

DECOLONIZING ARCHITECTURE

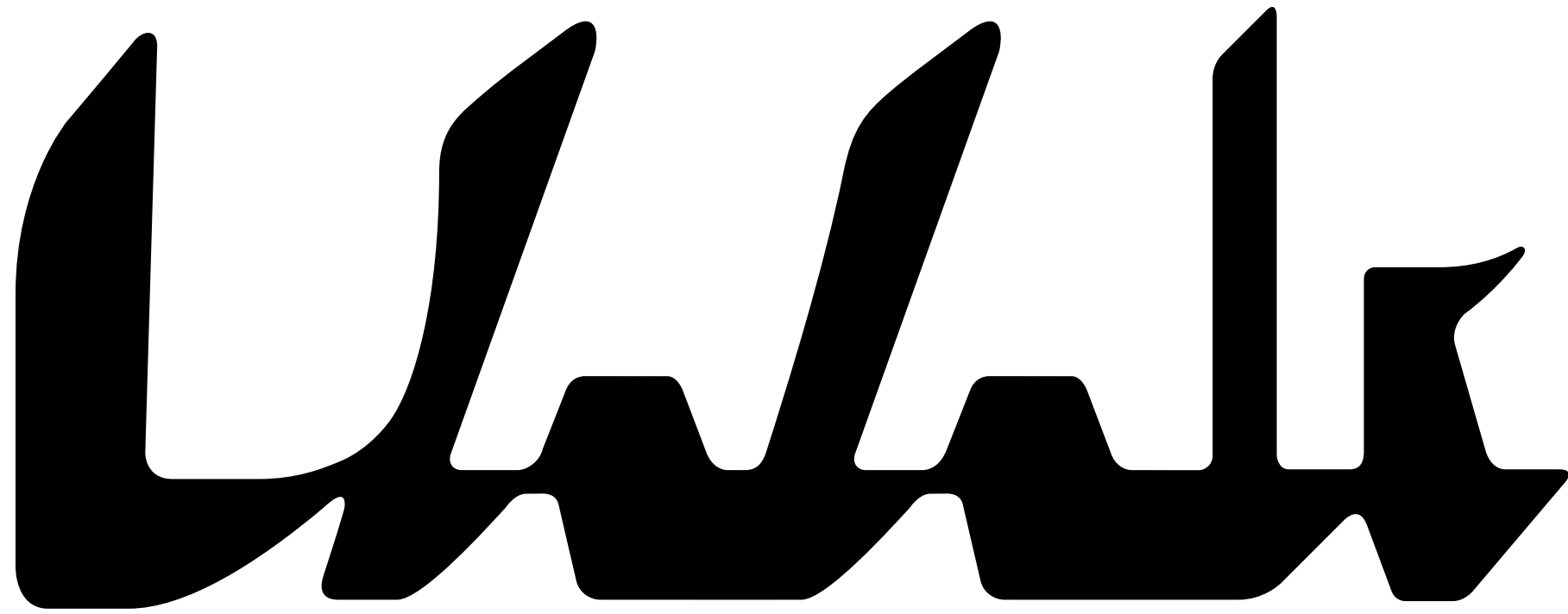
A PROJECT BY ALESSANDRO PETTI,
SANDI HILAL AND EYAL WEIZMAN

December 7, 2010–February 6, 2011

The exhibition is funded in part with generous support from the Nimoy Foundation, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and the haudenschild**Garage**. The Standard is the official hotel of REDCAT. In-kind support provided by Brian Quandt.



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Gallery Hours: noon-6pm or intermission, closed Mondays



DECOLONIZING ARCHITECTURE ART RESIDENCY

The exhibition centers on three projects by Decolonizing Architecture/ Art Residency (DAAR), a Bethlehem based studio led by Alessandro Petti, Sandi Hilal and Eyal Weizman.

DAAR has been in recent years engaged in a series of projects that seek to use spatial practice as a form of political intervention and narration.

DAAR's work does not start from a utopian image but rather from what already exists.

Probing politics through architectural interventions and mobilizing architecture politically, it proposes the subversion, reuse, profanation and recycling of the existing infrastructure of a colonial occupation. It employs political, legal and architectural approaches in beginning to articulate the contours of a "detoured" world in which all physical and organizational structures are reused, but not in the way they were originally designed for.

With the possibility of significant transformation blocked by the political impasse otherwise known as the "peace process," one of the challenges of the project is to test out the ways in which architecture can function as an "arena of speculation" about different future scenarios for Palestine, as evidence or as legal claim.

DAAR is directed by Alessandro Petti and was originally conceptualized and its pilot stage produced in dialogue with Eloisa Haudenschild and Steve Fagin, partners in the **haudenschildGarage**, Spare Parts projects. www.decolonizing.ps

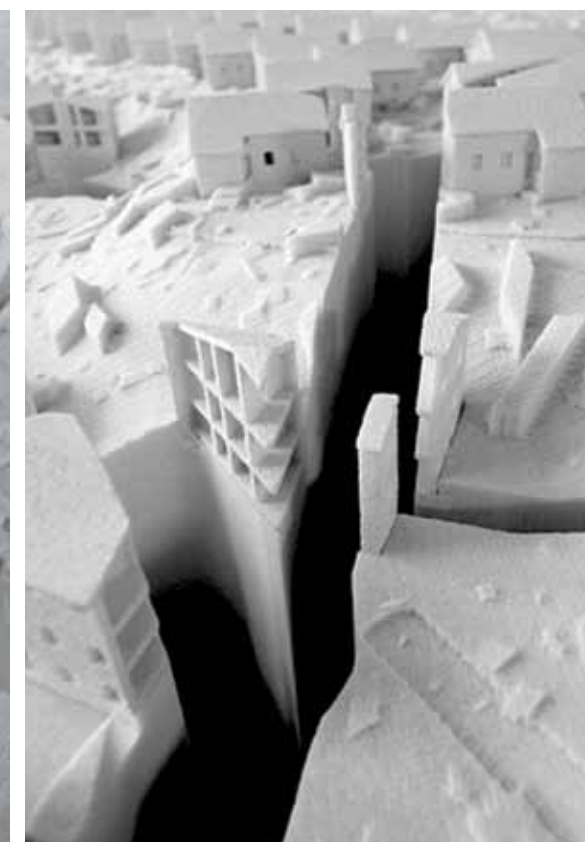
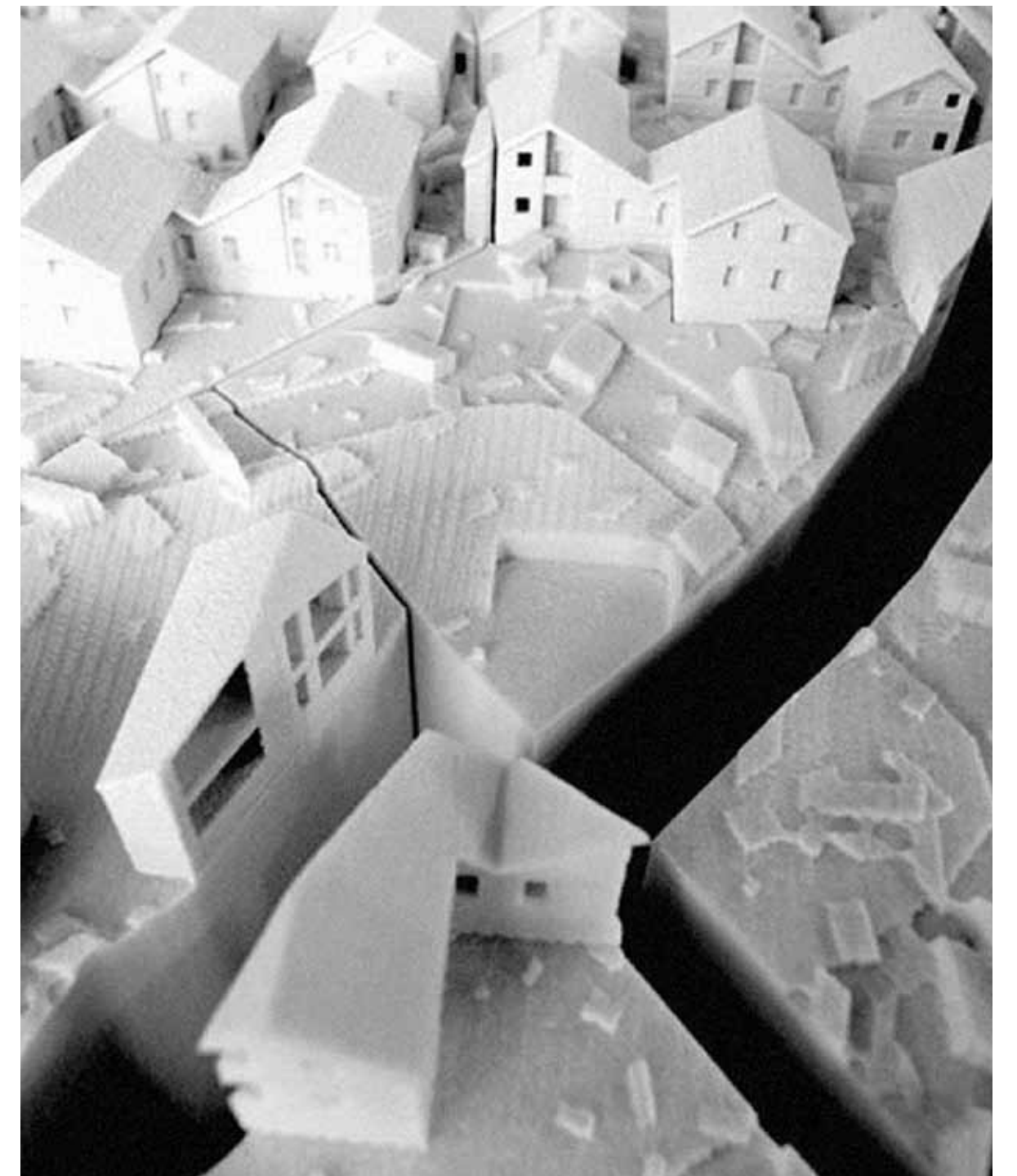
HOW TO INHABIT THE HOUSE OF YOUR ENEMY?

Historical processes of decolonization tended to see the reuse of the buildings and infrastructure left behind in the same way they were designed for, leaving some of the power hierarchies of the colonial world intact.

This project deals with the one of the most difficult questions of decolonization: how to inhabit the colonies and military bases to be evacuated in the future archaeology of Israel's occupation?

Concentrating on the settlement of Psagot near Ramallah, the guiding principle was not to eliminate the power of the occupation's built spaces, nor simply to reuse it in the way it was designed for, but rather to reorient its logic to other aims.

Psagot, like other settlements, is suburban when thought of in relation to the Jewish geography in the occupied territories. These settlements are fenced up bedroom communities fed by a growing matrix of roads and other infrastructure, but they must be articulated as potentially urban when considered in relation to the Palestinian cities besides which they were built.



Architecture: Barbara Modolo, Pietro Onofri, Armina Pilav, Rana Shaka
Manual of decolonization: Salottobuono
Landscape design and models: Situ Studio
Video editing: Roberto Sartor, Allegra Martin

RETURN TO NATURE

In May 2006, the Israeli army evacuated the military fortress of Oush Grab [Crow's Nest in Arabic] strategically located on one of the highest hills at the southern edge of the Palestinian city of Beit Sahour in the Bethlehem region.

On the summit, several concrete buildings formed the heart of the fortress. Throughout the Intifada the Israeli military piled sand and rubble in a giant circle around the hill, which made it appear like a crater of an artificial volcano. The buildings, damaged and evacuated, resembled edifices of a ghost town, abandoned after some mysterious disaster.

Since its evacuation, groups of settlers have attempted to establish a new settlement within Oush Grab. The fight for the hilltop has taken place as activists, settlers and the military clash on site and in courts.

The hilltop is also a point of natural singularity. It serves as one of the main sites where birds—starlings, storks and raptors—land to rest on their seasonal migration between Northeast Europe and East Africa every spring and fall. Around them a rich micro-ecology of small predators and other wildlife gathers. The scene is at once breathtaking and terrifying, and the inhabitants of Beit Sahour now joke that the flocks of migrating birds are the real reason behind the military evacuation.

Our intention seeks to accelerate the processes of destruction and disintegration. It is an architectural project for obsolescence, where the "ghost town" of the former military base is gradually "returned to nature."



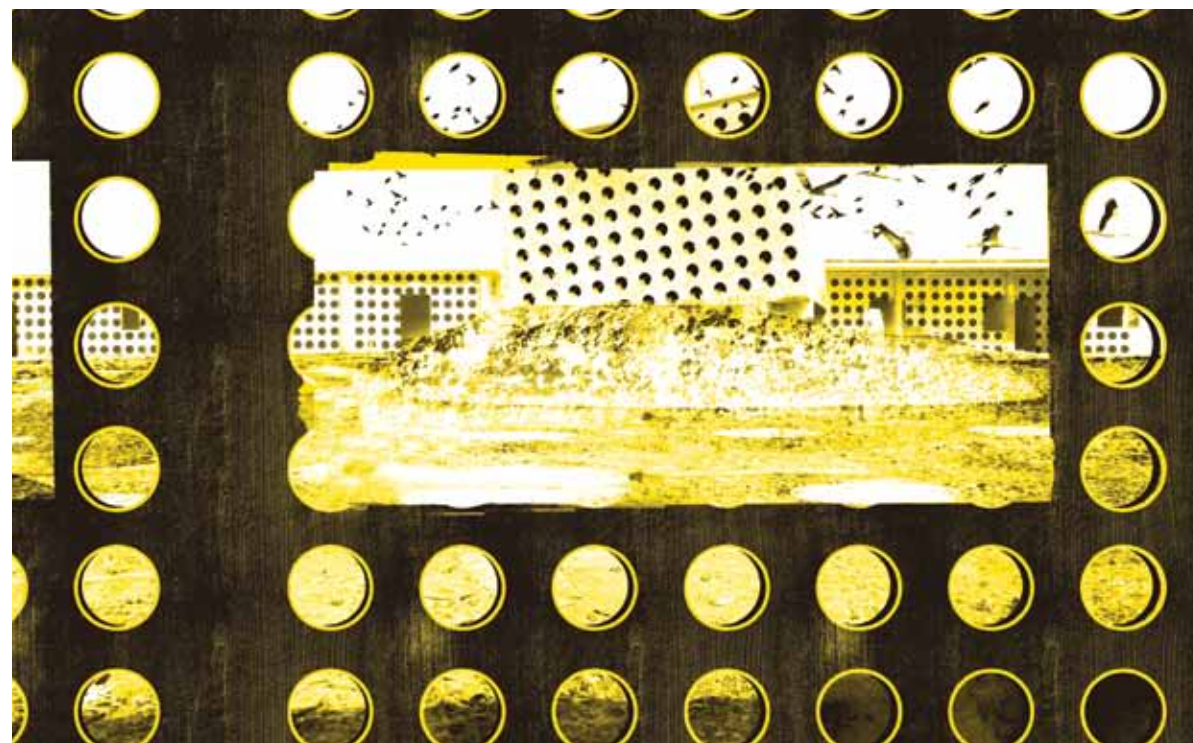
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Architecture: Mario Abuzzese, Jiries Boullata, Sara Pellegrini, Francesca Vargiu, Merlin Eayrs, Silvia Bellotti
Photos: Francesco Mattuzzi
Landscape design and models: Situ Studio
Images: Sara Pellegrini, Diego Segatto

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8-10

1-3 Photos by Francesco Mattuzzi, *Oush Grab Military Base*, Bethlehem, Palestine
4-5 Model of Oush Grab, 2008. Installation view, Delfina Foundation, London.
Photo ©Barbara Modolo (6) and Jawad Al Malhi (7)

6-10 Photomontages by Sara Pellegrini, *Return to Nature...The Transformation of the Military Base of Oush Grab (The Crow's Nest)*.

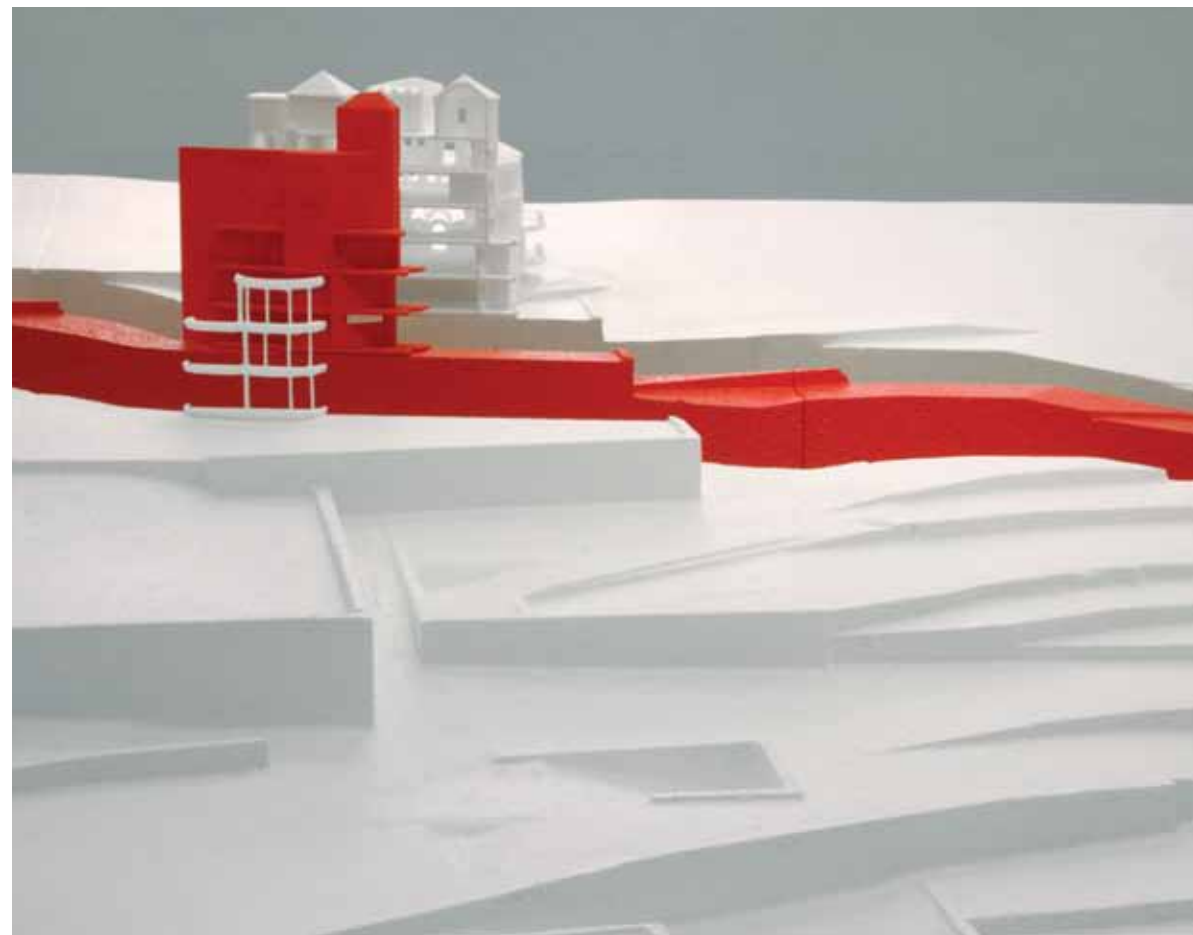
THE RED CASTLE AND THE LAWLESS LINE

In 1993, a series of secret talks held in Oslo between Israeli and Palestinian representatives inaugurated what was later referred to as the "Oslo Process." As is well known, this process defined three types of territories within the West Bank: Area A under Palestinian control, Area B under Israeli military control and Palestinian civilian control, and Area C under full Israeli control. When the process collapsed and the temporary organization of the occupied territories solidified into a permanently splintered geography of multiple separations and prohibitions, a fourth space had suddenly been discovered.

Existing in between this space was the width of the line that separates the three areas. Less than a millimeter thick on paper, when drawn on the scale of 1:20,000, the line measures 5.5 meters in real space. THE RED CASTLE AND THE LAWLESS LINE delves into the thickness of this line, and follows it along the edges of villages and towns, across fields, olive and fruit orchards, roads, gardens, kindergartens, fences, terraces, homes, public buildings, a football stadium, a mosque and finally a recently constructed large castle. Within this line is a zone undefined by law, a legal limbo that acts like a vortex to pull in all the forces, institutions, organizations and characters that operate within and around it.

With areas A, B and C already claimed by different forms of co-operating governments that rule the West Bank, the thickness of the line might become an extraterritorial territory. Perhaps "all that remains" for Palestine is a thin but powerful space for potential political transformations.

Political spaces in Palestine are not defined by legal zones, but operate through legal voids. Investigating the clash of geopolitical lines onto the domestic space of the castle, and operating on the margin between architecture, cartography and legal practice, we seek to bring up a legal case that calls for an anarchic regime of political autonomy to inhabit this line. It is from these seam lines—small tears in the territorial system—that the entire system of divisions may finally be torn down.



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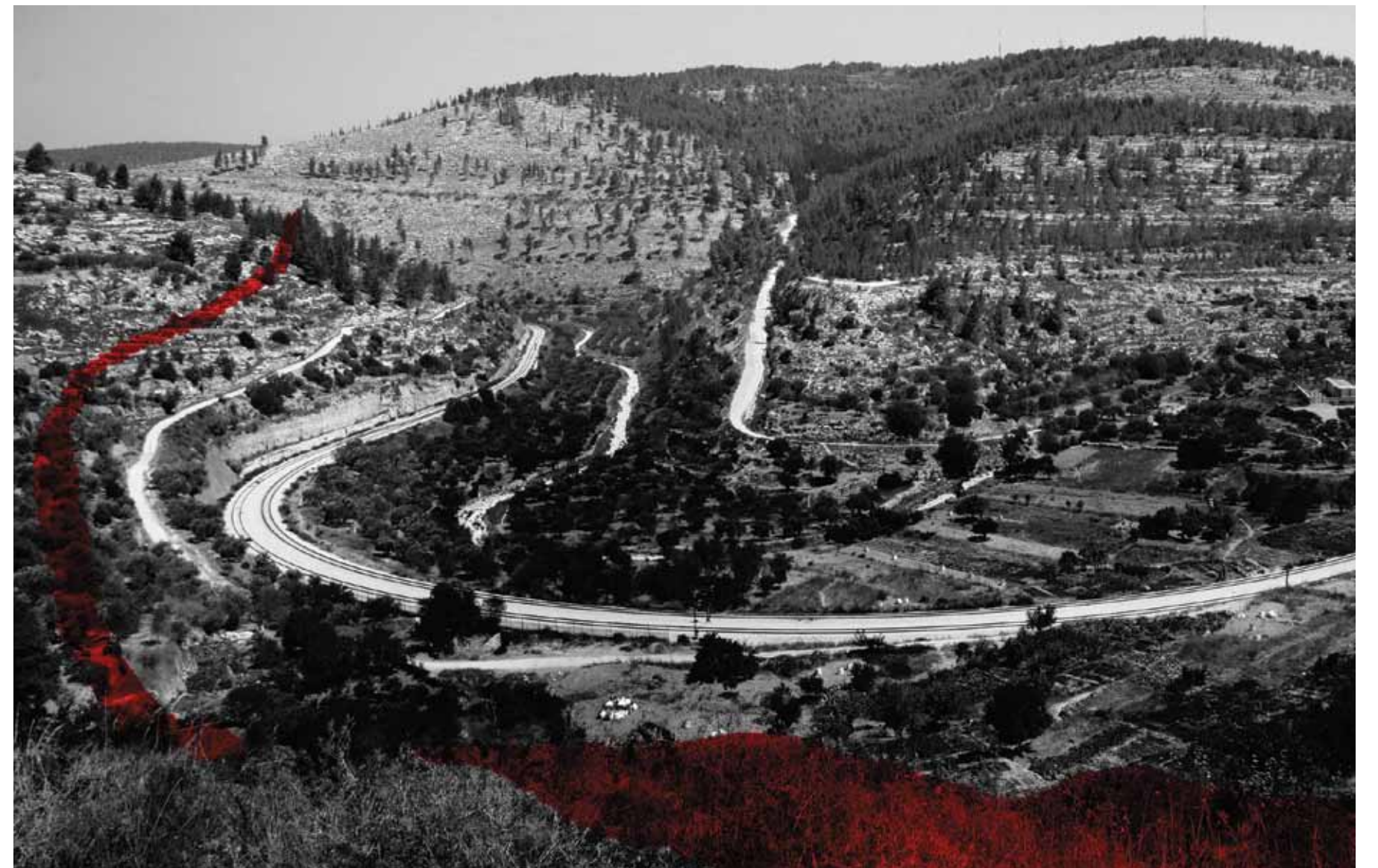
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Research: Nicola Perugini
 Project: Sonia Arw, Benoît Burquel, Luisa Cerlini, Elisa Ferrato, Alessandra Gola, Suzanne Harris-Brandts, Benjamin Leclair-Paquet, Michael Baers, Amina Bech
 In collaboration with UNESCO Battir Landscape Office: Samir Harb, Mohammad Hammash, Hassan Muamer, Nicola Perugini
 Delfina Foundation Resident: Lorenzo Pezzani
 Photo and Video: Amina Bech
 With the support of UNESCO/Ramallah Office and Al Quds-Bard Honors College

FLOORPLAN

ROOM 1

- 1_A| Video of Gaza, digital video with sound, 2 min. 18 sec.

ROOM 2 RETURN TO NATURE

- 2_A| Model of Oush Grab
 2_B| Photomontages by Sara Pellegini, Return to Nature,
The Transformation of the Military Base of Oush Grab (The Crow's Nest)
 2_C| Photos by Francesco Mattuzzi, Oush Grab Military Base Inside Tower,
Bethlehem, Palestine and Oush Grab Military Base Outside Tower,
Bethlehem, Palestine
 2_D| The Book of Activism and The Book Migration
 2_E| Wall installation

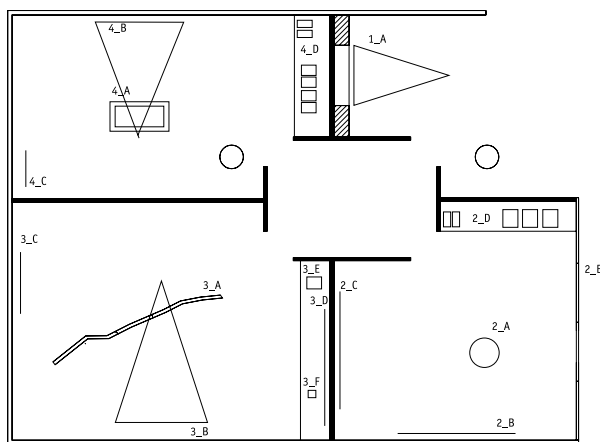
ROOM 3 THE RED CASTLE AND THE LAWLESS LINE

- 3_A| Model of The Red Castle and the Lawless Line
 3_B| Video of Lawyer, digital video with sound, 8 min. 13 sec.
 3_C| Photomontage by Suzanne Harris-Brandts, Battir
 3_D| Photomontages by Amina Bech, Tracing the Line
 3_E| Research material
 3_F| Model of Castle

ROOM 4 HOW TO INHABIT THE HOUSE OF YOUR ENEMY?

- 4_A| Model of Deparcelization
 4_B| Future Archaeology, a film by Armin Linke and Francesco Mattuzzi;
 visual effects by Francesco Siddi; sound design by Renato Rinaldi;
 camera by Armin Linke and Francesco Mattuzzi; editing by Armin
 Linke, Francesco Mattuzzi and Renato Rinaldi. 3D stereoscopic video
 with sound, 19 min.
 4_C| Video of Settler, digital video with sound, 10 min. 24 sec.
 4_D| The Book of Profanation and The Book of Proximity

All works courtesy of Decolonizing Architecture/Art Residency



EXHIBITION HISTORY

2010

21st Century: Art in the First Decade, Queensland Art Gallery |
 Gallery of Modern Art, South Brisbane, Australia

The Red Castle and the Lawless Line, 0047, Oslo

The Spacemakers, Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh, UK

Ungrounding, Architekturforum Tirol, Innsbruck, Austria

Oush Grab (the crows nest): Revolving Door Occupation,
 Home Works V, Beirut

Open City: Designing Coexistence, DEPO, Istanbul

2009

What Keeps Mankind Alive?, 11th International
 Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul

4th International Architecture Biennial of Rotterdam, Rotterdam

Decolonizing Architecture, COAC, Barcelona

Islands and Ghettos, NGBK, Berlin

2008

Decolonizing Architecture: Scenarios for the Transformation
of Israeli Settlements, Bozar, Brussels

No Man's Land?, Gemak, The Hague, The Netherlands

11th International Architecture Exhibition,
 Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy

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The Electronic Intifada, 15 July 2010
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 "Decolonizing Architecture." Abitare 504 (2010): 46-57.

Hilal, Sandi, Alessandro Petti and Eyal Weizman.
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Afterall 20 (2009): 17-26.

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 "Unhoming." Considering Forgiveness. Ed. Aleksandra
 Wagner and Carin Kuoni. New York: Vera List Center
 Art and Politics, 2009): 198-209.

Petti, Alessandro, Sandi Hilal and Eyal Weizman.
 "Return to Nature." ArteEast Quarterly: Extra-Territoriality
in the Middle East 1 December 2009
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D la repubblica della donna 648 (May 2009): 23.

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 "Decolonizing Architecture." Roulotte 5 (2009): 94-125.

Nora Barrows-Friedman, "Beit Sahour Reclaims Military Base Site."
The Electronic Intifada 24 June 2008
 <<http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article9642.shtml>>

De Bruyn, Joeri. "Decolonizing Architecture." A+ 214 (2008): 80-6.

BIOGRAPHY

Decolonizing Architecture/Art Residency was founded by Alessandro Petti,
 Sandi Hilal and Eyal Weizman in 2007.

ALESSANDRO PETTI (DIRECTOR)

is an architect, urbanist and researcher based in Bethlehem. He teaches
 at Honors College Al-Quds/Bard University in Abu Dis-Jerusalem. He has
 written on the emerging spatial order dictated by the paradigm of secu-
 rity and control in Arcipelaghi e enclave (Archipelagos and enclaves, Bruno
 Mondadori, Milan 2007). He recently published "The Future Archaeology"
 (Afterall 2009), "Dubai Offshore Urbanism" in Heterotopia and the City
 (Routledge 2008), "Temporary Zones: Alternative Spaces or Territories of
 Social-spatial Control?" in Post-it City (CCC 2008), "Asymmetries of the
 Globalized Space" in The Impossible Prison (Center for Contemporary Art
 Nottingham 2008). He has co-curated different research projects on the
 contemporary urban condition such as Border Devices (2002-07), Uncertain
States of Europe (2001-03), with the Milan-based studio multiplicity (2001-
 03), and Stateless Nation with Sandi Hilal (2002-07). He is working on a
 research project titled "Atlas of Decolonization," an architectural documen-
 tation of the re-use, re-inhabitation and subversion of colonial structures.
 His projects have been published in national and international newspa-
 pers and magazines including the New York Times, Il Manifesto, Al Ayyam,
 Al-Quds, Artforum and Archis.

SANDI HILAL

graduated in Architecture. She works as a consultant with United Nations
 Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) on the camp improvement program. She is
 a visiting professor at the International Academy of Art Palestine and holds
 a research doctorate in Trans-Border Policies for Daily Life from the Univer-
 sity of Trieste. From 2001 to 2005 she was teaching assistant in Visual Arts
 and Urban Studies at the IUAV University of Venice. She was co-curator of
 different research projects shown internationally including Stateless Nation
 and Arab City Project (with Alessandro Petti), Border Devices (with multi-
 plicity). Her publications include "Senza Stato una Nazione," (Marsilio 2003),
 "Living Among the Dead" (Domus 2005), "Road Map" (Equilibri 2004),
 "la stanza dei sogni" (Liguori Editore 2004) and "Stateless Nation" (Archis
 2003). Her projects have been published in national and international newspa-
 pers and magazines including the New York Times, Il Manifesto, Al Ayyam,
 Al-Quds, Artforum and Archis.

EYAL WEIZMAN

is an architect based in London. He studied architecture at the Architectural
 Association in London and completed his PhD at the London Consortium,
 Birkbeck College. He is the director of the Center for Research Architecture
 at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Before this role, Weizman was
 Professor of Architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. As an archi-
 tect in Israel he has been working on architectural projects related to
 art and theater. Weizman works with a variety of NGOs and human rights
 groups in Israel/Palestine. He co-curated the exhibition A Civilian Occupa-
 tion, The Politics of Israeli Architecture, and co-edited the publication of
 the same title. These projects were based on his human-rights research, and
 were banned by the Israeli Association of Architects. They were later shown
 in the exhibition Territories in New York, Berlin, Rotterdam, San Francisco,
 Malmö, Tel Aviv and Ramallah. Weizman has taught, lectured and organized
 conferences in many institutions worldwide. His books include Hollow Land
 (Verso 2007), A Civilian Occupation (Verso 2003), the series Territories 1, 2
and 3, and Yellow Rhythms. Weizman is a regular contributor to many jour-
 nals and magazines and is an editor-at-large for Cabinet Magazine. Weizman
 is the recipient of the James Stirling Memorial Lecture Prize for 2006-07.