

steirischer herbst 2012

Public Movement (IL)

Rebranding European Muslims

Campaign and gala

Fri 28/09, 7.30 pm, Helmut-List-Halle



Host: Nadja Kayali (A)

Honorary guest speaker: Omar Al-Rawi (A/IRQ)

Branding strategists: Mariusz Jan Demner / Demner, Merlicek & Bergmann (A), Guleed Mohamed / Love Tensta (SE) / Daniel van der Velden / Metahaven (NL)

Further guests: Marwan Abado (A/PS), Muhammad Asad (A), Neslihan Celebi / Katharina Zotter / Helene Byrna (A), Chor des Islamischen Kulturzentrums Graz (A)

Cat. I 100 € / Cat. II 36 € / Cat. III 12 €

Revenue from ticket sales benefits the "Rebranding European Muslims" campaign

Formal attire is preferred

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One hundred years ago, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was the first European country to recognise Islam as an official religion. Muslims have long since become a visible part of today's population – yet they still predominantly represent "the others", while Europe itself is on the verge of forfeiting its utopian ideals once and for all. "Rebranding European Muslims" is an international PR project by the Israeli performance and research group Public Movement, who play artistically with the instruments of a political branding campaign and the strategies of mass communication. Instead of giving answers, the project, being ambivalent, provokes different standpoints. Backed up by branding experts and with the aid of strategies deployed in official political campaigns, the project experiments with artistic possibilities of changing public opinion.

The campaign that begins in Graz, to be relayed to other countries, kicks off with a big gala: a political charity event as much as a theatrical enactment of commitment and conflict. The gala stages a performance of conflict and advocacy and celebrates at the same time Austria's historic role as Western gateway to the Muslim world. Special guests are a local belly dance company, the Choir of the Islamic Cultural Center Graz, scholars and diplomats, politicians, strategists, all joining in the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the recognition of Islam as an official European religion.

At the heart of the gala, three prestigious branding agencies from Amsterdam, Stockholm and Vienna present their creative proposals for the future direction of the Rebranding European Muslims campaign – and the audience itself will decide which one is the most convincing approach. The winning idea will be presented in the centre of Graz – before the campaign moves on to other cities and countries. The gala will be accompanied by traditional Middle Eastern cuisine and closes with a live concert by the internationally acclaimed Islamic punk band The Kominas from Lexington/Massachusetts, performing for the first time in Austria.

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Biographies

Public Movement (IL)

Public Movement is a performative research body that investigates and stages political actions in public spaces. The movement explores the political and aesthetic possibilities residing in a group of people acting together. It studies and creates public choreographies, forms of social order, overt and covert rituals. Focal point are the regulations, forces, agents and policies, systems of identity and systems of ritual which govern the dynamics of public life and public space. Public Movement was founded by Omer Krieger and Dana Yahalomi in November 2006. Since August 2011 it has been run solely by Dana Yahalomi. Amongst Public Movement's works are the following actions: "Accident" (2006), "Ceremony" (2007), "The Israel Museum" (2007), "Also Thus!" (Acco, 2007), "Rally" (Rabin Square, 2007), "Operation Free Holon, Change of Guard" (With Dani Karavan, Tel-Aviv Museum of Art), "Public Movement House" (MoBY, Bat-Yam Museum of Art), "The 86th Anniversary of the assassination of president Gabriel Narutowicz by the painter Eligiusz Niewiadomski" (National Gallery of Art Zacheta, Warsaw), "Spring in Warsaw" (2009), "Performing Politics for Germany" (2010), "University Exercise" (Heidelberg, 2010), "Exercise in Citizenship" (Tel-Aviv University, 2010), "Positions" (NY, 6.11.11, Performa&OWS), "SALONS: Birthright Palestine?" (New Museum, New York, 2012) and "The Reenactment of the Mount Herzl Terrorist Attack" (Upcoming).

Nadja Kayali (Q)

studied musicology and opera direction in Vienna and worked in theatre/opera for many years (as assistant to Christoph Marthaler, among others). Currently develops music programmes for Ö1 radio, concept and hosting of concerts in the country and abroad, concert and opera introductions (Salzburger Festspiele, among others), director of unconventional music projects ("Schönberg Express" in a tram, most recently "Red Carpet for John Cage", among others). She focuses on the topic of "The influence of the 'Orient' on European music" in radio programmes, lectures and publications (including programme contributions for Hamburg and Vienna state opera).

Omar Al Rawi (A/IRQ)

Omar Al Rawi, born in Baghdad, has lived in Austria since 1978. Member of the Vienna Federal State Parliament and Vienna City Councillor. Between 1999 and 2011, Al Rawi was commissioner of the Islamic religious community, in 1999 he co-founded the Muslim Austrian Initiative.

Mariusz Jan Demner / Demner, Merlicek & Bergmann (A)

Demner, Merlicek & Bergmann was founded in 1969 and currently serves 52 customers in 13 countries with a staff of 126. D,M&B has been number one in Austria for years, both in terms of turnover and creative ranking, as well as number one in the Effie ranking (efficiency) for the entire German-speaking world. Demner, Merlicek & Bergmann focuses on "brand magnetism" and is responsible for many of the most successful brands in a wide range of industries.

Guleed Mohamed / Love Tensta (SE)

Guleed Mohamed is an activist, branding consultant and a community organizer of Muslim Somali origin who has been one of the leading figures in the Stockholm immigrants suburb, Tensta. Mohamad co-founded "Love Tensta" in 2008, a youth center mainly for young people with an immigrant background. Their activities include business consultancy, design and advertising, guided tours as well as social work, educational programs, and an exchange of addresses between "new Swedes" and "native Swedes".

Metahaven (NL)

Metahaven is an Amsterdam-based research and design outfit on the cutting edge between politics and aesthetics. Founded by Vinca Kruk and Daniel van der Velden, Metahaven's work—both commissioned and self-directed—reflects political and social issues in provocative graphic design objects. Daniel van der Velden is a Senior Critic at Yale University, and a Tutor of Design at the Sandberg Institute Amsterdam. In 2010, Metahaven released *Uncorporate Identity*, a design anthology for our dystopian age, published by Lars Müller.

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Marwan Abado (A/PS)

Marwan Abado is a Palestinian singer, composer and oud player. Abado's music has its roots in the classical Arabic musical tradition of the "TAQ'SIM,". Born as a Palestinian refugee in Beirut, Lebanon in 1967 Abado moved to Vienna, Austria in 1985, where he continues his studies. Concurrently, he is performing as a solo musician and member of several ensembles in Austria and worldwide.

Muhammad Asad (A)

Muhammad Asad is a journalist, traveler, writer, diplomat, political theorist, translator and scholar born in Lemberg, Austria. He helped to draft the Pakistani constitution, and served as the Pakistani ambassador to the UN in New York. He is also known for translating the Qu'ran into English. His other books include "The Road to Mecca" and "Islam at the Crossroads". He is currently a visiting fellow at the University of Muri.

Choir of the Islamic Cultural Center Graz (A)

The Choir of the Islamic Cultural Center Graz had its first public appearance at the European Imam Conference in Graz in 2003. Since then the choir appeared at the Ramadan reception organized by the mayor of Graz Mr. Nagl, the interreligious roundtable in Vienna, and the big choir meeting of Islam choirs in Graz, among other venues. The choir organizes internal performances during the so-called "Nacht der Ilahi" two to three times a year. The members of the choir change constantly, consisting mainly of students who leave the choir after studying in Graz.

Neslihan Celebi (A)

Neslihan Celebi is the founder of the oriental dance studio "Oriental Groove" in Graz and promotes an open-minded approach to different cultures. She was the first oriental dancer performing in the Konzerthaus Wien and appeared in various TV performances. Her contribution for the Rebranding European Muslims Gala will be performed by Katharina Zotter and Helene Byma.

Jackie Shemesh (GB)

Jackie Shemesh is a London-based light and stage designer for dance, theatre, opera and music and has worked with many renowned international dance and theatre companies including amongst others: The Young Vic, Almeida Theatre, Scottish Dance Theatre, Lyric Theatre London, Uzes Dance Festival, Batsheva Ensemble, Tel Aviv Opera and Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra.

Information and tickets:

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