



MIT program
in art, culture and
technology
School of Architecture + Planning

artJameel
Abdul Latif Jameel | Community Initiatives



ARTISTS AND SCIENTISTS COME TOGETHER TO CREATE AND SHARE TECHNOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR CULTURAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE US AND THE MIDDLE EAST



CULTURUNNERS WORKSHOPS, MAJLIS SYMPOSIUM AND PUBLIC LECTURE OCTOBER 1 – 6, 2014 MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Cambridge, MA – CULTURUNNERS week of workshops and public events at MIT (October 1 - 6, 2014) is a multidisciplinary gathering of artists, designers, filmmakers, scientists, curators, and scholars whose practices inspire novel approaches towards cross-cultural exchanges specific to the United States and the Middle East. The events include **three days of hands-on workshops, an interactive public Majlis Symposium**, and a presentation as part of the ACT's **Monday Night Lecture Series**. CULTURUNNERS will use custom-built **artistic technologies and wearables** developed throughout the week-long event to map, archive, and broadcast the experiences of the travelers over the course of a three year tour across the United States.

Participants include:

Lara Baladi, multi-disciplinary Lebanese artist; **Abdullah Al-Mutairi**, artist and founding member of the artist collective - GCC; **Carol Huh**, the first curator of Contemporary Art at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; **Ahmed Mater**, artist and co-founder of Edge of Arabia; **Michael Rakowitz**, an artist whose decade long "Enemy Kitchen" project uses Iraqi food as an artistic gesture to open dialogue; **Rashad Salim**, multidisciplinary artist and activist who utilizes conceptual practices and printmaking techniques such as Mesopotamian cylinder seals to explore ideas of home and voyaging; **Husam Al-Sayed**, filmmaker and member of the Telfaz 11 - one of the Middle East's most influential Arabic online video networks based in Riyadh; **Peter Schmitt**, artist and roboticist; and **Daanish Masood**, advisor at UN Alliance of Civilizations and organizer of interactive performance-installation, *The Machine to Be Another*, aimed at developing conflict resolution through technology, including advanced 'body swap' virtual reality applications.

Further information, including bios of all participants, is available [here](#).

CULTURUNNERS is a core component of the Edge of Arabia's US tour – in partnership with Art Jameel - and ACT's Culture Fabric research on cultural empathy.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AT MIT



MIT Media Lab Exterior, copyright Andy Ryan

WEDNESDAY– FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1 – 3: **APPLIED WORKSHOPS**

Timing: Daily 10am – 6pm

Location: Program in Art, Culture and Technology,
Media Lab Complex, MIT.

MOBILE & WEARABLE TECHNOLOGIES

Workshop Leader: Azra Akšamija, artist and
architectural historian, Assistant Professor at MIT.

ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS and ARCHIVAL PLATFORMS

Workshop Leader: Stephen Stapleton and Ahmed
Mater, artists and Edge of Arabia co-founders

SUNDAY OCTOBER 5TH: MAJLIS SYMPOSIUM

Timing: 12pm – 6pm

Location: Program in Art, Culture and Technology,
Media Lab Complex, MIT.

Wiesner Bldg, Lower Level, 20 Ames Street,
Cambridge, MA

MONDAY OCTOBER 6TH: CULTURUNNERS @ MIT EVENING LECTURE

Timing: 7pm – 9 pm

Location: Bartos Theatre, MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology, Wiesner Building, Lower Level, 20 Ames Street, Cambridge, MA

To join as an audience member in the free Public Symposium, please RSVP [here](#).
Applied Workshop participation is by invitation only.

Connect with Edge of Arabia on [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) for all the latest news, updates, photos and more.
Join the conversation by mentioning @EdgeOfArabia and using the #EOAUSA #CULTURUNNERS hashtags.

ABOUT THE PARTNERS

Art Jameel

Art Jameel – Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI) arts and culture initiative – aims to foster and promote a thriving arts scene within the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT) region and to support the development of creative enterprises. In partnership with art organizations worldwide, Art Jameel develops cultural exchange programs to encourage networking and knowledge sharing.

Art Jameel is the founding partner of Edge of Arabia, The Crossway Foundation, Arabian Wings, Jeddah Art Week and The Archive. In partnership with the Victoria & Albert Museum in London it provides the biannual Jameel Prize for contemporary art inspired by Islamic traditions. Additional projects include: Jeddah Sculptures Museum, a public park established in collaboration with Jeddah Municipality; the Art Jameel Photography Award; and the Art Jameel Art Olympics in collaboration with the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia.

ALJCI was established in 2003 to promote positive social change through the establishment of long-term partnerships with international institutions, and the creation of initiatives in the fields of Job Creation, Global Poverty Alleviation, Arts and Culture, Education and Training, Health and Social. More information on ALJCI's considerable set of initiatives can be found online at www.aljci.org.

Edge of Arabia

Edge of Arabia is an independent non-profit arts and education enterprise dedicated to connecting Middle Eastern and international artists and audiences. The initiative is the brainchild of two artists, Ahmed Mater (Saudi Arabia) and Stephen Stapleton (UK/Norway) who met in the mountains of South-West Saudi Arabia in 2003 and shared a common desire "to create a real artistic movement that connected people across borders." With its exhibitions, educational programs, and publications, it seeks to foster new audiences and inspire young artists to develop independent and authentic practices and to collaborate across borders.

Based between London and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, *Edge of Arabia* maintains creative independence and has, to date, welcomed over 250,000 visitors to its exhibitions and distributed over 50,000 publications worldwide. International exhibitions include: *Rhizoma*, 55 Venice Biennale (2013); *#COMETOGETHER*, East London (2012); *We Need to Talk*, Jeddah (2012); *The Future of a Promise*, 54th Venice Biennale (2011); *Terminal*, Dubai (2011); *Transition*, Istanbul: European Capital of Culture (2010); *Grey Borders/Grey Frontiers*, Berlin (2010); *Edge of Arabia*, Riyadh (2010); *Edge of Arabia*, 53rd Venice Biennale (2009); and *Edge of Arabia*, University of London (2008)

ABOUT THE HOST

MIT Program in Art, Culture, Technology

The Program in Art, Culture and Technology (ACT) is an academic department and research center which facilitates artist-thinkers' exploration of art's broad, complex, global history and conjunction with culture, science, technology, and design via rigorous critical artistic practice and practice driven theory.

This exploration occurs in the program's academic offerings and the research of faculty, fellows, and guests in individual and collaborative forms and media including cinema, video, sound, performance, photography, experimental media and new genres, conceptual, sculptural, and spatial experiments, writings and publications. Critical thinking, knowledge mining, and creative engagement, along with explorations of changing public and private spheres, are of particular relevance. Extracurricular activities include a cross-disciplinary lecture series, field trips, workshops, studio visits, and public presentations.

ACT is one of the five discipline groups in the Department of Architecture within the School of Architecture + Planning at MIT. ACT offers a highly selective two-year graduate degree — Master of Science in Art, Culture and Technology (SMACT) — and graduate courses for students in other disciplines. On the undergraduate level, ACT offers a Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) concentration and minor. Throughout the academic year, ACT hosts numerous public programs, including the well-regarded Monday Night Lecture Series.

For more information about the event, please contact:

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