined by visual artists Lara Tabet, Omar Mismar, Maxime Hourani and Betty Ketchedjian, filmmaker Panos Aprahamian and sound artist Nour Sokhon.

"We're trying to navigate what it means to

organize an artists' residency and a relief residency," Osseiran said. In the first week "we explored Boicucanga, the village we're in. We got a sense of the geography and the feel of the place ... We cooked together. We eat together every day."

As it's a relief residency for artists, TAP was careful in its selection process. Abi Khalil says arts organizations affected by the port blast – Beirut Art Center, Beirut Art Residency, Ashkal Alwan, Zoukak, the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts, Haven for Artists, Culture Resource and Marfa' Gallery – recommended 32 artists.

Working from the criteria of diversity of voices and need, a selection committee reduced this number to the seven participants, but 15 of those approached had declined, saying they were in no shape for an artist residency.

"When I learned that artists had declined

for psychological reasons," Abi Khalil says, "I decided to make therapy available as part of the residency. The artists had access to Denise Portinari, who is a psychoanalyst and a curator, if they wanted it. Nothing was mandatory."

Osseiran said that, in discussion, the artists have tended to feed off one another's disparate practices and disciplines.

"The creative projects the group is undertaking [are] unfolding very organically," she said. "The purpose of this program isn't to demand more production from the artists."

"We're welcoming collaborative approaches. There are a lot of ideas percolating among the artists, a lot of discussion. This time together is bringing up some interesting propositions on hospitality and care in times of crisis."

Abi Khalil notes that, though some of the artists weren't interested in working or discussing their work when they arrived, the weeks of community got them moving again.

"When Maxime [Hourani] arrived he just wanted to be left alone," she says. "By week three he was ready to start on a really ambitious project.

"Omar [Mismar] just finished an intervention, a mural. It shows a mosquito carrying a mosquito trap and reads 'The revolution needs blood.' Being eaten by mosquitos is something we've all shared these weeks."

"I wanted to examine the notion of home," photographer Betty Ketchedjian wrote via social media. "Especially now with the current state of our country and the increase of emigration, these questions arise – what is home? Can we build it

elsewhere? Is it tied to the land, to the people? My time here is spent researching and exploring this idea."

Filmmaker Panos Aprahamian told The Daily Star he's devoted his residency to "AKA The Vanguard Outside of History," the third installment in an experimental film project.

"I have been exploring hybrid cinematic works," he wrote via social media. "With the first installment ['Yabandjo,' 2016], I explored what French filmmaker Jean Rouch [1917-2004] called 'ethnographic fictions.'"

Aprahamian's project reflects upon several genres – essay film, dystopian science-fiction, ethnographic film and nature documentary. He says "AKA The Vanguard" borrows its form from the traditions of documentary filmmaking and Masao Adachi's landscape theory of

cinema.

"The endeavor will both be a critique of the contemporary 'post-truth' media landscape," he wrote, "and some form of tribute to Middle Eastern artists and filmmakers that have experimented with and questioned the factual, the fictional, their differences and similarities ...

"For some of us, citizens of the Global South, indigenous people, and ethnic and sexual minorities, dystopian sci-fi horrors are not a future possibility but a historical reality."

Sound artist Nour Sokhon reiterated other artists in welcoming an opportunity to discuss her work face to face with other human beings.

"More than anything, I feel this residency has provided an opportunity to somehow recalibrate my mind to process a lot of the things we were not really given the opportunity to process since last October," Sokhon said via voice mail.

"Personally I came here with two commissioned works. They were delayed so I'm spending quite a lot of time doing that.

"We're collaborating. We're having conversations. We're working on a collaborative film project with [Aprahamian]. We're also doing some live performances. We collaborated with the Brazilian residents here for the film. Maxim [Hourani] and I collaborated with a Brazilian sound artist to do a performance.

"Simultaneously I'm constantly collecting recordings. I'm hearing a lot of

relationships between some sounds I hear in Beirut and here -- the way announcements are made, when it comes to political parties and street vendors as well."

Sokhon's hearing was affected for nearly a month after the port blast and she says the residency has been a re-energizing experience.

"This will definitely give us the energy to fight back when we're in Beirut, to send this energy to the other artists who, and other people that we know, to create more. I can definitely say my time here has inspired me and pushed me to keep pursuing my practice rather than give up."

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TAP's "Make Yourself at Home: Radical Care and Hospitality" would have been impossible without the assistance of the Goethe institute Beirut, the Goethe institute Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian consulate in Beirut and the generous support of individual donors