

AGENDA

LEBANON

MUSIC

'Only Beethoven'
Emile Bustani Auditorium, Beirut
 March 19, 8:30 p.m.
 Pianist Gloria Campaner is accompanied by the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia under the baton of Gianluca Marciano in performing "Coriolan Overture," "Emperor" and "Symphony No. 5" by the legendary German composer. The event is part of the ongoing 2016 Al Bustan Festival.

'Grand Finale'
Emile Bustani Auditorium, Beirut
 March 20, 8:30 p.m.
 The final event of the 2016 Al Bustan Festival will feature soprano Anna Kasyan and the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia under the baton of Gianluca Marciano performing the works of Tchaikovsky, Bellini, Gounod and Verdi.

PHOTOGRAPHY

'Colorful Centimeters 1800'
392Rmeil393, Gouraud Street, Gemmayzeh
 March 22 to April 10
 Johnny Semaan and Kaed Haydar document everyday life in Syria that occurs despite five years of civil war.

'A Closer Look at the Ordinary'
Tanit Gallery, East Village Building, Mar Mikhael
 Through March 31
 01-562-812
 Serge Najjar's striking new series of architectural photos blend reality and fantasy.

ART

'To Be a Woman'
ARTLAB, Gouraud St., Gemmayzeh, first right after St. Nicolas stairs
 Through March 26
 03-244-577
 These works by Iranian artists explore the lives of women around the Middle East.

'L'Attrait du Paysage Libanais'
Aida Cherfan Fine Art Gallery, Hussein al-Abdab Street, Downtown Beirut
 Through March 24
 04-444-111
 This show of work by abstract artist Pierre Mouhanna is comprised of paintings of Lebanon's modernist architecture.

'Regimes of the Personal'
ArtSpace Hamra, 6th Floor, Costa Cafe Bldg, Hamra
 Through April 2
 01-736-516
 Thirteen works by Ghada Zoughby discuss the private and public spheres of our lives, asking what our personal belongings say about us.

READING

'International Storytelling and Monodrama Festival'
La Crypte, St. Joseph Church, Asbrafiyeh, next to Theatre Monnot
 Through March 20, 7:30 p.m.
 01-978-829
 The House of Storytelling and Monodrama in collaboration with Theatre Monnot present five nights and five storytellers. This year's theme is "An Invitation to Travel."

JUST A THOUGHT

One just principle from the depths of a cave is more powerful than an army.

Jose Martí
 (1853-1895)
 Cuban poet, writer, journalist and revolutionary

REVIEW

The musics of stalactites and spheres

The performances of SAF's 2016 March Meetings: challenging, informative, cool

By Jim Quilty
 The Daily Star

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates: In November 1969, Lebanon's Jeita Grotto was host to a historic sound event. German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen and a troupe of musicians descended on the cave complex – renowned for its sheer size and the beauty of its stalactites – to stage a four-day contemporary music festival.

Feted as one of the most important composers of the 20th and early-21st centuries, Stockhausen's several interests included spatialization, how music travels in space. He was intrigued by the sonic possibilities of Jeita's eight-second-long echoes in changing the fabric of his music.

Stockhausen's trite with Jeita was the subject of "Time Tuning," Raed Yassin's lecture performance in Sharjah earlier this week. The Lebanese visual and sound artist introduced the composer's work and shared some fascinating footage shot during the 1969 event.

He then performed an excerpt from his own remix of Stockhausen's "Stimmung" (Tuning), which the Cologne Vocal Ensemble performed in Jeita in 1969. Yassin plans to revisit this work in 2019, the 50th anniversary of their seminal performance, when he intends to restage Stockhausen's festival within Jeita.

Yassin took some pains to emphasize that his plans to restage Stockhausen isn't an exercise in nostalgia. "To move forward in your work," he told his Sharjah audience, "you need an unquestioning sense of hope ... and an interest in the future. It sometimes feels as though we've lost this unquestioning sense of hope. We live in the perpetual present."

Yassin's presentation was staged at the Sharjah Art Foundation's March Meetings, an annual assembly of global art professionals and institutions working in the production and dissemination of art.

Held in the gap year between SAF's art biennial, March Meetings have been staged since 2008 with the aim of creating a forum where professionals can connect, share ideas and expertise, network and collaborate in future projects.

The talks are complemented by a series of SAF-sponsored exhibitions and performances.

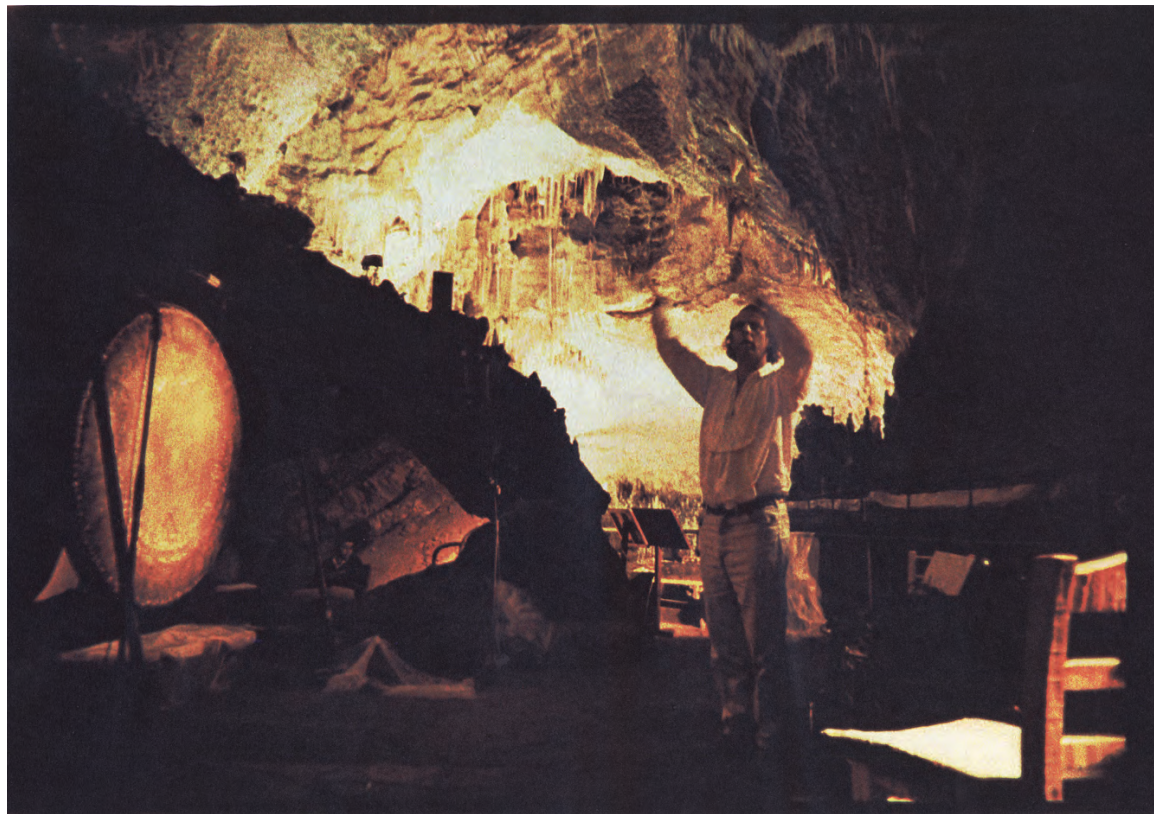
"Time Tuning" was among a handful of works especially commissioned for "The Time is Out of Joint," an exhibition assembled by Cairo-born curator Tarek Abou El Fetouh and hosted at the SAF's new spaces.

The show builds upon the exhibition program Abou El Fetouh erected in Beirut for Home Works 6 in 2013. Among the several historical sources the curator has cited as inspirations is Andalusian philosopher Ibn al-Arabi, specifically his notion of time as a fluid place and place as frozen time.

Abou El Fetouh's project "challenges the constraints of time and place by suggesting leaps across temporal and geographic boundaries, deliberately confusing times, places, cities and artistic events that



Taro Shinoda and Uriel Barthelemi's "Lunar Reflection Transmission Technique" at March Meetings.



Composer Karlheinz Stockhausen in Jeita Grotto in November 1969.

took place in the past or will take place in the future."

"The Time is Out of Joint" also re-enacts two exhibitions staged at recent transitional moments – the First Arab Arts Biennale in Baghdad in 1974 and the China/Avant-Garde exhibition in Beijing in 1989. It also seeks to "pre-enact" a future event, the Equator Conference, scheduled for Yogyakarta in 2022.

"The Time is Out of Joint" exhibition includes videos, installations, photography and performances by a wide range of international artists including Zeinab Al Hashemi, Basma Alsharif, Ali Cherri, Maha Maamoun, Basim Magdy, Khalil Rabah, Wael Shawky and Jalal Toufic, as well as Yassin.

After days devoted to absorbing hours of scintillating artist and institutional talks and exhibitions of often intellectually engaging contemporary art, the performances staged for "The Time is Out of Joint" were notably challenging.

Basma Alsharif's "Doppelganger" set the artist on the stage of the Sharjah Institute for Theatrical Arts to perform a piece that would likely have been more at home in a less-formal setting.

Dressed in an outfit adorned with reflective strips, Alsharif was lit by strobe lights so furiously insistent that ushers had to warn prospective audience members to beware attending if they're prone to seizures.

Working with a variety of audio-

visual media – including nicely muddled landscapes shot on 8mm- and 16mm film and a video montage of soft-porn boob shots – the work mingles historical-fictional Palestine autobiography and mild audience-confrontation tactics to interrogate matters of place and time.

Held on March 13-14, Mark Teh's self-reflexive "Baling" restages the 1955 Baling Talks, during which the nominally independent leaders of Singapore and Malaya (nowadays Malaysia) confronted Malayan communist and guerrilla leader Chin Peng, who'd long fought foreign occupation of the peninsula. Profoundly critical of mediated depictions, the work scrutinizes the matter of nationalism and

the person of Chin Peng himself. Perhaps the most transcendent performance to be held during the 2016 March Meetings, however, wasn't part of "The Time is Out of Joint."

That distinction goes to "Lunar Reflection Transmission Technique," another new SAF commission, a 45-minute collaboration of video artist Taro Shinoda and percussionist Uriel Barthelemi.

Shinoda's work is preoccupied with capturing the movement of the moon, using a telescope he hobbled together, mostly from corrugated cardboard scraps, and a video camera. With this low-tech gear he's recorded the moon's passage across the nighttime sky from various terrestrial vantage points – including Tokyo, Istanbul, Limerick, Boston and Sharjah.

Held on the evening of March 11 in a natural depression in Sharjah's Mleiha desert, "Lunar Reflection Transmission Technique" saw Shinoda's black-and-white footage of the moon's nightly passages over various urban centers projected on a 9 x 12-meter screen. For this performance, Shinoda erected an improvised-looking watchtower-like wooden structure, which loomed over the screen and audience members splayed on the square of rugs and pillows laid out at the foot of the screen. Atop this tower sat Barthelemi, working a rock 'n' roll percussion battery augmented by a kettle drum and gong.

The desert location – complete with a smiling sliver of moon, smirking down at the several versions of itself rolling across the screen – conspired with Shinoda's monochrome light studies and Barthelemi's often muscular percussive stylings to create a unique, occasionally hypnotic sort of atmosphere.

It would be cliché to call it zen, but it sure was cool.

For more, see www.sharjahart.org

Painterly The Assassin tops winners at Asian Film Awards

By Angela Chen
 Associated Press

MACAU: Hou Hsiao-hsien's painterly martial arts masterpiece "The Assassin" claimed eight wins at the Asian Film Awards, including best film and best director.

The cinematic historical drama was also honored for cinematography and its lead and supporting actresses at the ceremony Thursday night in Macau.

Best-actress winner Shu Qi jokingly thanked the "Band-Aids and medicine" that accompanied her during filming, referring to the rigorous training to prepare for the role.

Taiwanese director Hou did not attend but the film's cinematographer Mark Lee collected the awards on the director's behalf. He thanked the jury, the cast and crew and Hou's supporters in the region.

"The Assassin," a gorgeously filmed story of a female killer faced with an impossible choice between love and duty, was named best film at Taiwan's Golden Horse Awards and the veteran Hou won best director at the Cannes Film Festival last year.

Chinese actress Zhou Yun of "The Assassin" was named best-supporting actress, while the best-



Shu Qi poses with her trophy after winning the best actress award.

supporting actor honor went to Japan's Tadanobu Asano for "Journey to the Shore."

Lee Byung hun won best actor for his role in the political thriller "Inside Men." Accepting the award,

Lee thanked the director and his co-star, but saved the most important people until last: "I would like to

thank my wife and son at home for all the love and support through good times and bad," the South Korean actor said.

In addition to his work in Asia, Lee has enjoyed success in Hollywood, having appeared in "G.I. Joe: Retaliation" and "Terminator Genisys."

Lee was invited to last month's Oscars as the only Asian presenter.

After criticism over the lack of ethnic diversity among the nominees, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences added three new governors to its 51-member board and appointed six minority members to other leadership positions. The academy also apologized to Asians for a racially insensitive skit during the ceremony.

Lee said he wasn't aware of the controversy surrounding host Chris Rock's joke, but he said Hollywood needs to generally broaden its definition of diversity. "It's for all of us actually. For Asians, for Hispanics, for blacks. I think more roles should come to every kind of race," he said.

In its 10th year, the Asian Film Awards celebrate the best talents in Asian cinema. Hong Kong director Johnnie To was the jury president, with actors Sean Lau Chin-wan and Gao Yuanyuan among the film industry figures also on the panel.