



Art inspired by research - new AiL videos

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In 2017, two artists from Saudi Arabia spent some time at Eawag as part of the Artists in Labs (ail) project and were inspired by research into artistic interpretations, Zahrah Alghamdi and Muhannad Shono. Now ail has created a video for both projects.



Zahrah Alghamdi (Photo: Peter

Penicka, Eawag)

Zahrah Alghamdi is currently employed as assistant professor at the Faculty for Art and Design at the King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah. Her work is inspired by traditional,

artistically decorated architecture. This architecture reflects the cultural traditions and the history of Saudi Arabia. In her work as an artist, she draws on her memories of these rooms and their cultural significance. During her residency at Eawag, Zahrah Alghamdi has accompanied the Stream Ecology research group on three excursions to the Roseg Valley in the Engadine. Taking her inspiration from the activities of the scientists in the midst of the mountain terrain with its countless rivers and streams, she captured her impressions in the form of works that make use of found materials, directly intervening in the landscape. She created the pieces either by hand or using simple tools and made use of materials that she mostly picked up in the Roseg Valley — such as sand from a river bank, or dried plants. This process enabled Alghamdi to tune in to an unfamiliar landscape and leave her own imprint on it while at the same time offering up these imprints to the effects of impermanence. Having been documented in a series of photographs, the works represent a moment in time, as do the scientific data collected in the Roseg Valley.



Muhannad Shono (Photo: Peter

Penicka, Eawag)

Muhannad Shono, born to Syrian parents, grew up in Saudi Arabia. He currently lives and works in Riyadh and Sidney. His artworks grapple with themes of displacement, migration and identity. At a young age he was already writing comic books which wove together various storylines, fictional worlds and drawings. Muhannad Shono worked within the Drinking Water Microbiology Group, led by Dr. Frederik Hammes. Based on his exploration of the scientific research on Bacteria he developed his own fictional organism. He compares this organism with LUCA (Last Universal Common Ancestor), the hypothetical last common ancestor and foundation stone of all organisms. On a metaphorical level his project led to the origins of civilisation.

For both projects the 15-minute videos are now available online, either via the [Artists in Labs](#) project page or directly on vimeo: [Video Zahrah Alghamdi](#), [Video Muhannad Shono](#).

Related Links

Artists

Project intermittent streams, Val Roseg

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