

29 km – Palestinian, German and Israeli Artists

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"29 km" is the Initiated of the Art Gallery of Um-al-Fahm, the largest Arab city in Israel, and is held in collaboration with the Goethe Institute.

"29 km" is a visual project which addresses the continued aggravation of various restrictions imposed on the freedom of movement of the Palestinian population under the Israeli occupation. It is in this context that the participating artists consider issues of power, occupation, regime, opening and closing of borders, control and public and private movement.

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29 km - refers to the largest distance of the width and length in the north of the west bank that Palestinian can move without meeting a checkpoint or other restriction. (29x29 km = 841 sq/km – that's the largest area near Jenin)

While Europe has opened the public space to free movement by all EU members by lifting the limitations and increasing both physical and economic mobility, the Israeli occupation continually adds new limitations on the freedom of movement of the Palestinian. These limitations are enforced through policing and control methods which permeate every area of life: military control, economic control, division into areas of sovereignty, division by age and gender, compulsory permits and certificates, geographic control through the construction of fences and digging of canals and the establishment of all kinds of barriers, including a concrete wall and electronic and digital means. All these are mobilized to control 3.5 million Palestinians. These restrictions make the daily missions of moving around, crossing and accessing extremely and increasingly difficult.

The project examines the restrictions on movement from historical and contemporary perspectives. It addresses various forms of movement, like the movement from a physical to a mental place, cruising concurrently with opening and closing of passageways, immigration, deportation, economics, technological changes and physical and psychological states.

The group members attended a one week symposium from November 23-20, 2008. In all, 15 artists from Berlin, Ramallah, Tel Aviv, Gaza, Zalafa, Sdeh Warburg, Modiin and Giv'atayim attended the symposium. The meetings were held mainly in Ramallah, but also in East Jerusalem, Um Al Fahm and Tel Aviv. In addition to lectures, the week included many tours and meetings with Palestinian and Israeli speakers to learn about the practices of restricting the freedom of movement which result from these relations.

