



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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“In Palestine poetry and tragedy walk hand in hand and there is no such thing as giving up. It is a culture I am proud to be a part of inside and outside of the Danish House in Palestine.”

Lone Bildsøe Lassen, Director of
the Danish House in Palestine



Photo by: The Danish House in Palestine

A YEAR OF CHANGES

My first year as director of the Danish House in Palestine has been a time of changes and transition.

A new Danish/Palestinian Board has been appointed, the organization has secured funding for the next three years through the Finance Bill of Denmark and a long-term strategic framework 2016 to 2018 has been formalized in partnership with the Danish Representative office in Ramallah. The new economic stability provides new possibilities but also new obligations – we welcome the challenge.

The level of activities – projects and events - has increased in 2015 and our procedures, workflow and strategies have been revised. Through these transitions we remain loyal to the DHIP heritage and the partners, project participants, volunteers, members and employees that have made the Danish House what it is.

If we look beyond DHIP to the situation in Palestine the changes have been as significant but significantly less positive. 136 mainly young Palestinians lost their lives in clashes and confrontations between October and December 2015, thousands are wounded or detained and nothing suggests that the level

of violence will decrease. Our thoughts go out to all those who have lost their family members.

The unstable situation has of course affected the efforts of DHIP but although it has required flexibility and improvised solutions, we have been able to implement successful projects and events and met our organizational ambitions and deadlines.

It goes without saying that this has been made possible through the engagement of our staff, board, donors and partners.

In Palestine poetry and tragedy walk hand in hand and there is no such thing as giving up. It is a culture I am proud to be a part of inside and outside of the Danish House in Palestine.

New and exciting projects are lined up, the house is in great shape and we are ready to raise the bar again in 2016.

Best of wishes to all.

Lone Bildsøe Lassen, Director of the Danish House in Palestine

“We believe in direct and respectful cooperation. We base our projects and events on a constant dialogue with our Palestinian and Danish partners and always look for new ways of learning from and benefiting each other.

The Danish House is open in every sense of the word. We try to adapt to the dynamic and changing reality we work in and see the potential possibilities it offers.”

Lone Bildsøe Lassen, Director of
the Danish House in Palestine

ABOUT US

The Danish House in Palestine (DHIP) is an independent organization based in Ramallah, Palestine which works on a cross cultural mandate. Our board, staff, partners, visitors and project participants represent both Danes and Palestinians.

DHIP

is committed to promoting volunteerism at the core of its work and as a means of achieving its strategic objectives.

DHIP

aims to be a transparent organization and expects its members, partners and others to hold DHIP accountable to its vision, mission and business practices.

DHIP

aims to create programs and projects that are sustainable and which have the potential to continue beyond DHIP's involvement.

Vision

The Danish House in Palestine's vision is to strengthen mutual understanding and appreciation between Danish and Palestinian cultures, as well as encouraging the values of open and tolerant societies.

Mission

The Danish House in Palestine's mission is to foster opportunities for cultural and educational exchange and cooperation between Danes and Palestinians on individual and institutional levels.

PROJECTS 2015




Photo by: The Danish House in Palestine

DESIGN IN CONTEXT

Design in Context is a long-term project with the objective of empowering Palestinian designers and craftswomen both creatively and economically. By rethinking traditional Palestinian textile design, the aim is to develop products with a broad market appeal in Palestine which also have international potential.

In the last months of 2015 the craftswomen have been participating in design and business workshops, learning business planning essentials, designing new products and developing their technical skills. The workshops have given them the tools to be able to start their own businesses by the beginning of 2016.

“I learned how to make traditional embroidery from my family, but at the design workshops I learned some more difficult things. I learned that I could use the old, traditional embroidery for new scarves, shirts, and accessories.

In the business workshop I learned how to evaluate my own products and how to account for everything I sell and buy. I didn’t know that this was necessary before.

My dream is that there will be a market for my products in the future – either locally or internationally.”

Yusra Qazaz, participant in
Design in Context.

PHOTO MARATHON

In an attempt to challenge stereotypes and show a more complex image of Palestinian identity, culture, and everyday life the Danish House in Palestine organized the Palestine Photo marathon for the fourth year in a row, asking the question: what images are in focus when Palestinians themselves are behind the camera?

On the day of the marathon 101 photo enthusiasts hit the streets of Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Gaza City to participate in the photo competition. For 1, 6, 12, or 24 hours they provided personal and original interpretations of a number of predetermined themes such as; Smile you are in Palestine, Frame it, and Upside Down.

A jury of photographers from Denmark and Palestine assessed the many hundreds of photos submitted, and the winners were announced at a ceremony in the Danish House in Palestine in Ramallah.

The winner of this year's 24-hour Photo-marathon, Samer Hamed from Ramallah, won a trip to Denmark, where he opened the first exhibition of this year's winning pictures in the Danish NGO ActionAid's café in Mellemrummet, Copenhagen. Later on the exhibition was shown in different cities across Palestine.





JOURNALIST EXCHANGE

How do Israeli military checkpoints and social expectations affect artists and ping-pong players? What are the thoughts and fears of Palestinian mothers currently seeing their teenagers taking to the streets calling for an end to decades of occupation?

These were just some of the themes tackled by eight teams of Danish and Palestinian journalists as they explored close to every inch of the West Bank while discovering untold stories, different angles and perspectives on current news stories.

The Danish journalists who represent an array of leading media outlets worked in close partnership with Palestinian counterparts as part of the project Journalist Exchange. The second part of the project will be implemented in March 2016, when the Palestinian journalists visit Denmark. The second phase is co-financed by International Media Support (IMS).

A woman with dark hair, wearing a peach-colored jumpsuit, is standing in a stone archway of an old building. She is looking down and holding onto the stone wall. The building is made of large, rough-hewn stone blocks. The scene is set in a village, likely in Palestine, as part of the 'Living History' project.

LIVING HISTORY

How do you bring history to life? How does theatre recreate the memory of place and time? The project Living History aims at giving life to Palestinian heritage through oral history.

Danish and Palestinian actors recreated history by performing a theatrical scene in old, traditional, Palestinian buildings. Living History was implemented in September with the performance 'Living Stones' taking place in the villages Ein Senya, Birzeit, Ras Karkar and Sebastiya.

"A woman from the old city in Birzeit told me that when she saw the performance she felt at home, because the performance reflected the life of the old generation. When she watched the performance tears ran from her eyes as she was reminded of her life before the war of 1948 and before the intifadas. She remembered how it used to be a normal place inhabited by regular people living a regular veryday life," says Sahar Soufan, Project Coordinator on Living History. "So, I think Living History is an important project. When you see these reactions you know that you made your point and you have reached your audience."



MERGING MUSIC

Merging Music aims at establishing relations between Danish and Palestinian musicians as well as letting them experiment with merging the two musical traditions.

The project took place for the second time in December 2015, when six Palestinian music students went to visit Danish students from the Royal Academy of Music at Aarhus. During one week they participated in workshops and performed concerts together. In March 2016 the Danish musicians are to visit Palestine where they will perform with the Palestinian musicians.

The Merging Music project is a cooperation between The Danish House in Palestine, The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music and The Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus. The project intends to establish a long term partnership between the two music academies.

“They say that music is a universal language and in this project we aim to take advantage of that and combine different traditions to create something new and allow Danish and Palestinian musicians to inspire and learn from each-other,”

Lone Bildsøe Lassen, Director of
the Danish House in Palestine

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Danish House in Palestine hosted a variety of events throughout the year. We have screened a wide range of films – from the prize winning Danish production ‘We Shall Overcome’ to the documentary ‘Epicly Palestine’d’ about young Palestinian skateboarders. The House has been filled with music as we hosted several concerts and we have had interesting debates during our couch talks, discussing topics from; the Palestinian media scene and the use of private video clips as a news source, to historical preservation and the political situation seen through the side mirror of a taxi.

FEBURARY 22: Film Screening – The Infiltrators

Infiltrators is a visceral “road movie” that chronicles the daily travails of Palestinians of all backgrounds as they seek routes through, under, round, and over a bewildering matrix of barriers. The screening was followed by a Q and A session with the Palestinian director Khaled Jarrar.

APRIL 24: Film Screening – ½ Revolution

The film by Danish-Palestinian documentarist Omar Shargawi, shows Omar and his friend and his friend Karim in Cairo when the Arab uprising broke out in February 2011.

JUNE 14: Couch Talk – The Ear of Palestine

CEO at AJYAL Radio, Walid Nasser and the General Director at RADIO NISAA FM, Maysoun Odeh Gangat gave their analysis of the Palestinian media scene. The debate touched upon central journalistic dilemmas such as appeal and marked shares vs. substance and public service, journalistic neutrality vs. charged political reality, and investigative journalism vs. tabloid accusations. The audience joined the discussion led by the two well-spoken and passionate guest speakers.

AUGUST 9 + 13: Concerts with classical violinists Peter Sulski and Jonathan McBride

Peter Sulski has been the head of strings of the National Palestinian Conservatory and has also been a member of the London Symphony Orchestra for several years. Jonathan is originally from Northern Ireland and has played with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the Manchester Camerata,

and the Hallé Orchestra. Both gave beautiful concerts in the big room of our old house.

SEPTEMBER 17: 5 Year Anniversary

The five year anniversary was marked by a wonderful evening with speeches given by Director Lone Bildsøe Lassen, the Palestinian Ambassador to Denmark Mufeed Shami, and the Danish Representative Anders Tang Friborg. More than one hundred people showed up for cake and a light buffet. Mahmoud Awad provided musical entertainment for the event.

SEPTEMBER 27 + 28: Film Screening – Life is Waiting

The film ‘Life is Waiting: Referendum and Resistance in Western Sahara’ by Lara Lee which looks at the Saharawi people living under occupation by Moroccan military forces, was screened twice – in Arabic and again in English. Subsequently the producer Salah Ardelaine was present for a post screening Q and A via Skype. People in the audience were surprised to experience that they could draw parallels between the movie and their own situation of living under occupation.

OCTOBER 3: Film Screening – I’m Still Alive

The young documentary filmmaker Camille Bildsøe showed her film about Mohammad Azzez, a student at the Palestinian Circus School in Birzeit. The film follows Mohammad as he tries to balance the consistent trauma of death and his essential will to be alive, after he at the age of 15 receives a bullet through the chest.

OCTOBER 6: Couch Talk – How Do We Save History?

Can individual stories be translated into a collective history? Can art be the media for this process? Can an oral tradition be translated into a professional academic discourse? These were some of the questions discussed by actress Faten Khoury and Dr. Adel Yahya. The talk ended with a lively discussion about the importance of documenting oral history and how Palestinian heritage can be preserved for the future.

OCTOBER 13-18: Days of Cinema

During the film festival Days of Cinema arranged by FilmLab Palestine, the Danish House hosted several film screenings. Among the films were 'Peshmerga' about three former fighters from Kurdistan, the Finish 'The Grump', and three Palestinian and Tunisian short films. The Danish House also hosted the opening of the Nordic Spotlight, where the Danish prize winning film 'We Shall Overcome' was screened.

OCTOBER 24: If Everyone is a Journalist – Who is the Editor?

Palestinian Journalist Nour Qudaimat and Danish Journalist Mille Schneekloth discussed the benefits, challenges and ethical implications of videos captured by ordinary people as a viable news source. The Danish and Palestinian journalists participating in the Journalist Exchange project were members of the audience and took part in the lively debate.

NOVEMBER 11: Film Screening – Epicly Palestine'd

The house was filled with skateboards and young Palestinian skaters when we hosted the premiere of 'Epicly Palestine'd', a documentary about the newly established skate scene in the West Bank. After the screening a Q and A was held with some of the characters from the movie, who talked about how skateboarding helps them escape the frustrations of occupation.

DECEMBER 9: Couch Talk – Reflections from the side mirror

During the couch talk, the two experienced taxi drivers Akram Mansour and Jack Kapataies gave their angles on Palestinian reality. Travelling from villages to downtown Ramallah and talking to anyone from high level civil servants to young activists, the two taxi drivers offered unique insights from street level on everything from economy and high level politics to traffic regulations and gender issues. The event was conducted in Arabic and the audience was modest but highly engaged.

DECEMBER 11: Concert with Shadi Zaqtan

Shadi is a guitarist, composer, singer and songwriter. He lives in Ramallah, composing his musical projects that focus on transmitting the lived experience of his present surrounding into songs addressing political issues, personal and emotional concerns. Lots of people showed up for the concert, where Shadi was accompanied by a couple of friends playing the oud, violin, and guitar, as well as a freestyle rapper who joined in for one of the songs.



VOLUNTEERS



Photo by: The Danish House in Palestine

Our volunteer program is essential to our vision of strengthening mutual understanding and appreciation between Danish and Palestinian cultures. We believe that every one of our volunteers will return back to Denmark more enlightened on the Palestinian situation. Our hope is that each of these volunteers will share their knowledge and experiences with ten, twenty, or even more friends and family members.

All support systems and procedures including overviews, briefings, interviews and contact to partners have been revised to ensure better support and a higher level of satisfaction for both partner organizations and volunteers. A comprehensive database has been established to enable and ensure a full follow up on volunteer placements and better

evaluation of the Volunteer Program.

Throughout 2015 The Danish House in Palestine welcomed 47 volunteers. For periods ranging from one to six months the volunteers have been working in our partner organizations which are active in the fields of English teaching, health, human rights, media and journalism, rehabilitation, refugee camps, and youth.

Group Visits

During 2015 many groups came to visit The Danish House in Palestine. Many of the groups were on study trips from Danish high schools, folk high schools, and universities, but also political delegations were among our visitors.

“I was looking for an internship, within the field I deal with: social studies and journalism. I contacted the Danish House in Palestine, described my skills and my profile, and they matched me with MADA.

The main purpose was to channel my academic grades into something that I think will benefit the Palestinian cause and to gain insight into the challenges Palestinians face in their everyday lives. I had a desire from the beginning to get an insight into the conditions Palestinian journalists are working under and what specific issues they are struggling with.

I have gained much more insight into this subject through MADA than I would have achieved if I stayed in Denmark reading it all in a book at the university.”

Issa Jeppesen, Volunteer through
the Danish House in Palestine

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

In June 2015 a new DHIP communication strategy was approved by the board. On the strategic level it was designed to ensure a coherent and efficient organizational approach to communication. On the practical level it included a revision of all DHIP platforms and outlets as well as purchasing equipment for the production and editing of videos and pictures. Finally, a formal brand manual including design guide and templates for all future outlets from an official letterhead, press releases and logo presentation for posters, briefs and reports was produced.

DHIP PLATFORMS AND OUTLETS

Between mid-May 2015 and January 2016 a number of new DHIP platforms and outlets have been established while others have been redesigned.

HIGHLIGHTS

A new DHIP website was introduced in December 2015

The website design is aligned with the new graphic identity of DHIP. It hosts and links all DHIP platforms and outlets – social media, newsletter, blog, annual report etc. The menu structure provides a user friendly overview for visitors. Furthermore the site is compatible with both tablets and smart phones, servicing a broader audience with a redesigned search engine optimized to reach a larger potential audience. Finally the backend system (Wordpress) is intuitive and easy to navigate.

DHIP Facebook page increased the number of followers to 3725 by 31th of December 2015

The DHIP FB page has developed a broad and dedicated audience (followers) ready to engage in dialogue and interact through shares, likes, comments and messages. The flow of content includes; general statements and updates from the director, campaigns to increase the number of followers, relevant DHIP press coverage, promotion of projects and events, presentation of DHIP outlets and stories from our volunteers.

Twitter account for the Director is established with 177 followers by 31th of December 2015

The personal account of the director of DHIP aims to position her as the Danish reference point on Palestine for journalists, opinion makers and potential partners and donors. At the same time the account enables us to keep updated and follow relevant sources on Palestine, culture and development.

The DHIP Flickr account was established in 2015

The Flickr account ensures that DHIP pictures are archived in a structured way are easy to access and available to interested public.

The new electronic DHIP newsletter – ‘A Voice Across’ was introduced in 2015

The design of the newsletter is aligned with DHIP’s graphic identity. Through the functions of Mailchimp it links to and shares content from all DHIP platforms thereby saving time and ensuring the presentation of our main outlets. The short editorial by the director is designed to function on social media platforms and provides the DHIP perspective on current events in Palestine, while at the same time promoting the newsletter itself.



Photo by: Muhannad Mansour

PRESS WORK AND EXPOSURE OF DHIP

Media exposure of DHIP in 2015 includes leading media and outlets in Denmark and Palestine as well as local and regional coverage in Denmark. It covers projects and events as well as statements on the general situation in Palestine.

HIGHLIGHTS

Escalating violence in Palestine

In accordance with the new communication strategy, the director of DHIP has engaged in interviews on the Palestinian context beyond the projects and events of the organization. When clashes and confrontations erupted in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem in October 2015, Danish correspondents largely covered developments from Jerusalem, leaving the DHIP director as the primary voice of the Palestinian side. The series of interviews given by the director included DR P1 radio, DR2 TV and TV2 News.

Palestinian voices

Corresponding with the ambitions of the new communication strategy DHIP has worked to facilitate the inclusion of Palestinian sources and voices in relevant debates taking place in Denmark. This includes our own platforms as well as external media. Our interview with DHIP board member Sam Bahour on the economic consequences of the occupation was published by the Danish paper 'Information'.

Journalist Exchange project

The Journalist Exchange project 2015 brought journalists from leading Danish media to the West Bank. Although escalating violence influenced their perspective, the outcome was relatively diverse. Cultural radio features on DR P1, video features in the tabloid Ekstra Bladet and a number of reflective stories and personal angles on the conflict were published in mainstream Danish newspapers such as Kristeligt Dagblad, Information and Politiken.

Palestinian media:

A series of meetings with all central Palestinian media outlets was completed in the spring. Formalized partnerships are established through new and renewed projects and the volunteer program. Media coverage of the activities of DHIP often featuring interviews with staff members include; PNN, AJYAL, NISAA, RADIO 24 FM, WAFA news agency among others.

ADMIN, FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Throughout 2015 a number of new strategies, procedures and tools have been developed and implemented to support the increasing number of projects and staff and to ensure accountability towards our donors.

The DHIP Operations Manual and Financial Manual functions as the guideline for all administrative, financial and human resource related procedures of the organization and provides the corresponding tools to implement them.

Admin

Formal procedures and guidelines have been established across the full range of organizational structures and corresponding requirements from; legal representation to equipment, cooperative language, filing and storage of documents as well as visa requests and air-travel.

All staff members have received training in procedures and tools.

Finance

The new revised finance manual detailing individual responsibilities of DHIP staff, tools and templates is in place. It includes guidelines in areas such as; accounting and reporting, payments, procurement, fixed assets and inventory list, salaries, taxes and time sheets for staff.

All staff members have received training in procedures and tools.

Human Resources

An organizational chart and formal clarification of roles and responsibilities across the organization has been developed. Recruitment, contracts and Terms of Reference have been formalized as well as induction procedures, trainings and rights and obligations of DHIP staff.

The office structure is reorganized to reflect the actual work flows of the organization and to increase efficiency across the organization.



PARTNERS, BOARD AND STAFF

PARTNERS

Danish partners

Action Aid Denmark Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke
University College Capital UCC
International Media Support IMS
Frilandsmuseet / The Open Air Museum- Denmark
The Royal Academy of Music- Aarhus

Palestinian partners

Film Lab Palestine
Palestine News Network PNN
Al Quds Newspaper
AJYAL Radio Network
Radio 24FM
Nisaa FM Radio
WAFA News Agency
AL Falastiniah Satellite Channel
Tamer Institute for Community Education
Youth Development Resources Center (YDRC)-
Hebron
Sharek Youth Forum
Visit Palestine- Bethlehem
PalVision- Jerusalem
The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music-
Jerusalem
Iprint
Dalia Association

BOARD

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Gry Krogager Lund, Board Member
Ghassan Abdullah, Board Member
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Nu'man Kanafani, Board Member
Uffe Andreassen, Alternate Member

STAFF

Lone Bildsøe Lassen, Director
Anne Mønster, Admin Manager & Program
Coordinator
Abeer Habash, Office Manager
Doha Jabr, Program coordinator
Sahar Soufan, Project Coordinator
Anne Cathrine Holmen, Project Intern
Riia Marette, Project Intern
Naela Awad, House keeper
Mohammad Awar, Internal Auditor
Niveen Shaheen, Accountant
Villads Zahle, Communication Manager
Frida Lassen, Communication Intern
Anne Trolldoft Hjorth, Communication Intern

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2015

INCOME

Project grants (unspent 2014)	370,950
Danish MoFA	2,903,736
MS - Action Aid	222,067
Total project grants	3,496,753
Unrestricted grants/income	
DHIP programs and Activities	211,095
Accommodation	59,840
Total unrestricted	270,935
Total Available income	3,767,688

EXPENSES

Projects/Activities	2,789,715
Rent and operating costs	157,215
Administration	211,960
Loss on currency differential	34,310
Depreciation	26,300
Total expenses	3,219,500



THE DANISH HOUSE IN PALESTINE

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