

Beirut Art Film Festival – BAFF, in collaboration with AUB Archaeological Museum,
presents

Saving Yemen's Cultural Heritage

In-Person Panel Talks & Film Screenings

Tuesday, March 18 at 7:00 PM | AUB – Bathish Auditorium



Photo credits Roger Moukarzel.

Yemen holds a unique status among Middle Eastern countries due to its distinctive location at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, between the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, at the crossroads of Asia and Africa. Yemen is also set apart by its inhabitants, mountain dwellers and sedentary people, bearers of ancient cultural traditions.

The country's recent opening to the outside world, while bringing to light a fascinating heritage, has also been marked by the challenges of transitioning to modernity. In his 1971 film *The Walls of Sana'a* (15 minutes), Pier Paolo Pasolini unveils the architectural treasures of Sana'a threatened by time degradation and the onslaught of consumer society.

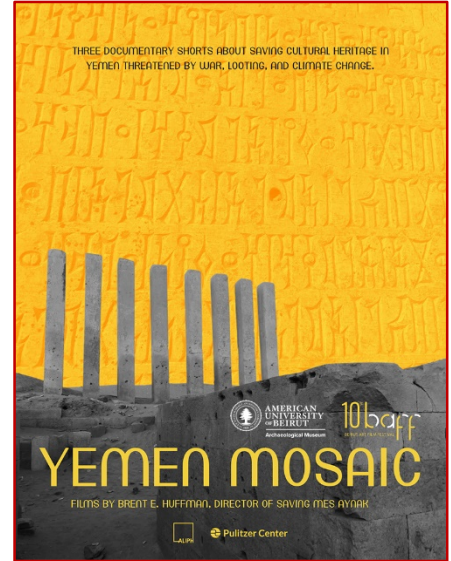
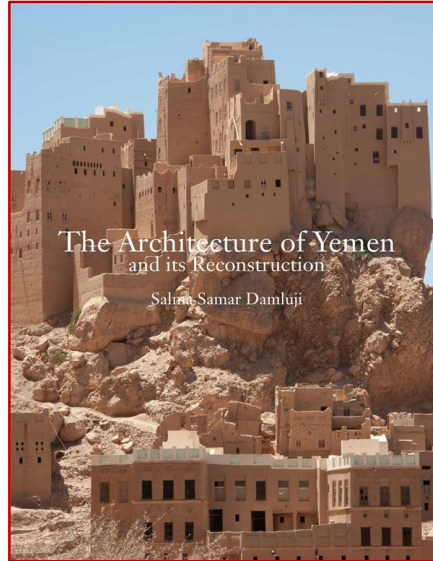
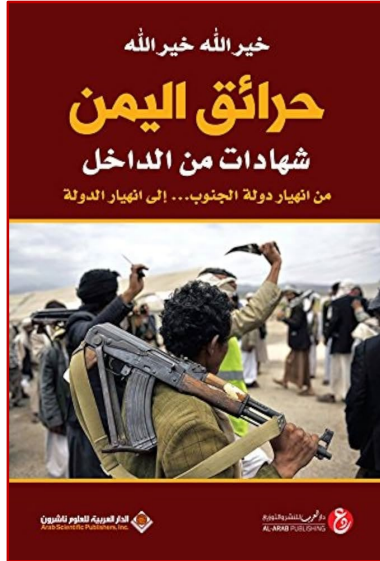
The Walls of Sana'a screening. Pier Paolo Pasolini wrote: "...the problems of Sana'a, I felt them as my own. The degradation, which like a leprosy is slowly taking over, hurt me with pain, rage, a sense of helplessness, and at the same time, a feverish desire to do something that compelled me to film." This documentary turned into an emergency call to UNESCO.



Original photograph of Pier Paolo Pasolini and Alberto Moravia from the set of the 1971 film.

The Collapse of Yemen. Khairallah Khairallah, journalist and writer, is a keen observer of Yemen's collapse, witnessing the upheavals since 1986 to present days. In his book *Yemen Fires: Inside Stories; From Southern State Collapse...to State Collapse*, he offers an analysis of the country's recent history, its complex political scene, and the numerous conflicts that devastate Yemen.

Yemeni Architecture: Culture in Post-Conflict. In 1982, Salma Samar Damluji, architect and specialist in traditional Arab architecture, began conducting in-depth researches on Yemen's earthen-built heritage. These studies, carried out over more than two decades, culminated in the 2007 publication of her book *The Architecture of Yemen: From Yafi' to Hadramut*. In 2021, an enriched re-edition, including drawings, documentation, and a chapter on construction and reconstruction projects carried out between 2008 and 2014 in the Hadramaut and Daw'an regions, was published under the title *The Architecture of Yemen and its Reconstruction* by Laurence King Publishing Ltd. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of Yemen's architectural heritage are central to Professor Damluji's career.



She is co-founder of the Daw'an Architecture Foundation (DAF), and as Chief Architect and Director (2008- 2024) she secured funding for reconstruction projects in Hadramut. She is Trustee of the Earth Architecture Lab she founded in 2022 with colleagues in London, www.eartharchlab.org. Together with landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic, Salma Samar Damluji will talk about *Yemeni Architecture: Culture in Post-Conflict*.

Yemen Mosaic. Brent E. Huffman, professor at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and award-winning documentary filmmaker, has been crafting since 2022 a feature film about the Yemeni struggle to save their incredible cultural heritage. In *Yemen Mosaic*, a selection of three excerpts focusing on the reconstruction efforts funded by ALIPH (International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage), the director takes us to three cities—Shibam, Taiz, and Dhamar—where Yemeni specialists, many of whom are women, document, protect, and preserve their heritage. Professor Huffman, who directed the multi-award-winning documentary *Saving Mes Aynak* (2016) about the fight to save an ancient Buddhist city in Afghanistan, now focuses on Yemeni people fighting to preserve their heritage threatened by looting, climate change, and war.

Q&A.

Tickets sold at 300,000 LBP exclusively at Antoine Ticketing Online & All Branches.

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