

Fellows



Melanie Sindelar
IFK_Junior Fellow

Duration of fellowship
01. October 2017 bis 30. June 2018

Melanie Sindelar

PROJECT-TITLE

Their Past in a Painting: Remembering Local Heritage in the Arab Gulf

PROJECT-DESCRIPTION

In the last ten years, local artists in the UAE have begun responding to state interventions in the UAE's art scene which seek to promote art production related to the country's Bedouin heritage. The state's interventions into the arts via funding and other support mechanisms however produced conflicting opinions and heated debates amongst artists in Dubai, the location of my ethnographic research. My research questions address, firstly, the ways in which the UAE are trying to disseminate Bedouin narratives in the local art world, and secondly, how artists practicing in Dubai are responding to these attempts. The project's underlying epistemological interest asks about the role artists assume in nation-building projects. Are artists aiding nation-building efforts in the UAE? Or are artists resisting these attempts, and if so, how?

CV

Melanie Sindelar is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Vienna, where she has also been a uni:docs fellow. Her current research project *Their Past in a Painting: Remembering Local Heritage in the Arab Gulf* examines the relationship between contemporary art production and nation-building in the Arab Gulf. She has been a Visiting Researcher at the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies and its adjacent Gulf Studies Centre at Exeter University. Melanie Sindelar received multiple grants for her studies, including a grant for the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR) at the Maxwell School, Syracuse University, NY. She received her M.Sc. in Social Anthropology, with a focus on the Middle East, from Oxford University, after completing her B.A. degree in Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology with distinction at the University of Vienna.

Publications

"Land Art as a means to negotiate the culture/nature divide in the desert of the UAE", in: *Cesky Lid* (monothematische Ausgabe), erscheint 2017; "Local, Regional, Global: An Investigation of Art Dubai's Transnational Strategies", in: *Arabian Humanities* 7 | 2016, URL <http://cy.revues.org/3250>