

# MEANING (A)DRIFT:

*The movement in the Holiday Inn Beirut's  
socio-political narrative*

By

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the movement in the Holiday Inn Beirut's socio-political narrative and traces the hotel's transformation from a modernist icon, to a war apparatus, to an unintentional monument.

The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) has had a lasting impact on the city and its urban relics. Among these relics is the Holiday Inn Beirut. Commissioned by developer Abdal Mohsin Kattan, the Holiday Inn Beirut was designed by French architect André Wogenscky, an associate of Le Corbusier's Rue de Sèvres studio, and his Lebanese associate Maurice Hindie.

This multi-method research project explores the hotel's socio-political narrative. It results in the production and curation of an exhibition of dioramas, video and

postcard installation of the hotel's spaces.

Through this exhibition, viewers are invited to physically enter and explore the Holiday Inn Beirut as a lived and experienced space. It is an exercise in learning how to construct meaning into space.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To Beirut.

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# PROLOGUE

I have always been captivated by Beirut. Although I was born in Lebanon, the first time I saw Beirut was when my mother and I left the country to be reunited with my father in Canada. I had just turned five years old, but I still remember feeling the gravity on my chest as the plane lifted off the runway. As I look back today, I recollect an abstract memory of a chaotic and rotting cityscape rising from the Mediterranean. Although I am part of a post-war generation that grew up far away from Beirut and its reconstruction, I cannot help but still feel an unexplainable attraction to it. Perhaps this is because of its long and sedimented histories and fetishized violence. Or maybe this is because Beirut is the gateway to the homeland and family.

It has been twenty-five years since

we left, and Beirut's condition continues to worsen. As I continue to watch this from a distance, I cannot help but feel the need to contribute to help Beirut in its struggle somehow. I cannot physically join the revolution from a distance, nor can I protest on its streets. But I can draw, and I can write. I can draw and write for the martyrs and victims of the Lebanese Civil War, the 17000 kidnapped or disappeared, the more than one million Lebanese now part of the diaspora, and those still in Lebanon today and suffering from the ineptitudes of a corrupt government.

I have no memory of how I first came across the Holiday Inn Beirut. I do know that I was immediately captivated by its history. Much has been written and documented about it. Yet, its iconicity, militarization and status

as an unintentional monument have never been explored in the context of socio-political spaces and formal architectural qualities.

This thesis attempts to formalize the drift in the hotel's socio-political narrative and its spaces – to tether it, and in a way, myself.

**“You’re about to be welcomed to one of the best hotels in the world. The hotels with the best locations, near the things you want to be near...”**

Holiday Inn ‘Welcomes You’ Commercial, 1978<sup>1</sup>

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1. “Holiday Inn ‘Welcomes You’ Commercial (1978)”. December 2, 2013. Accessed December 13, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1q2XAZSSn8>

## INTRODUCTION

The Lebanese capital of Beirut is a city of complexities and contradictions primarily attributed to its colonial past and continued civil conflicts. The Lebanese Civil war, lasting between 1975 and 1990, has impacted the city through the urban relics that stand today. Among these relics is the Holiday Inn Beirut. Following Lebanon’s independence from the French mandate in 1946, the capital city of Beirut witnessed an enormous upswing of development. This was reflected in the development of Beirut’s hotel district on the Mediterranean coast, along which several modernist buildings would be built. Among the hotels in the district was the Holiday Inn Beirut.

The 1970s were a decade of multinational arrivals. In “A History of

Modern Lebanon”, Fawwaz Traboulsi explains that the 1970s saw significant growth in foreign capital investment with multinationals directly controlling existing industries produced mainly for the Arab market. As an American brand of hotels, the Holiday Inn first opened in 1953 under the Holiday Inns of America, Inc. Kemmons Wilson of Memphis, Tennessee, led the corporation. In 1967, the corporation began a worldwide expansion program and soon found itself in the Lebanese capital. In Lebanon, Law Decree no. 134 of August 1967 limited commercial representation of foreign companies to exclusive agents.<sup>2</sup> As the exclusive agent to the Holiday Inn of America, Inc., Abdal Mohsin Kattan would commission André Wogenscky, an associate

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2. Fawwaz Traboulsi, *A History of Modern Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2012), 158.

of Le Corbusier's Rue de Sèvres studio,<sup>3</sup> to design the hotel as part of the St. Charles City Center complex. Wogenscky needed to work, by Lebanese law, with a locally registered architect or engineer. He collaborated with his long-time associate Maurice Hindie.<sup>4</sup> The hotel was inaugurated in 1974 during Beirut's economic boom when the city was known as a glamorous Middle East tourist destination.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after its opening in 1974, the Holiday Inn Beirut became an icon through its legibility and representational sculptural features. Militants would use these features to gain immediate territorial control of the city as part of the Battle of the Hotels – a sub-conflict of the Lebanese Civil War.<sup>6</sup> More recently, the Holiday Inn Beirut has been referred to in both media

and academia as an unintentional monument, with locals and foreigners defining its commemorative value. This thesis explores the movement in the Holiday Inn Beirut's socio-political narrative and traces the hotel's transformation from a modernist icon, to a war apparatus, to an unintentional monument.

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3. André Wogenscky, *Le Corbusier's Hands* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006): 87.

4. John Hadidian, "A French Architect in Lebanon," *Architecture Plus* (May 1973): 25, <https://usmodernist.org/AP/AP-1973-05.pdf>.

5. Abdallah El Binni, "How the Holiday Inn Became a Symbol of the Lebanese Civil War | War Hotels", Al Jazeera English, December 3, 2018. 9:41 to 10:05, <https://youtu.be/4DTGFcjRrQ4>.

6. Fawwaz Traboulsi, "A History of Modern Lebanon" (London: Pluto Press, 2012): 204.



Figure 1: Abdal Mohsin Kattan. Thomas J. Abercrombie. 1975

## PREMISE

### Modernist Icon

In *Iconic Architecture and Capitalist Globalization*, Leslie Sklair writes that iconicity is “...increasingly driven by those who own and control the sector,”<sup>7</sup> adding that “national icons have invariably been characterized by great legibility in terms of their monumentality and, often, representational sculptural features.”<sup>8</sup> In the case of the Holiday Inn Beirut, its iconicity was driven by its multinational developer, its modernist agent and Wogensky’s formal architectural language. The balconies are laid in a grid pattern and create a texture of light, shade and shadows, a feature present in many of his work, including the “Foyer de jeunes travailleurs” (1963). This pattern is contrasted with the protruding curves of

the restaurant and bar on its uppermost level. Contrast can also be observed between the rectilinear facade and the rounded cores at the east and western sides. There is also a strategic and deliberate use of the colour red, present in Wogensky’s work here, but also his other work such as his residence (1953), now housing the Fondation Marta Pan & André Wogensky (since 2014), as well as the work of many other modernist projects including Le Corbusier’s “Unité d’habitation” (1952) and Lina Bo Bardi’s São Paulo Museum of Art (1968). When the hotel opened in 1974 at the height of Beirut’s economic boom, the city was still a glamorous Middle East tourist destination. It hosted weddings and international events including a world card

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7. Leslie Sklair, “Iconic Architecture and Capitalist Globalization,” *City* 10, no. 1, (April 2006): 21.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810600594613>

8. *Ibid.*: 39.

game tournament in 1975, attended by the actor Omar Sharif. While the modernization of Lebanon's economic and political contexts benefited the upper class, the ruling class failed to integrate the most basic state-wide infrastructures to help its middle and lower class. This failure would widen the divide between various communities and further contribute to the existing religio-political tensions that would, ultimately, lead to war.<sup>9</sup> The Holiday Inn Beirut quickly become a symbol of these inequalities. It would be subsequently featured in militia propaganda that celebrated its fall as a symbol of western influence and capitalism.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Joseph Chamie, "The Lebanese Civil War: An Investigation into the Causes," *World Affairs* 139, no. 3 (1976): 173, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671682>.

10. Sara Fregonese, "Between a Refuge and a Battleground: Beirut's Discrepant Cosmopolitanisms," *Geographical Review* 102 no. 3 (2012): 316–36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1931-0846.2012.00154.x>.



Figure 2: Christian Woman with Hand Grenade, Holiday Inn, Beirut. Don McCullin. 1976.

## War Apparatus

As the war polarised the city into east and west, the two main antagonists – the Lebanese Front (Christian right-wing militias backed by the Lebanese army) and the National Movement (Lebanese leftist parties supported by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)) – raced to capture the hotel district in the sub-conflict that would become known as the Battle of the Hotels. In the *New York Times*, the Holiday Inn Beirut was reported as a centre of clashes in an article published October 27, 1975.<sup>11</sup> Now militarized, the Holiday Inn Beirut became, by Foucauldian definition, a war apparatus. In “What is an Apparatus? and other essays”, first published in 2009, Giorgio Agamben

summarized what he described as the closest to a complete definition that Foucault gave in 1977. Agamben explains that “apparatus” refers to “a set of practices and mechanisms that aim to face an urgent need and obtain an effect that is more or less immediate.”<sup>12</sup> Militias had managed to utilize the Holiday Inn Beirut’s site as a critical node within a system of urban warfare to gain territorial control. Its height enabled militants to gain clear views in all directions of the city below. Militants positioned their snipers on the upper floors and rooftop of the building. Its windows allowed panoramic views of the city to better target, possess and dominate it. In his 1976 article in the *New York Times*,

James M. Markham described precisely this, writing “the hotel’s south face, from which rightist snipers had killed scores of people, has been punctured in the last few days by sporadic bursts of anti-aircraft and recoilless-rifles fire.”<sup>13</sup> The Battle of the Hotels went on to seal the division of Beirut between the Lebanese Front-controlled East and National Movement-controlled West for the remainder of the war which lasted until 1990.<sup>14</sup>

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11. James M. Markham, “Beirut Leftists Seize Holiday Inn In Heavy Assault,” *The New York Times*, March 22, 1976. <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/03/22/archives/beirut-leftists-seize-holiday-inn-in-heavy-assault-hundreds-led-by.html>.

12. Giorgio Agamben *What is an apparatus?: And other essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford University Press, 2009), 8.

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13. James M. Markham, “Beirut Leftists Seize Holiday Inn In Heavy Assault,” *The New York Times*, March 22, 1976. <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/03/22/archives/beirut-leftists-seize-holiday-inn-in-heavy-assault-hundreds-led-by.html>.

14. Fawwaz Traboulsi, “A History of Modern Lebanon,” (London: Pluto Press, 2012), 204.



Figure 3: “war peace”. Jad El Khoury. 2015

## Unintentional Monument

In 1989, Lebanese parliamentarians signed the Taif Agreement in Taif, Saudi Arabia, and inaugurated a process that would put a formal end to the Lebanese Civil War.<sup>15</sup> The signing of this agreement followed an extensive reconstruction effort led by the private sector. However, the Holiday Inn Beirut would be left untouched; its shareholders, one of which is the Lebanese Compagnie Immobiliere Libanaise and another - a Kuwaiti company - still disputing over its future. More recently, the Holiday Inn Beirut has been referred to as an “accidental monument” in media<sup>15</sup> and academia.<sup>16</sup> To formalize this, the term “unintentional monument” is applied. Austrian art-historian Alois Riegl coined this term in

his groundbreaking 1903 article “The Modern Cult of the Monument: Its Character and Its Origin.” According to Riegl, a monument is “erected for the specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events...alive in the minds of future generations”.<sup>18</sup> He explains that “in the case of the intentional monument, its commemorative value has been determined by the makers, while we have defined the value of the unintentional one.”<sup>19</sup> In 2015, the Lebanese artist Jad El Khoury painted cartoonish, blue-and-white creatures around bullet holes on its facade as part of a piece titled “war peace”. In an interview with Aljazeera, El Khoury explained his intentions stating, “I opened up a debate that was already

15. Karam Karam. “The Taif Agreement,” *Accord* no.24 (July 2012): 36.

16. India Stoughton, “The Scars of War on Lebanon’s Holiday Inn,” *Al Jazeera*, December 30, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/12/30/the-scars-of-war-on-lebanons-holiday-inn>.

17. Adam Abou-Alewi and Erika Linenfelser, “Post-Trauma Aesthetics,” *Agora* 11 (2017), 95, <https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/136580?show=full>.

18. Alois Riegl, *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin*, trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo Moderne, *Oppositions* n. 25 (Fall 1982), 21.

19. *Ibid.*

there – should we fix all the scars of the war, or should we keep them?”.<sup>20</sup> Art historian and artist Gregory Buchakjian was one of the first academics to voice his opinion on El Khoury’s work on the facade posting on Facebook “This is an outrage! An outrage to Beirut, an outrage to memory, an outrage to everything!”<sup>21</sup> adding in the same interview with Al Jazeera “What’s irritating is that this building is completely inaccessible. It’s very difficult to enter, and this guy has permission, and he gives himself the privilege of painting it from top to bottom. Street art is not an art of the privileged”.<sup>22</sup> Close to three decades after the Lebanese Civil War, Beirut’s identity is synonymous with violence through the relics of this war and the many conflicts that follow. The Holiday

Inn Beirut’s future continues to be unclear.



Figure 4: Advertisement for Beirut’s Holiday Inn ca. 1974

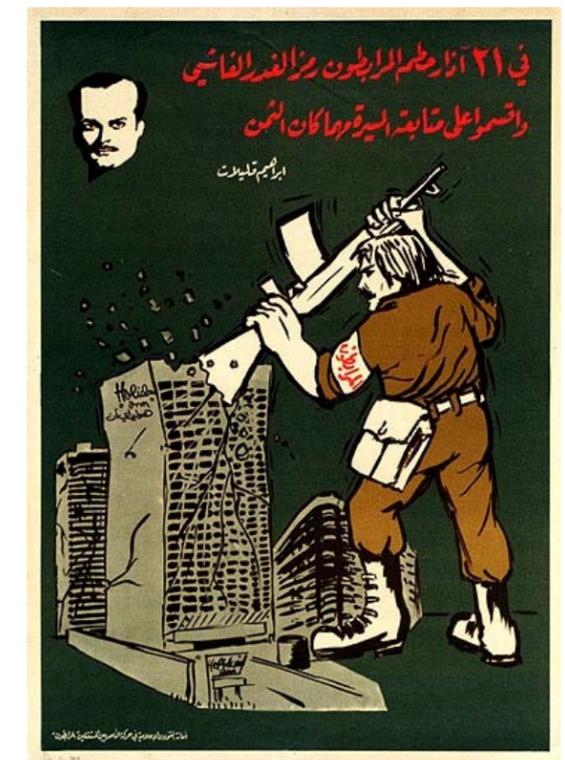


Figure 5: El-Mourabitoun Poster ca. 1976

20. India Stoughton, “The Scars of War on Lebanon’s Holiday Inn,” *Al Jazeera*, December 30, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/12/30/the-scars-of-war-on-lebanons-holiday-inn>.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

# METHODOLOGY

## Archiving and Indexing

The thesis methodology is structured in two parts. The first part – archiving and indexing – is a process of cataloguing and contextualizing the building, its history and the movement in its socio-political narrative. Diverse material, including newspaper articles, interviews, documentaries, papers and artwork, are used as a basis for evaluating changes in the Holiday Inn Beirut’s meaning. Through this sequencing, it became clear that each of the three moments in the Holiday Inn Beirut’s social-political narrative are intertwined and all contribute to the current state of the building. In archiving and indexing, the trajectory of the Holiday Inn Beirut is further formalized. Having embodied a prosperous time for

Lebanon, the Holiday Inn Beirut’s status as a modernist icon ended when it was militarized. Through this militarization, its use as an apparatus of war has become visible. Still standing today, it has become an unavoidable towering relic within the city skyline. The visible violence remaining has contributed to its status as an unintentional monument.

### Timeline

The work began with a critical grounding by sequencing the movement in the hotel’s socio-political narrative through the cataloguing and indexing of historical events and people that inform and contribute

to it. As this thesis explores pre-existing conditions, the timeline in the form of a documentative drawing was created. The material, including newspaper articles, interviews, documentaries, papers, were indexed chronologically along the timeline. The timeline begins with the establishment of the French mandate and ends in the present day. It includes events that are referenced in the premise of this thesis. Significant events that include and are peripheral to the Holiday Inn Beirut are marked along with their respective dates. Events that mark each transformation in the hotel’s socio-political narrative are emphasized.



Figure 6: Holiday Inn Beirut Postcard, ca. 1975.



Figure 7: Omar Sharif attends a card game competition ca. 1974



## Artwork

To understand the Holiday Inn Beirut's place in aesthetic and material culture, the works of contemporary Lebanese and foreign artists have been indexed based on the hotel's application as either medium or subject and in accordance to each moment in its socio-political narrative. In Holiday Inn (Beirut), Richard Klein composed a sculpture of found Holiday Inn ashtrays. Here, Klein places the Holiday Inn in the realm of iconism and transnationalism. The work of Lamia Ziade and Raed Yassine depict the Holiday Inn Beirut as a war apparatus within the context of the Battle of the Hotels. Both artists apply a playful, almost foreign aesthetic to depict the complexity

and violence inherent in the sub-conflict. The work of Joana Hadjithomas, Khalil Joreige, and Alfred Tarazi both express violence through texture and layering. Through their work, artists Ayman Baalbaki, Harry Vorperian, Tom Young and Mazen Kerbaj depict the hotel's monumentality through a pedestrian's perspective, looking up towards the towering relic. Through war peace, Jad El Khoury uses the hotel's facade as a canvas. He highlights the bullet and missile traces through the drawing of characters meant to deliver joy. Here, there is also the implementation of humour that contrasts the violent past of the building.



Figure 9: "Holiday Inn (Beirut)", Richard Klein, 2015.



Figure 10: "China", Raed Yassine, 2012.

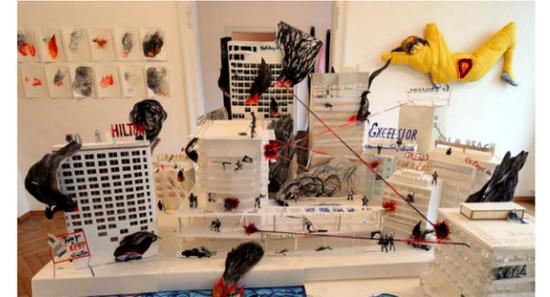


Figure 11: "Hotel's War", Lamia Ziade, 2008.

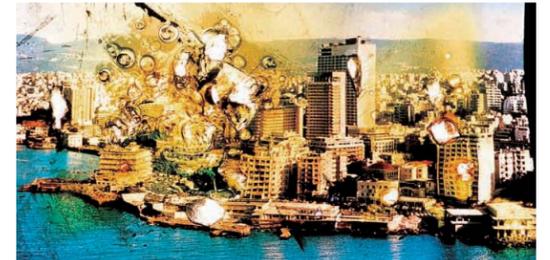


Figure 12: "Postcards of War", Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, 1997-2006.



Figure 13: "Wishful Beginnings", Alfred Tarazi, 2012.

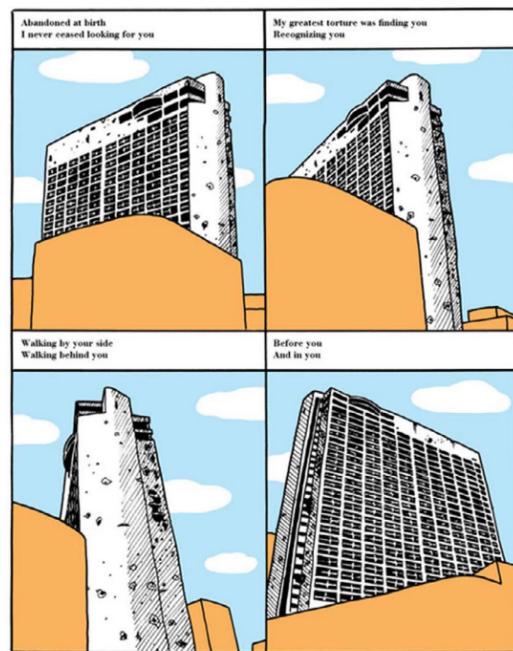


Figure 14: "Lettre à la mère", Mazen Kerbaj, 2013.



Figure 15: "Holiday Inn Beirut", Harry Vorperian, 2015.

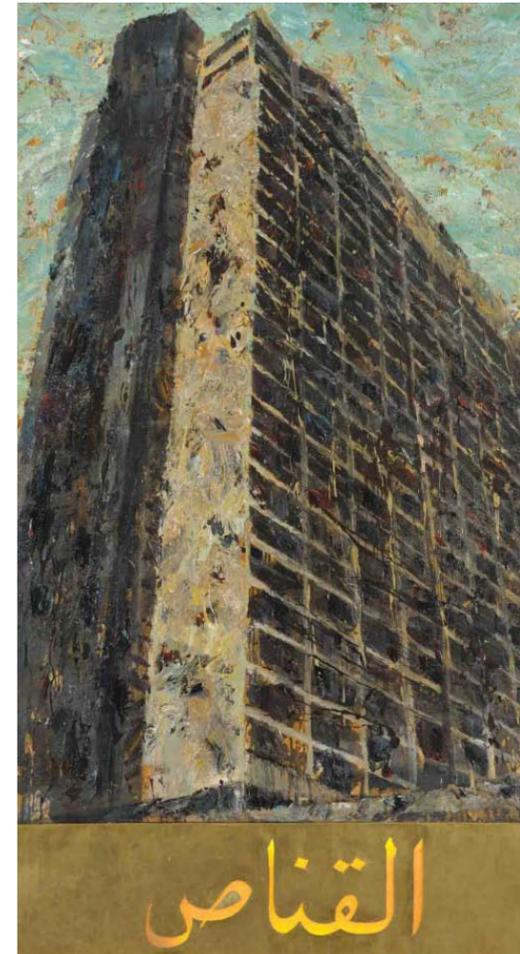


Figure 16: "Holiday Inn Beirut", Ayman Baalbaki, 2010.



Figure 17: "Holiday Inn, Beirut", Tom Young, 2016.



Figure 18: "war peace", Jad El Khoury, 2015.

## Hotel Spaces

In parallel, the qualitative and social meaning of archetypal hotel spaces were studied. This included the lobby, the leisure pool, the bedroom, circulation spaces and the rooftop. Images of the Holiday Inn Beirut's most recent state were also indexed according to the studied spaces.

According to Lawson and Rawson, a lobby should be accessible and include a transition area of flooring before fine finishes.<sup>23</sup> For German cultural and film critic Siegfried Kracauer, the lobby was “one of the spaces that epitomized the cultural transformation of the modern city.”<sup>24</sup> According to Kracauer, the lobby is a transition space and an apt expression of the post-modern human



Figure 19: Holiday Inn Beirut lobby, Fadi Badran, 2021.

situation, redolent of uncertainty, confusion and anxiety.<sup>25</sup> The reception desk is typically designed to be visible to guests upon entry and adjacent to lifts and stairs. It can be designed to prioritize visibility or offer privacy to guests.<sup>26</sup> It is a form of control and a passage between the public space of the lobby and the semiprivate spaces of the hotels and a space of transformation and rite of passage from anonymous visitor to hotel guest.<sup>27</sup>

Lawson and Rawson write that leisure pools and dryside facilities in the hospitality industry are designed to accommodate leisure. They have been themed to represent ‘tropical



Figure 20: Holiday Inn Beirut leisure pool,

23. Fred Lawson and John Rawson. “Hotels,” in *The Metric Handbook - Planning and Design Data*, 2015 ed. David Littlefield, (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2015), 11-9.

24. Tom Avermaete, “The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby The Norms and Forms of a Public- Private Figure,” in “Hotel Lobbies and Lounges the Architecture of Professional Hospitality,” ed. Anne Massey, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 59.

25. Ibid.

26. Fred Lawson and John Rawson. “Hotels,” in *The Metric Handbook - Planning and Design Data*, 2015 ed. David Littlefield, (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2015), 11-9.

27. Tom Avermaete, “The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby The Norms and Forms of a Public- Private Figure,” in “Hotel Lobbies and Lounges the Architecture of Professional Hospitality,” ed. Anne Massey, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 59.

paradises' through dense planting and bright colours.<sup>28</sup> In a social context, the propagation of leisure pools in America promoted family and community sociability. They offered a multiplicity of parallel social activities such as lounging, sunbathing, and strolling.<sup>29</sup>

Lawson and Rawson explain that bedrooms are furnished to facilitate access, cleaning, make-up, and service from a functional perspective. Although balconies are pleasant, they are costly and present issues in terms of safety and security.<sup>30</sup> These functional considerations all contribute to sanctuary-like qualities of calm and stability typical of hotel bedrooms.<sup>31</sup>

According to Lawson and Rawson, from a pragmatic perspective, circulation spaces should facilitate movement.



Figure 21: Holiday Inn Beirut corridor.



Figure 22: Holiday Inn Beirut bedroom.

Circulation should also provide the separation of guests, staff and maintenance personnel to avoid distributing guests and enable efficient servicing.<sup>32</sup> Socially, both stairs and elevators have become a focus of design activity for their social function. Stairs offer an opportunity to perform public life. The introduction of elevators provided an opportunity for dramatization.<sup>33</sup>

Lawson and Rawson caution that the costs of servicing accessible rooftops are substantial; they should be designed to take advantage of exceptional views.<sup>34</sup> The views are therefore rendered into a commodity to be consumed by guests.<sup>35</sup>



Figure 23: Holiday Inn Beirut rooftop.

28. Fred Lawson and John Rawson. "Hotels," in *The Metric Handbook - Planning and Design Data*, 2015 ed. David Littlefield, (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2015), 11-9.

29. Jeff Wiltse, "The 'Swimming Pool Age': 1920 to 1940," in *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 99.

30. Fred Lawson and John Rawson. "Hotels," in *The Metric Handbook - Planning and Design Data*, 2015 ed. David Littlefield, (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2015), 11-9.

31. Tom Avermaete, "The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby The Norms and Forms of a Public- Private Figure," in *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges the Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, ed. Anne Massey, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 59.

32. Fred Lawson and John Rawson. "Hotels," in *The Metric Handbook - Planning and Design Data*, 2015 ed. David Littlefield, (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2015), 11-9.

33. Tom Avermaete, "The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby The Norms and Forms of a Public- Private Figure," in *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges the Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, ed. Anne Massey, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 59.

34. Fred Lawson and John Rawson. "Hotels," in *The Metric Handbook - Planning and Design Data*, 2015 ed. David Littlefield, (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2015), 11-9.

35. Sara Fregonese and Adam Ramadan, "Hotel Geopolitics: A Research Agenda." *Geopolitics* 20, no. 4 (2015): 806.

## Probing

The second part of the methodology – probing – attempts to physically explore and examine the Holiday Inn Beirut and its spaces. A multi-method approach is used to prompt the retreat of the socio-political narrative and advance its spatial implications. Given the limitation to physically visit the sites and the various moments within its socio-political narrative, dioramas, video and postcards are used to physically explore and examine the hotel. These mediums were selected for their ability to investigate the tangible and the intangible, spatial scale and intimacies, and complex relations and proximities. The socio-political narrative and hotel spaces archived in the first half of the methodology

are recorded using this set of media. In doing so, these three mediums form a set of tools that measure the movement in the hotel’s socio-political narrative while also investigating its spatial implications.

### Dioramas

Dioramas were first introduced in 1822 by Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre and Charles-Marie Bouton and were initially theatrical experiences involving the use of light on landscape paintings. From the start of the 20th century, the term has been used to describe everything from miniature model cardboard cases to expansive installations in museums.

After spreading across Europe, the ideas and techniques of the dioramas were soon adopted by museums to portray a wide variety of content, ranging from wildlife in natural habitats to historical events such as battles, landscapes, or scenes of domestic life.<sup>36</sup> Here, dioramas are used as a medium through which questions of place, emotion, memory, and vision – both perceived and created, are presented. They offer an opportunity to re-engage with both the tangible and the intangible. Each of the five dioramas represents a space within the hotel, with the inside, including a background depicting the lobby, leisure pool, bedroom, corridor, and the rooftop.

Each diorama is clad in a material that offers a glimpse of the space contained within it. The lobby diorama is covered in gold, responding to observations by author and broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby as part of the documentary “How the Holiday Inn Became a Symbol of the Lebanese Civil War,” where he states, “...there was plenty of chrome, plenty of silver, plenty of gold-coloured drapes”.<sup>37</sup> The leisure pool is clad in turquoise tiles, in reference to the bright colour of the pool as an idea of a tropical paradise. The finishing on the bedroom diorama references the tile-clad balcony walls, a colour of calm and stability intended for the hotel bedroom. The corridor diorama

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36. Claudia Kamcke and Rainer Hutterer. “History of Dioramas,” in *Natural History Dioramas*, ed. Sue Dale Tunnicliffe and Annette Scheerso, (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2014), 8.

37. Abdallah El Binni, “How the Holiday Inn Became a Symbol of the Lebanese Civil War | War Hotels”, Al Jazeera English, December 3, 2018. 10:10 to 10:15, <https://youtu.be/4DTGFcjRrQ4>.

is finished in a blue carpet, referencing a comment by Gaby Gemayel, a veteran of the Lebanese Front who noted, “there was a corridor with a blue carpet...we used to sit in the corridor most of the time”.<sup>38</sup> The rooftop diorama is clad in a glazed metallic blue tile. This finishing references the rooftop volumes containing the bar and service area, their glistering alluding to the glamour of this spatial commodity.

Each diorama is fitted with a fish-eye lens door viewer, allowing a wide field of view. The dioramas become portals that enable the transcendence of space and time through these openings. Each diorama is equipped with headphones through which soundscapes are paired with each space. The soundscapes were created by juxtaposing

found audio from Beirut and Lebanese media.



Figure 24: Lobby diorama exterior.



Figure 25: Lobby diorama interior.

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38. Georges Boustany, “Beirut Holiday Inn – April 6, 2000,” November 17, 2017, video, 7:13, <https://youtu.be/nFLrXVnM1Uw>.



Figure 26: Leisure pool diorama exterior.



Figure 27: Leisure pool diorama interior.

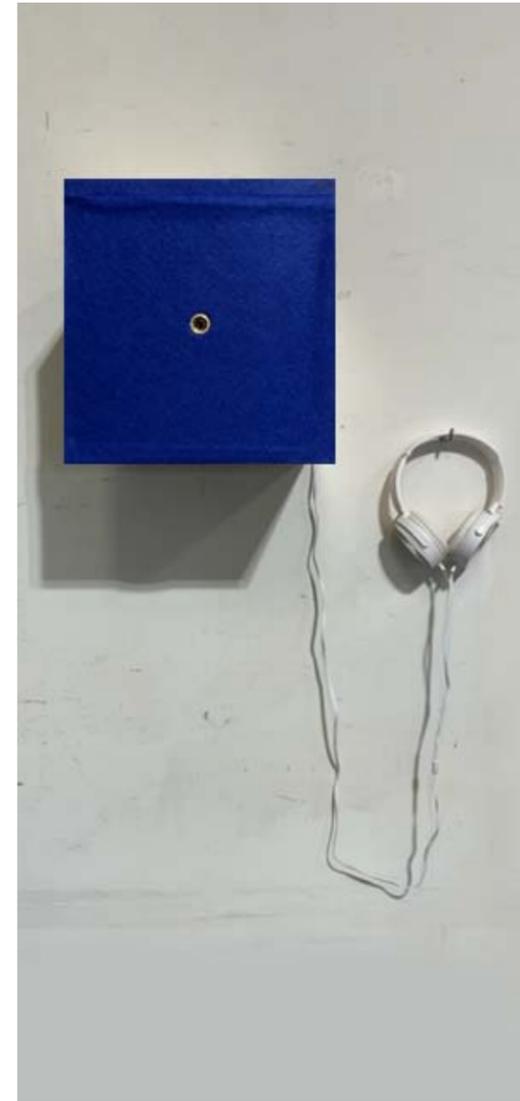


Figure 28: Corridor diorama exterior.



Figure 29: Corridor diorama interior.

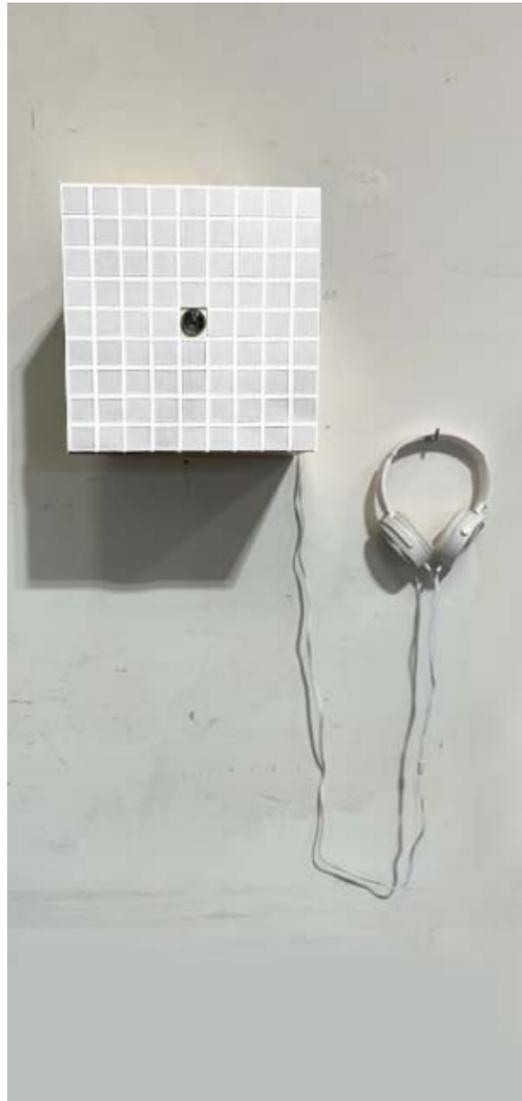


Figure 30: Bedroom diorama exterior.



Figure 31: Bedroom diorama interior.



Figure 32: Rooftop diorama exterior.



Figure 33: Rooftop diorama interior.

## Video

Found video footage is used to explore the hotel and its spaces. In “Film Architecture: Set Designs from Metropolis to Blade Runner,” Dietrich Neumann identified three general ways in which a dialogue between film and architecture is developed: cinema as a reflection and commentary on architecture and the city; cinema as a testing ground for innovative architectural visions; and cinema as a field in which different methods of practice can be applied to the realization of architectural projects.<sup>39</sup> Here, video is used to explore how spatial meaning is constructed through the hotel’s formal qualities. The combination of video footage, associated soundscapes and personalities from moments



Figure 34: Still from “Lobby”.



Figure 35: Still from “Leisure pool”.

of the hotel’s socio-political narrative - such as militants, heiresses and urban explorers - suggests the advance of geopolitical and social stories while exercising the inhabitation of the spaces in the impossibility of visiting the site whether physically, today, or in the past. The found footage is paired with the words of Lebanese writers and poets, read by their respective authors, along with soundscapes from Beirut and Lebanese media. The videos reveal the interplay of spatial scale and intimacies in the hotel spaces and the material construction that has reflected and facilitated the social and cultural practices for which they are renowned. The videos speak of the propagation of modernity and



Figure 36: Still from “Corridor”.



Figure 37: Still from “Bedroom”.

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39. Dietrich Neumann, “Introduction” in “Film Architecture: Set Designs from Metropolis to Blade Runner”, ed. Dietrich Neumann (London: Prestel 1996), 7.

universal standards to provide predictable accommodations and ‘normalized’ public environments such as lobbies, bars, and restaurants through transnational chains.



Figure 38: Still from “Rooftop”.

## Postcards

Picture postcards - postcards made directly from photographic negatives - were introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century. The postcard would contribute to modern society’s affective and imaginary synthesis as a form of mass media. In a study tracking the trajectory of letters, postcards and email, Esther Milne writes, “Postcards repeat and even intensify the fantasy of immaterial and therefore pure communication by individuals, media, postcards emerge in and maintain a set of complex relations with many traditional forms of correspondence.”<sup>40</sup> In this thesis, a series of collaged postcards are developed as a medium for exploring the translational and non-linear notion of

history and meaning. Collage has seen a renewed interest as an arts-based research approach to meaning-making through the juxtaposition of pictures, artifacts, natural objects, words, phrases, textiles, sounds, and stories.<sup>41</sup> Through its multi-methods approach, the thesis is a collage of its own. It combines news clipping, documentative photography, film stills, architectural drawings and social media posts to depict the change of use, meaning and commemorative value inherent in the Holiday Inn Beirut. Three sets of postcards were created.

The first set depicts hotel’s elevation superimposed with historic photographs documenting the Holiday Inn Beirut’s

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40. Esther. Milne, “Letters, Postcards, Email : Technologies of Presence”, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010. ProQuest Ebook Central, 134, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/oculcarleton-ebooks/detail.action?docID=481114>.

41. Lisa M. Given , The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods. “Collage”. SAGE Publications Inc., 2008. doi: 10.4135/9781412963909.

socio-political drift from modernist icon, to war apparatus, to unintentional monument. The first postcard depicts the economic and political context that allowed the commissioning of the hotel but also its use in promoting Beirut along with comparable destinations such as Montecarlo, Malaga and Rome. In the second postcard, the façade begins to decay and its use as a war apparatus is depicted through the figure of a Christian militant throwing a hand grenade from the balcony. In the third postcard, the city can be seen in the background along with the juxtaposition of graffiti. A Lebanese soldier stands guard as a reminder of the hotel's current use as a military base. This set of postcards highlights the relationship between the three moments in the Holiday Inn Beirut's

socio-political narrative. They reveal more clearly the role of violence in changing architectural meaning. Having embodied a prosperous time for Lebanon, the Holiday Inn Beirut's status as a modernist icon came to an end when it was militarized. Through this militarization, its use as an apparatus of war has become visible and further contributes to its status as an unintentional monument.

The second set of postcards comprises collages of images and drawings layered onto orthographic drawings produced by Raafat Majzoub for the Arab Centre for Architecture. to document the Holiday Inn Beirut (see Appendix B). This set of postcards was produced as a means to explore notions present in the hotel throughout the three moments in its socio-political narrative.

The first postcard explores the projectivity of the hotel as a transnational space and its relation to tourism and other Holiday Inn of America Inc. locations. The second postcard explores the openness and closure and their function in both geopolitical and warfare spaces. The last postcard in this series explores the contrast in both the hotel's formal qualities and destruction.

The third set of postcards probes the hotel spaces catalogued in the first part of the methodology. The photographs of the hotel's interiors in its current state were manipulated to empathize the formal qualities of each space while referencing the materiality of the dioramas and their soundscapes. The lobby postcard, for example, references the gold-cladded diorama and

the ground floor's current use as a military base. In manipulating the photographs of the hotel, this set of postcard references the staged, saturated colors, and the post-production work done on early postcards and as demonstrated in the catalogued images of Holiday Inn of America Inc. postcards in the first part of the methodology.

Firstly, the postcards reveal the projection present in soft power through transnationalism and hard power – through, for example, sniper nest views. Having been part of an American chain, the Holiday Inn Beirut acted as a crucial node of American soft power projection that helped construct the transnational cultural context in which Lebanon's political economy and diplomacy took place. The chain's powerful visual and

material presence along with its architectural modernity, is designed to reproduce American values at the furthest boundaries of the Western spheres, such as Beirut.<sup>42</sup>

Secondly, the postcards reveal presence of openness and closure as a geopolitical and military tool, through the hotel's formal qualities and their co-option as devices of military surveillance and use. The Holiday Inn Beirut became a strategically valuable asset during Lebanon's War. Its verticality became a militarily strategic asset and was redeployed so that acts of violence can be projected from it. Its high floors that offered panoramic views of the city as a commodity to be consumed by paying guests; were used to better target, possess and dominate it. Its selective openness

and closure to its surroundings, and its flexible material infrastructures which once facilitated and mediated geological processes were coopted for military uses.<sup>43</sup>

Lastly, the postcards reveal the presence of an intended contrast through the hotel's formal qualities and their transformation through ammunition and graffiti. The contrast in the Holiday Inn Beirut's sociopolitical narrative is evident in its material form. The bullet punctures that destroy its formal architectural qualities become part of its commemorative value just as the character defining elements might have placed it in the realm of heritage preservation. Jad El Khoury graffiti furthers this contrast through the cartoonish character, a highly contrasted element to

42. Sara Fregonese and Adam Ramadan, "Hotel Geopolitics: A Research Agenda." *Geopolitics* 20, no. 4 (2015): 799.  
 43. Ibid. 793.



Figure 39: Modernist icon postcard.

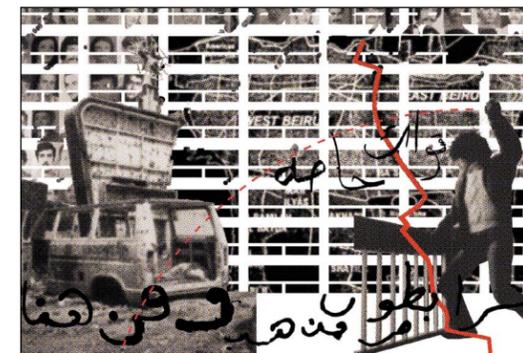
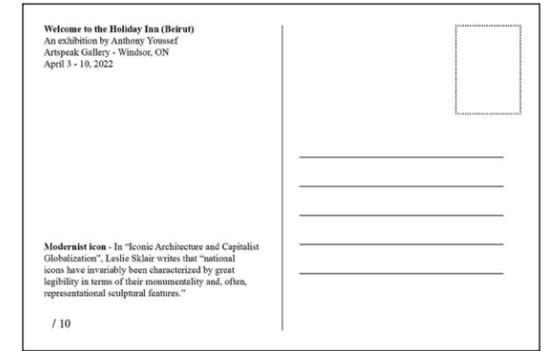


Figure 40: War apparatus postcard.

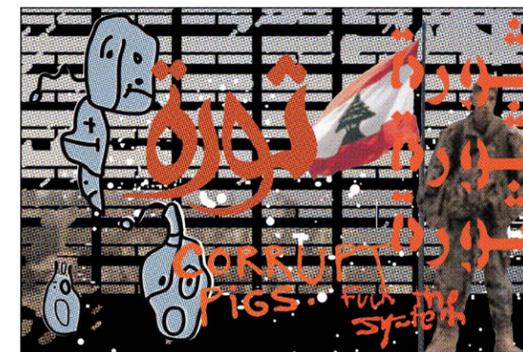
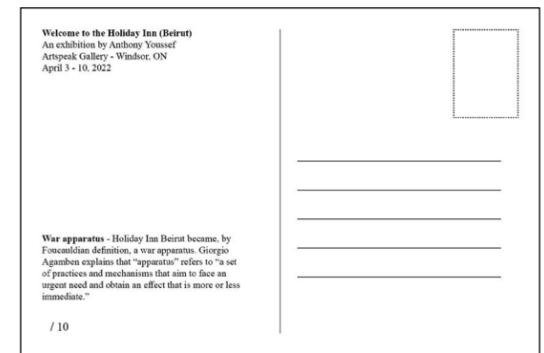
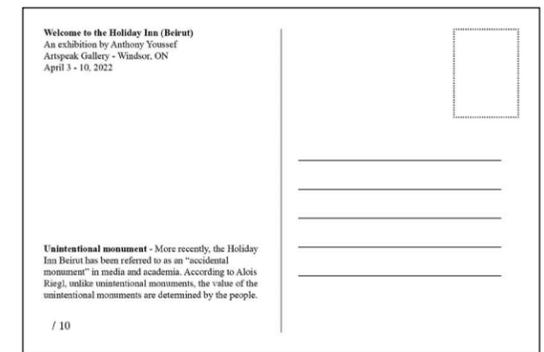


Figure 41: Unintentional monument postcard.



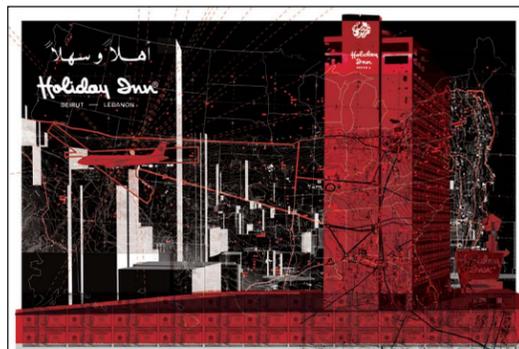


Figure 42: Projection postcard.

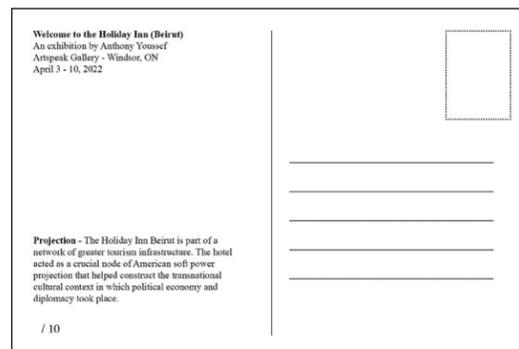


Figure 45: Lobby postcard.

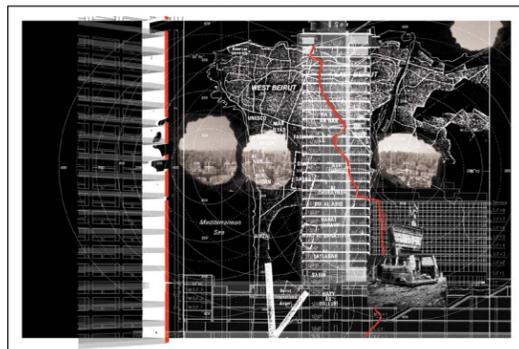
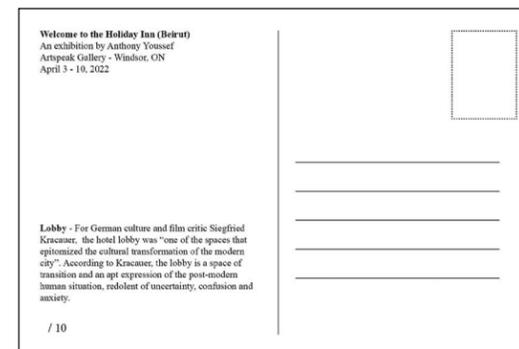


Figure 43: Openness and closure postcard.

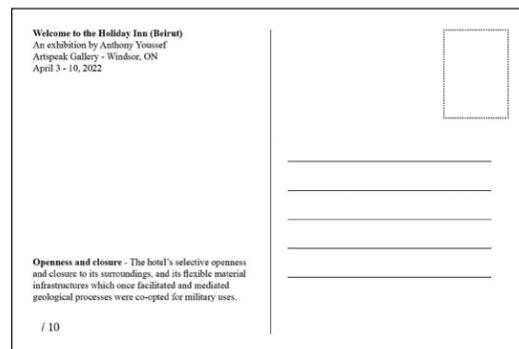


Figure 46: Leisure pool postcard.

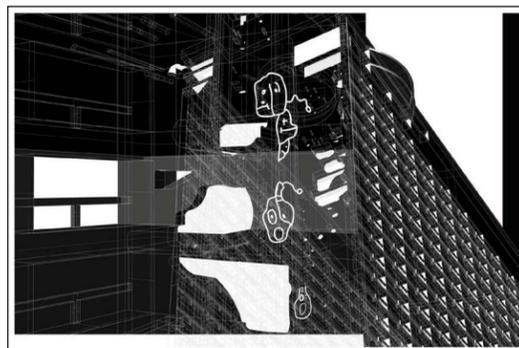
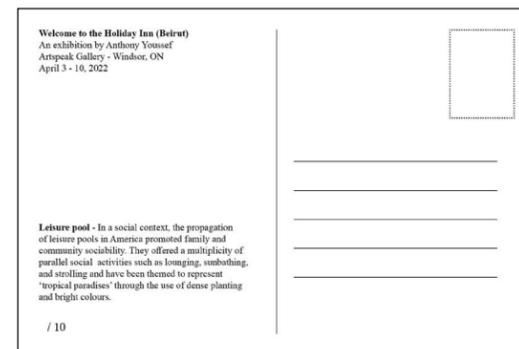


Figure 44: Contrast postcard.

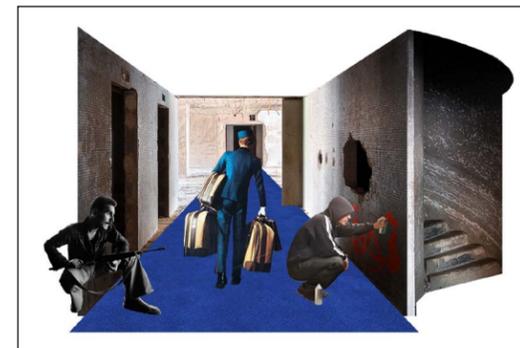
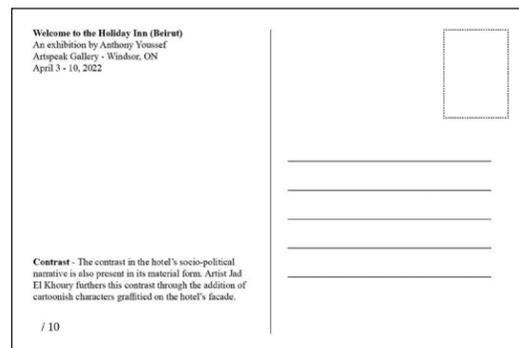
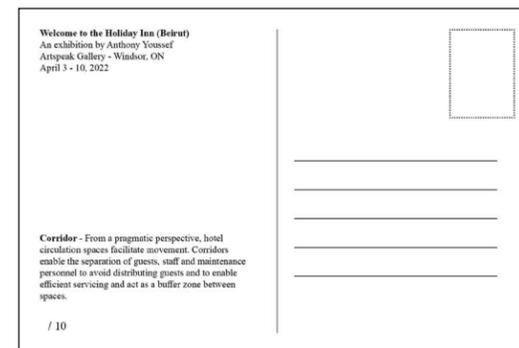


Figure 47: Corridor postcard.



# PROPOSAL

## Exhibition as Medium

The multi-method approach of this thesis culminates in the production and curation of an exhibit that comprises the postcards, videos and dioramas. This work and its research contexts formed the curatorial premise of the exhibition and prompted strategies for designing and choreographing the exhibition and its experience. Through this exhibition, viewers are invited to enter and explore the Holiday Inn Beirut physically as a lived and experienced space. It is an exercise in learning how to construct meaning into space. This work and its research contexts formed the curatorial premise of the exhibition and prompted strategies for designing and choreographing

the exhibition and its experience.

During the 1960s, primary discourse around exhibitions turned away from forms of critique of work as an autonomous object of study and shifted, rather, to a form of curatorial criticism, in which the exhibition space was given critical precedence over that of the objects of art contained within it. This was largely propagated by artist Seth Siegelaub who exhibited heavily abstracted works that owed their visibility to curatorial intervention and support structures, including fliers and posters. This was further developed in the 1990s, which saw the dominance of curatorial practice as a potential nexus for discussion, critique, and debate. The



Figure 48: Bedroom postcard.

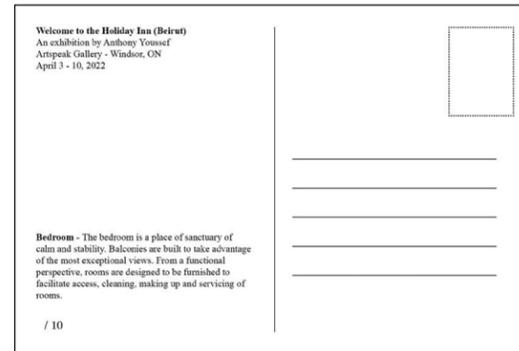
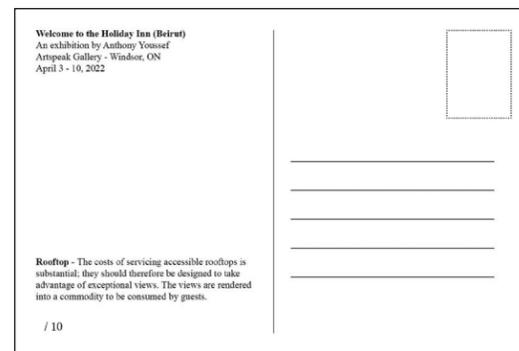


Figure 49: Rooftop postcard.



parameter of the exhibition was extended to incorporate more discursive, conversational and geo-political discussion while taking on a translational scale through the biennial phenomenon. Exhibitions therefore became a contemporary forms of rhetoric, whose aim is to produce a prescribed set of values and social relations for their audiences.<sup>44</sup>

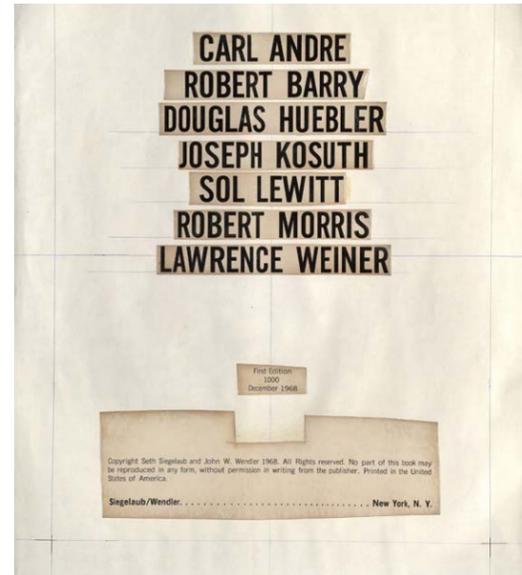


Figure 50: Mock-up draft of title page for “Xerox Book”.

Top right

Figure 50: Mock-up draft of title page for Xerox Book.

Siegelaub experimented with exhibitions-as-books in 1968 with Xerox Book.

Bottom right

Figure 51: Siegelaub’s gallery floor plan for January 5–31, 1969.

In Siegelaub’s first group exhibition, the catalogue was the primary manifestation. The floor plan outlines the exhibition’s two-room layout.

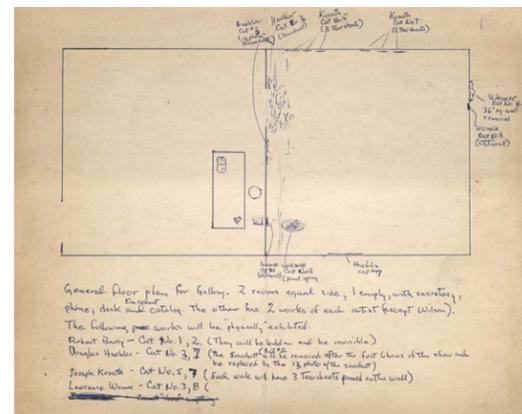


Figure 51: Siegelaub’s gallery floor plan for “January 5–31, 1969”.

44. Alex Gawronski, “Curated from Within: The Artist as Curator,” in “A Companion to Curation,” ed. John Conomos, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2019), 243.

Here, the parameters of the exhibition were extended to incorporate more discursive, conversational, and geo-political discussions. In applying ideas of demystification, the thesis itself becomes part of the support structure of the exhibition. The exhibition was installed at Artspeak Gallery (see Appendix C), a non-juried space for exhibitions and events, located in Windsor, Ontario, a city in which, according to the 2016 Census, Arabic is the most common mother tongue next to French and English.<sup>45</sup> The gallery is located along Wyandotte Street, a street known for its many Arab-run businesses in an area locals call an “Arab village.”<sup>46</sup>

Precedents comprising the work of contemporary Lebanese artists exhibiting abroad are studied to contextualize how

exhibition installations are used to address Lebanon’s history and socio-political narratives. This includes the works Walid Raad, Akram Zaatari, Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige. To a certain degree, all of their work navigates fiction, archives and the circulation of images. Through installation, performance, video, and photography, Walid Raad explores how historical events of



Figure 52 (left) and 53 (right): Installation view of “Postcards of War”.

45. Meg Roberts, “Arabic Most Common Mother Tongue in Windsor Other than English, French, *CBC News*, August 3, 2017. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/arabic-most-common-mother-tongue-in-windsor-other-than-english-french-1.4232219>.

46. Ibid.

physical and psychological violence affect bodies, minds, culture, and narrative.<sup>47</sup> Through “Dance to the End of Time,” Akram Zaatari pursues a range of interconnected political themes, including political resistance, the lives of former militants, the legacy of an exhausted left, the circulation of images in times of war, and the play of tenses.<sup>48</sup> Through “Postcards of War” and “Unconformities,” Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige question the fabrication of images and representations, the construction of imaginaries, and the writing of history.<sup>49</sup>



Figure 54: Installation view of “Walid Raad” at the MoMA.



Figure 55: Installation view of “Dance to the End of Love”.



Figure 56: Installation view of “Unconformities”.

47. “Walid Raad.” Paula Cooper Gallery. Accessed January 13, 2022.

<https://www.paulacoopergallery.com/artists/walid-raad#tab:thumbnails>.

48. “Akram Zaatari.” Thomas Dane Gallery. Accessed January 13, 2022.

<https://www.thomasdanegallery.com/artists/55-akram-zaatari/profile/>

49. “Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige.” Joana Hadjithomas Khalil Joreige Biography Comments. Accessed January 13, 2022.

<http://hadjithomasjoreige.com/biography/>

## Installations as Portals

Whether the diorama, video or postcard installation, each installation suggests a type of portal into the hotel’s spaces. The operative ideas revealed through the “probe” section of the thesis (projection, openness and closure, and contrast) are used as a basis for intervening in the gallery space and, consequently, for exploring the geopolitical nature of hotel spaces. Through this proposed exhibition, both curatorial practice and exhibition design become a methodology for inviting viewers to physically enter and explore the Holiday Inn Beirut as a lived and experienced space. Each installation invokes a certain level of interaction as a means to invites viewers to enter the work physically.

Objects are choreographed through scope of reach and a broad spectrum of intimacies; from the closeness of a single viewer gazing into the diorama, to the more open viewing experiencing of the videos, and the far reach of the postcard.

### Dioramma installation

“Peeping into the Holiday Inn (Beirut)” invites viewers to enter and occupy the spaces through an audio-visual experience that applies the condensing of scale. The dioramas are installed horizontally along the same height. As visitors enter, they experience each box in a sequence similar to

the circulation intended for the Holiday Inn Beirut beginning with the lobby and ending with the rooftop. Visitors first experience the finishing of each diorama. As the visitors put on headsets that play the soundscapes on a loop and gesture to look through the door viewer, they are transported to each of the space. The visitors' interaction is meant to invoke the experience of heightened contrast between the exterior finishing of the dioramas and the destroyed spaces portrayed in the interior



Figure 57: Gallery model view of diorama and video installation.

### Video installation

In “Installation and the Moving Image”, Catherine Elwes writes, “...film and video transport viewers to that functional domain, simultaneously dulling their awareness of the

here-and-now”.<sup>50</sup> “Exploring the Holiday Inn (Beirut)” is a video installation, a technical derivative of cinema and architecture, is a spatial and cinematic phenomenon. It is a medium through which spaces are created to be inhabited.<sup>51</sup> This video installation is meant to not only reference the projection in transnationalism and warfare, but also invites visitors to interact with the projection in order to inhabit the projected space. The looped video is projected from a height that relates to the human scale to allow viewers to interact with the looped video as they cross the projector’s field of projection.

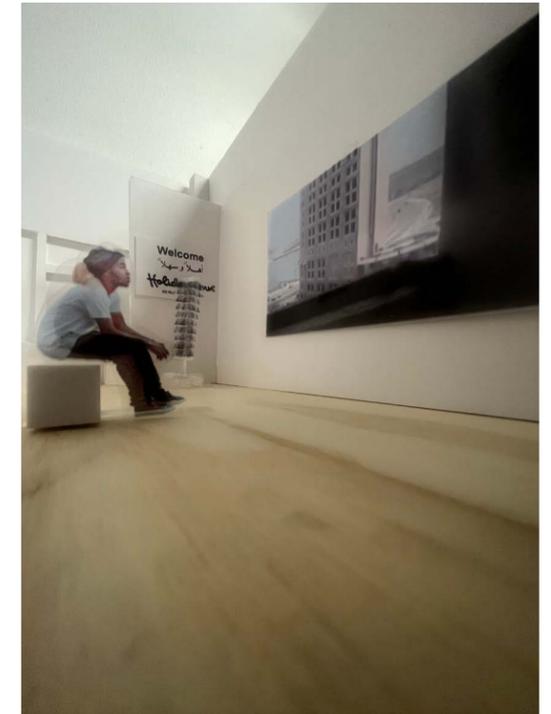


Figure 58: Gallery model view of video and postcard installation.

### Postcard installation

“Projecting the Holiday Inn (Beirut)” is

50. Catherine Elwes, “Introduction.” in “Installation and the Moving Image,” (London: Wallflower Press Book, 2015), 1.

51. Graham Cairns, “Introduction,” in “The Architecture of the Screen : Essays in Cinematographic Space,” (Bristol: Intellect, 2013).

an installation comprising the postcards installed on a floor spinner display rack as a means to recall the memorabilia associated with tourism infrastructure. Through this installation, visitors can browse the postcards and experience an even more condensed and flattened space. Furthermore, this installation applies the selective openness and closure and mediated geological processes by inviting visitors to expand the space on a transnational scale by taking and sending a postcard through postal mail.



Figure 59: Gallery view of diorama, video and postcard installation.



Figure 60: Gallery model view of storefront.

## EPILOGUE

In March of 2022, Kenneth Morrison and Abdallah El Binni published their book *War Hotels*, an exploration of hotels, including the Holiday Inn Beirut, in wartime and in other times of crisis. Morrison and El Binni write “...the Holiday Inn [Beirut] remains as it was at the end of the battle: a stark, symbolic reminder of the country’s civil war. It was not left as a monument intentionally, however.”<sup>52</sup> More than forty five years after the end of the “Battle of the Hotels,” the Holiday Inn Beirut continues to intrigue as its particular narrative continue to be reinforced. In engaging the Holiday Inn Beirut as subject for this thesis, I sought to respond to the movements and shifts in its social-political narrative: from a modernist icon, to a war apparatus, to an unintentional monument,

as spatial prompts and implications. The thesis work resulted in so much more.

Prior to engaging with the Holiday Inn Beirut as a subject, my understanding of the Lebanese Civil War was limited to the inherited political views in which the rhetoric focused on socio-religious conflicts between Christians and Muslims. On a personal level, the thesis became an educational exercise that deepened my understanding of Lebanon’s history. As part of my thesis, I developed and designed an exhibition titled “Welcome to the Holiday Inn (Beirut)” that was on display at Artspeak Gallery in Windsor, Ontario, between April 3rd and 9th of 2022. The opening took place on April 7, 2022, one week short of the Lebanese Civil War’s 47th anniversary

52. Kenneth Morrison and El Abdallah Binni, “The Holiday Inn and the Commodore, Beirut, Lebanon,” in *War Hotels* (Merrion Press, 2022).

on April 13. The stylized exhibition title was an invitation for visitors to explore the Holiday Inn as a translational body and the spatial implications of its Lebanese location.

As visitors entered the exhibition, they were drawn towards the colorful dioramas. Unsure what to do, some visitors first placed a pair of headsets on and observed the diorama's exterior, while others were quick to notice the door viewer and gestured towards it to peek inside. Visitors became part of a full-scale diorama within the gallery itself. In watching the video installation, some viewers tried to avoid walking through the projector's field of projection, while others willingly stood within the field of projection to interact with the projected spaces. Some visitors were hesitant to interact with the postcard



Figure 61: Gallery view looking south.



Figure 62: Installation view of "Peeping into the Holiday Inn (Beirut).

installation until they read the instruction label inviting them to browse through the floor spinner and to choose a card to send by mail.

Sending the postcards became a reflective exercise in and of itself. Given the limitations of having the thesis committee visit the exhibition, a postcard was sent to each committee member. Reflections ranged in topics including the appeal of contested space, the vulnerability of hotels to militarization and the reproduction of space in transnationalism. This process further underlined the role of personal narrative in advancing architectural narrative and constructing meaning into space.

This process revealed the relationship between the moments in the hotel's socio-political narrative; their overlap became evident. The militarization of hotels is a



Figure 63: Installation view of "Exploring the Holiday Inn (Beirut).

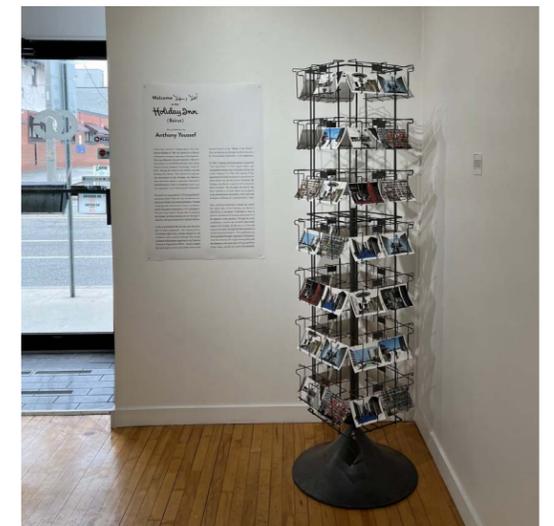


Figure 64: Installation view of "Projecting the Holiday Inn (Beirut).

well documented phenomena. Literature on the topic rarely focuses on their design as apparatuses for effectively and immediately offering guests accommodations and facilitating geo-political processes. Hotels are tourism apparatuses that apply iconism through legibility and representational sculptural features to, as Agamben explained “capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions or discourses of living beings”.<sup>53</sup> This legibility and representational sculptural features, which can also be observed in elements present in monumentality, are coupled with a spatiality that facilitates the apparatus’ function. It is for this reason, that hotels can be easily transformed from tourism apparatuses to war apparatuses.



Figure 65: Visitor viewing the dioramas as part of the installation “Peeping into the Holiday Inn (Beirut).”



Figure 66: Visitors interacting with the projector’s field of projection as part of the installation “Exploring the Holiday Inn (Beirut).”

53. Giorgio Agamben, *What is an apparatus?: And other essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford University Press, 2009), 14.

The exhibition paralleled the moments in the hotel’s social-political narrative as an icon, apparatus and monument. Comprising three installations, the exhibition was an icon through its legibility and representational features that reflect the hotel’s socio-political narrative. As an apparatus, the exhibition presented a set of practices and mechanisms to effectively and immediately present a controlled view of the hotel and its socio-political narrative. Lastly, the exhibition became a monument - erected for the purpose of keeping the hotel in the minds of future generations. It became a means by which the likely fate of the Holiday Inn Beirut’s demolition is accepted and a way to preserve architectural meaning and narrative in the absence of the physical. It reinforced the



Figure 67: Visitors browsing the postcards as part of the installation “Projecting the Holiday Inn (Beirut).”



# Appendix A

## Literary map

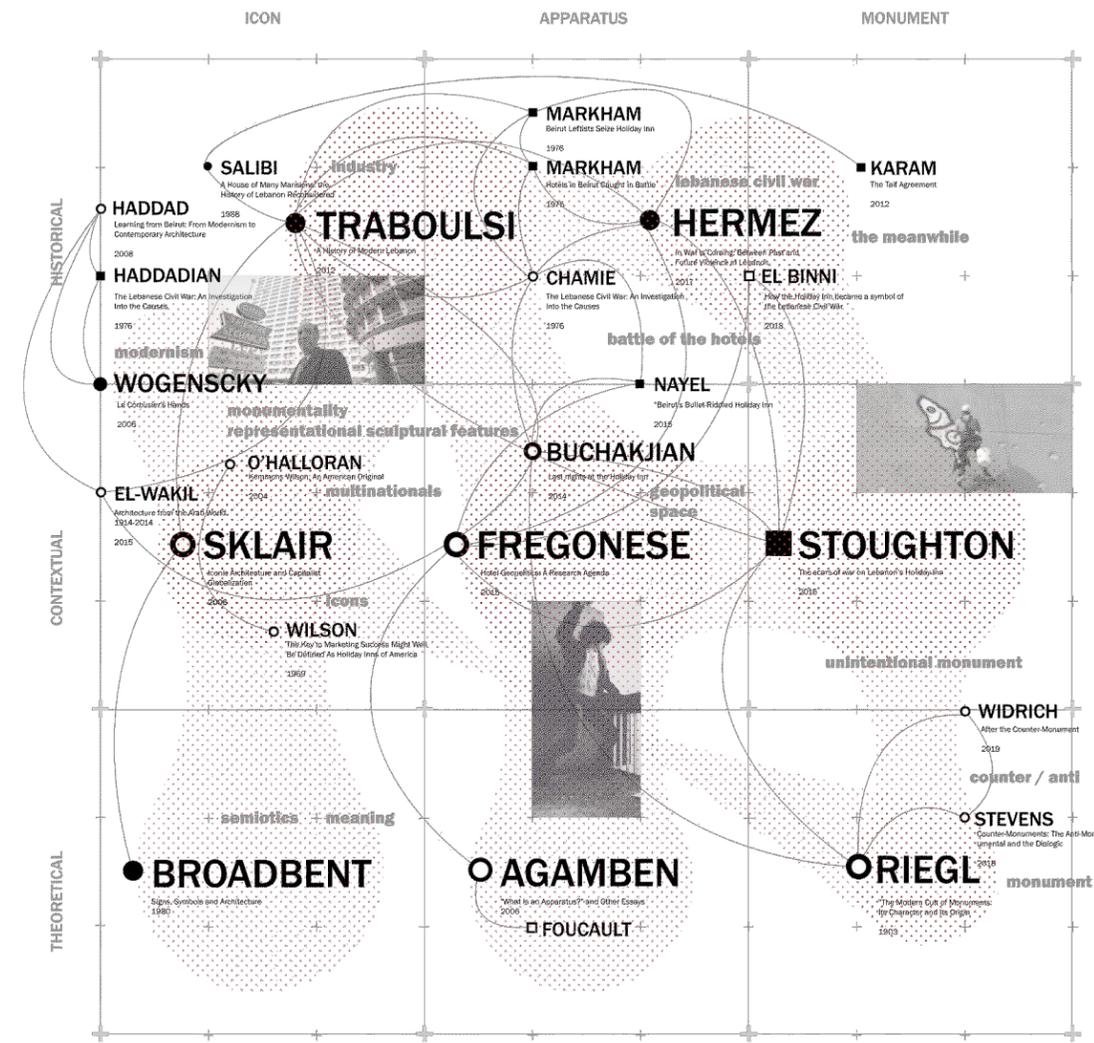


Figure 71: Literary map

# Appendix B

## Holiday Inn Beirut orthographic drawings

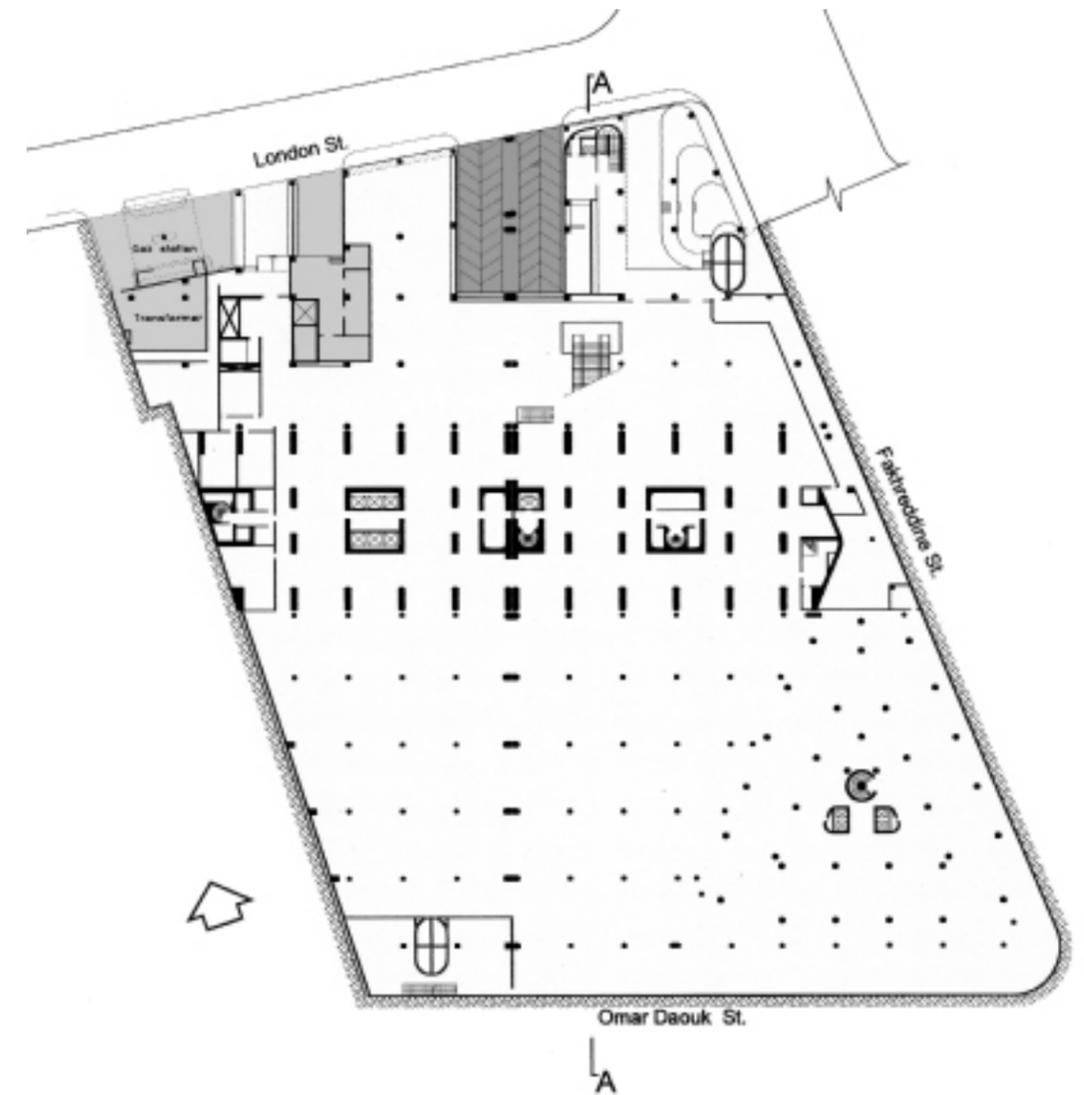


Figure 72: Holiday Inn Beirut lower ground floor plan.

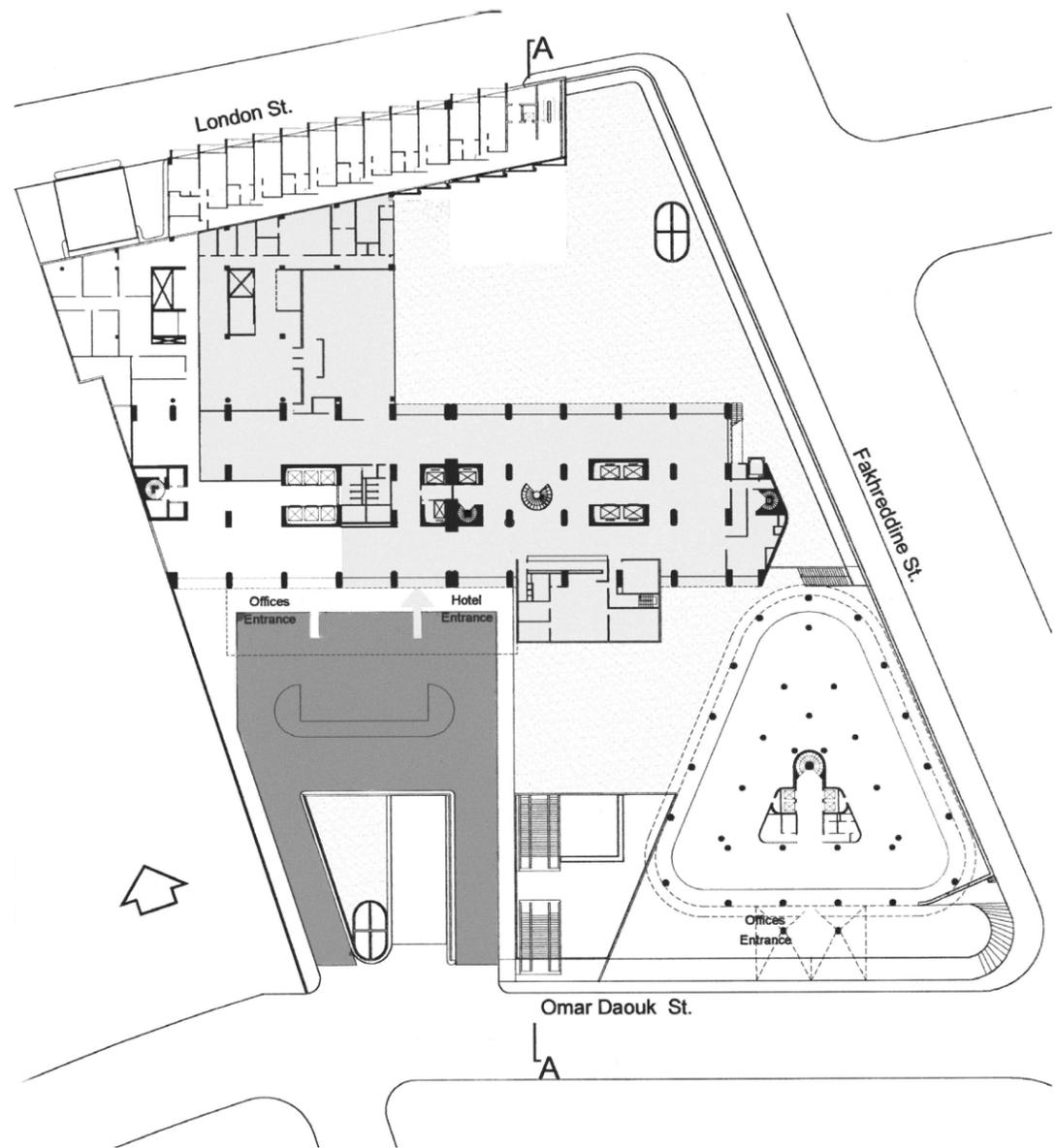


Figure 73: Holiday Inn Beirut upper ground floor plan.

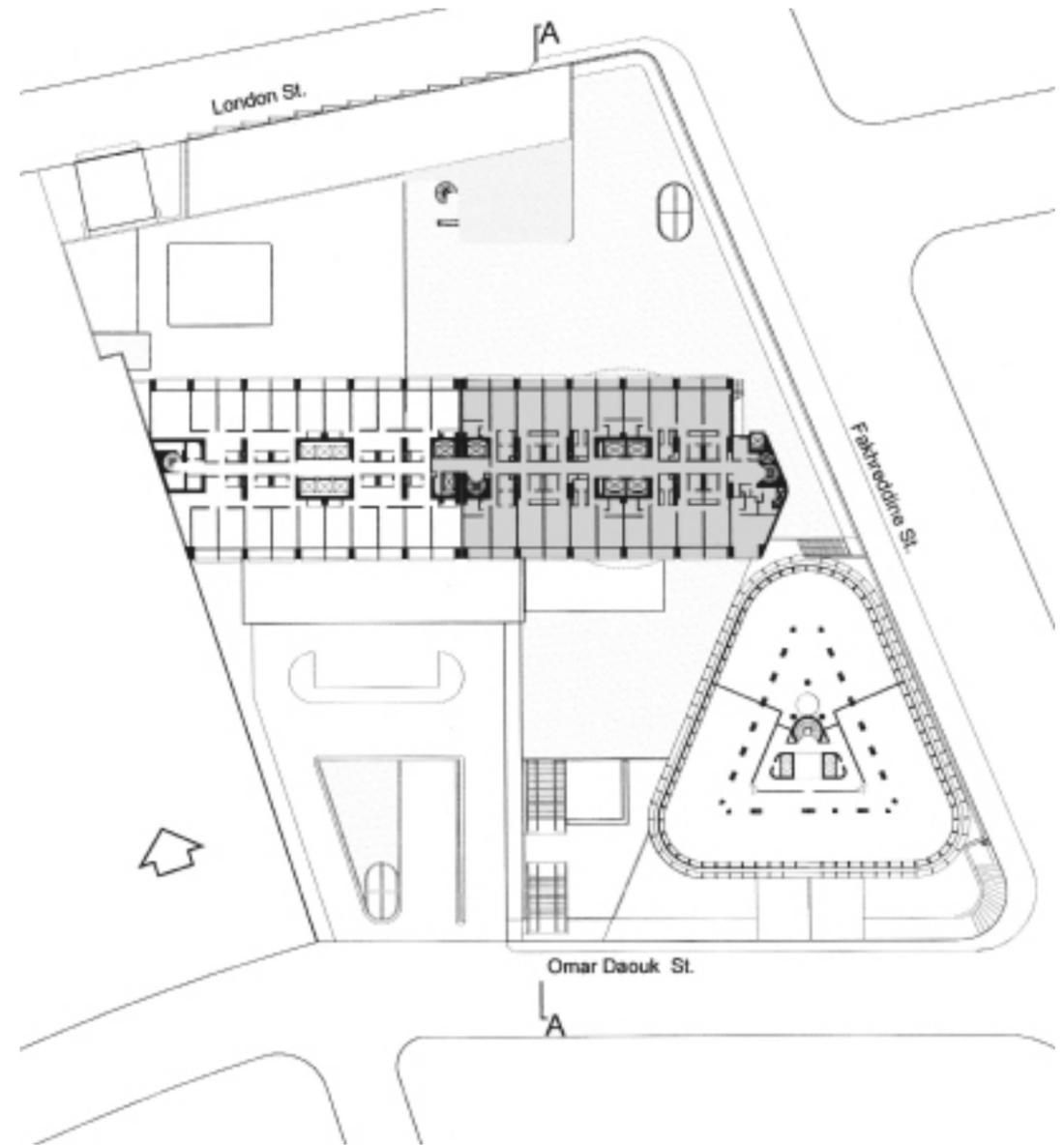


Figure 74: Holiday Inn Beirut typical upper floor plan. Raafat Majzoub for the Arab Centre for Architecture.

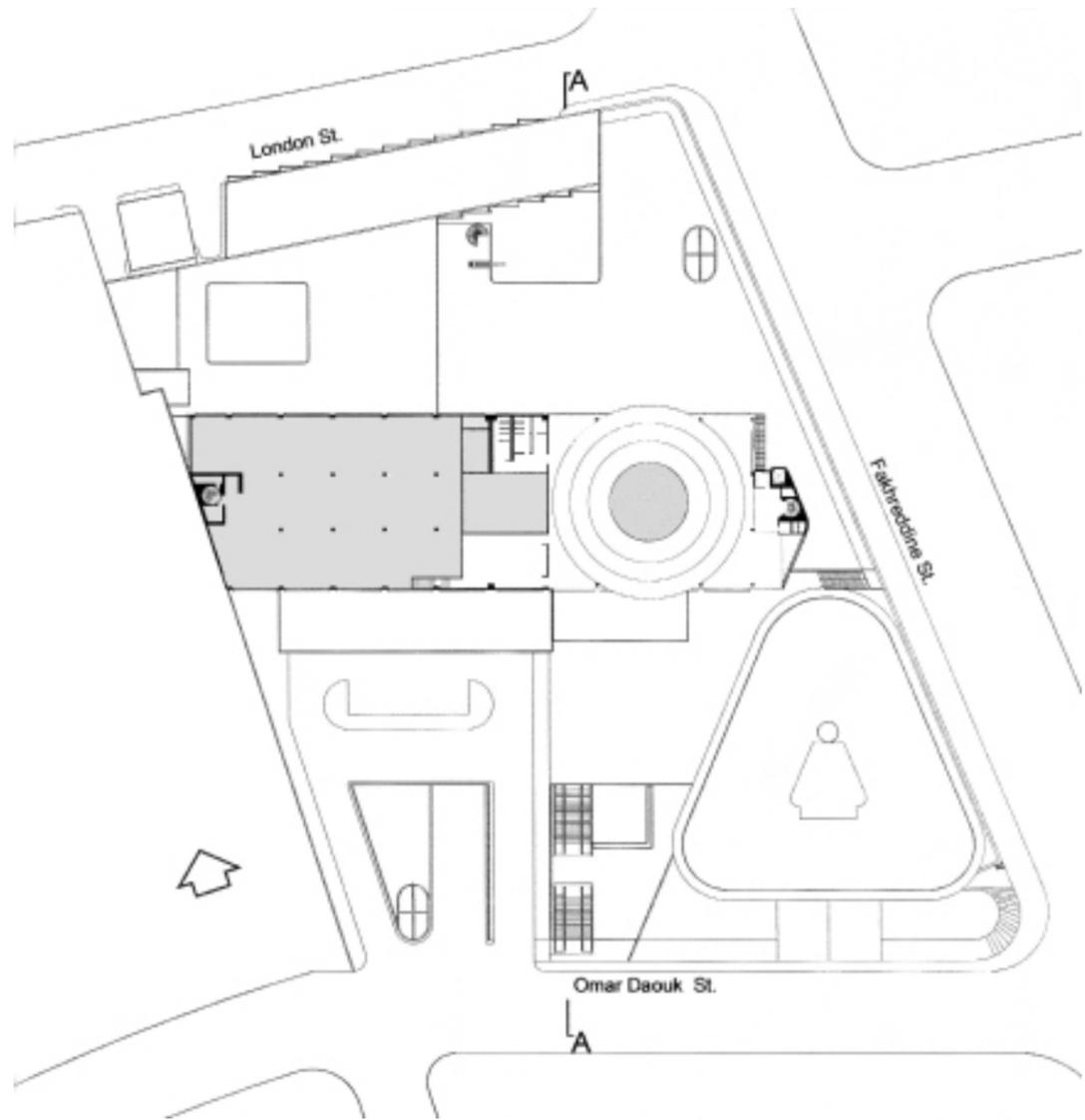


Figure 75: Holiday Inn Beirut Floor 26 Plan. Raafat Majzoub for the Arab Centre for Architecture.

**Legend :**  
 B.F. = Basement Floor  
 L.G.F. = Lower Ground Floor  
 M.F. = Middle Floor  
 M.S.F. = Middle Studio Floor  
 U.G.F. = Upper Ground Floor  
 T.F. = Technical Floor  
 U.F. = Upper Floor

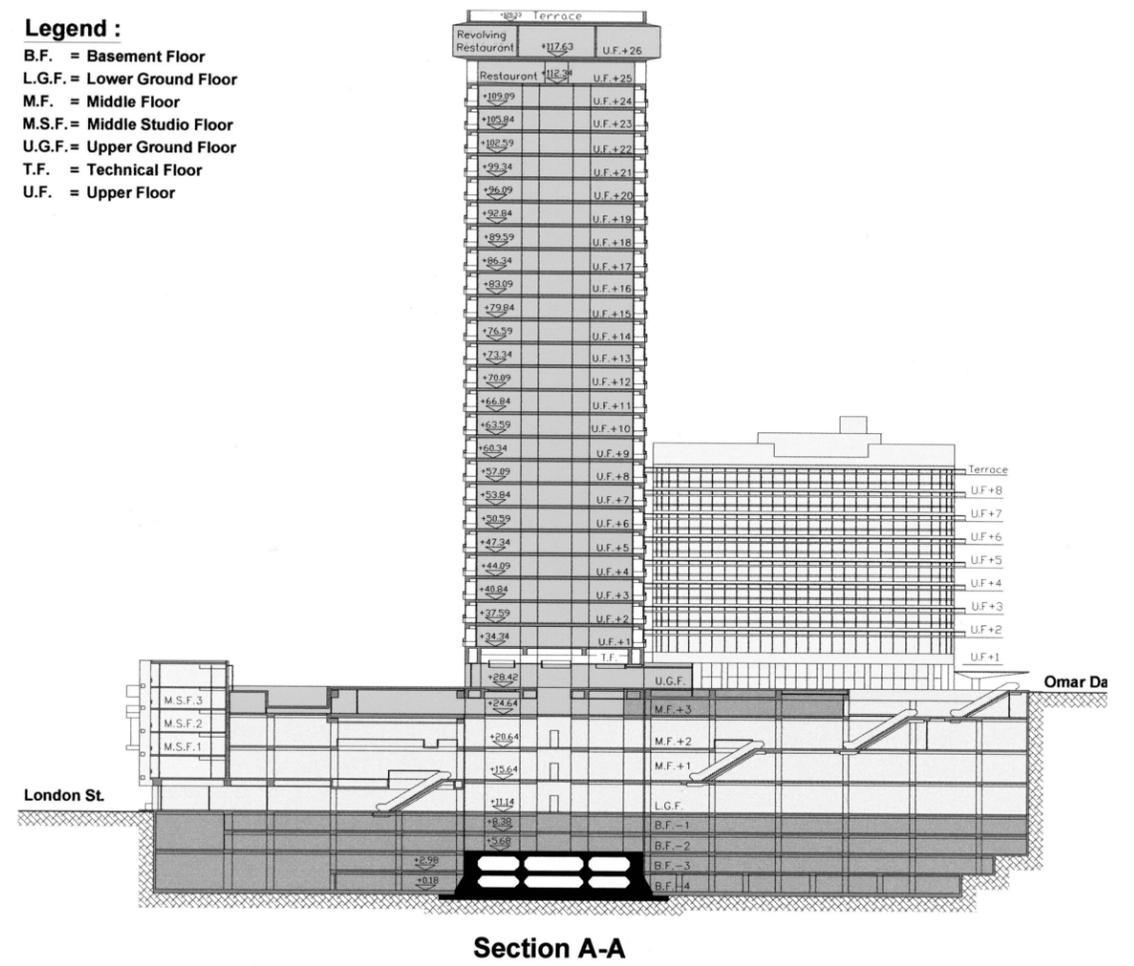


Figure 76: Holiday Inn Beirut Cross Section AA. Raafat Majzoub for the Arab Centre for Architecture.

# Appendix C

## ArtSpeak Gallery

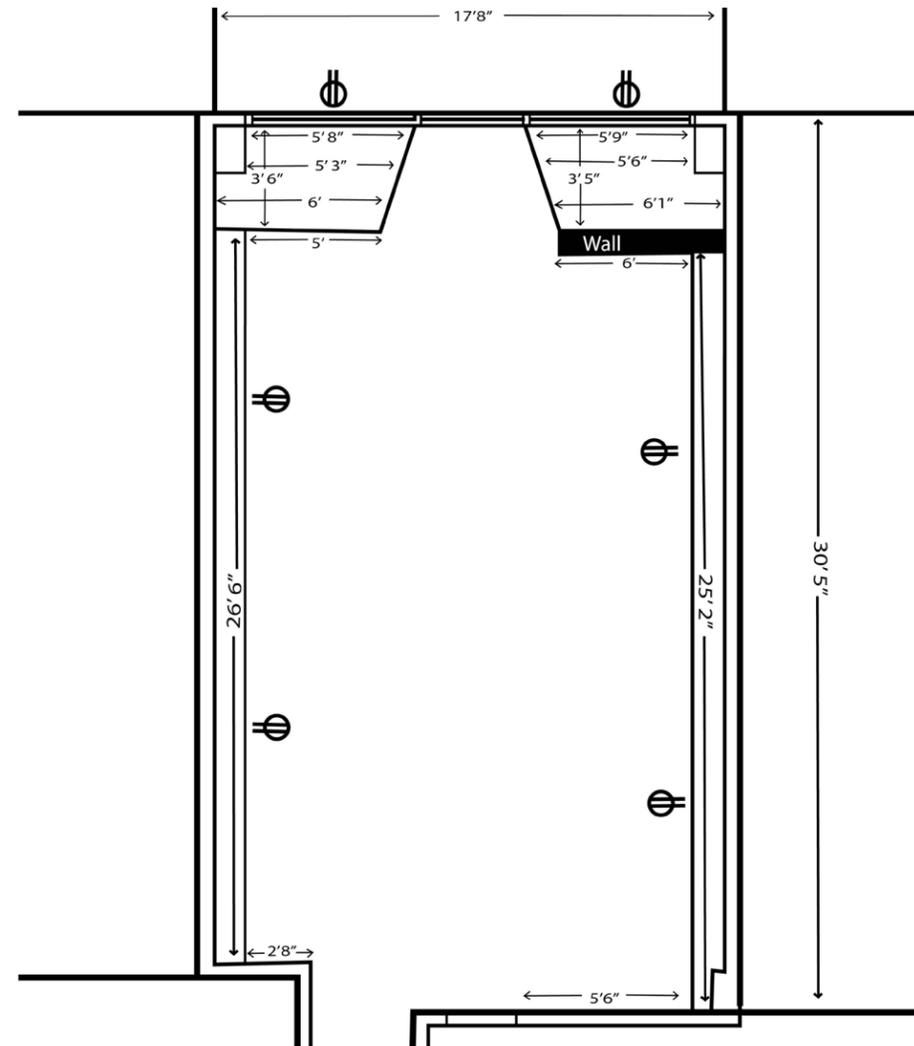


Figure 77: Artspeak Gallery floor plan.

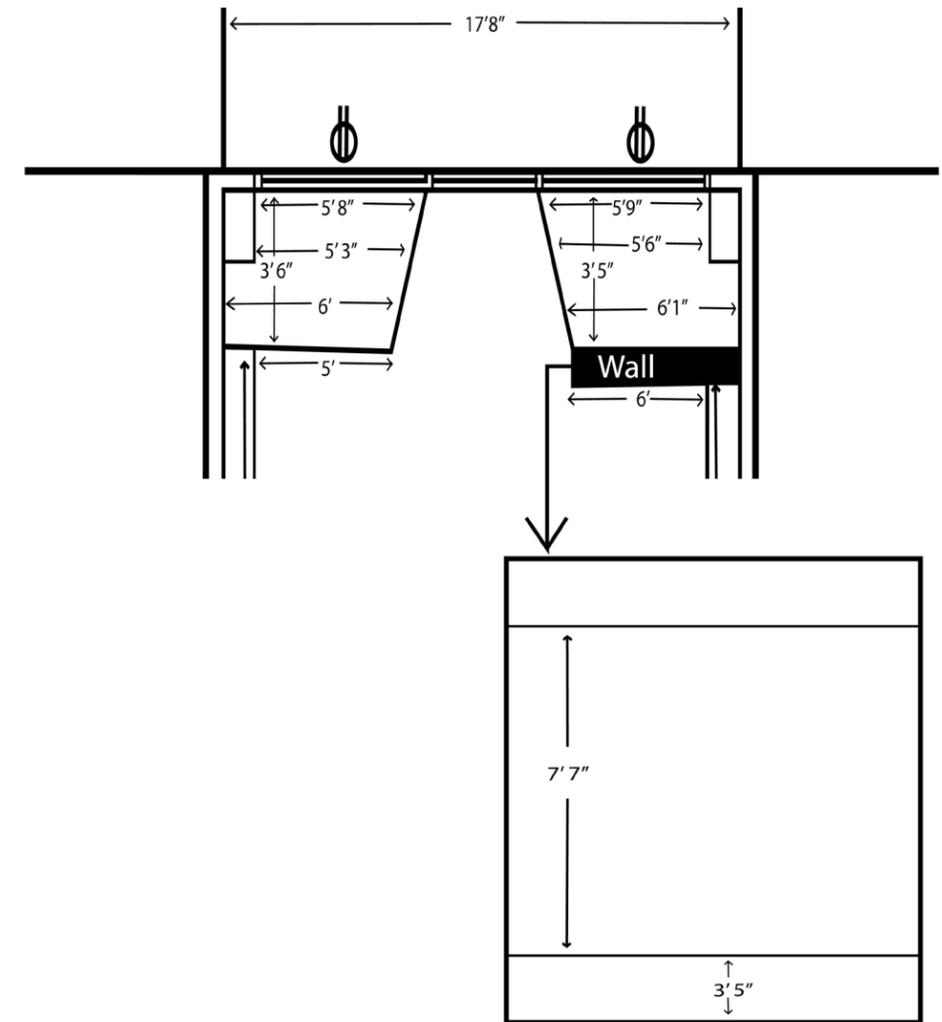


Figure 78: Artspeak Gallery storefront wall plan and elevation.



Figure 79: Artspeak Gallery exterior view.

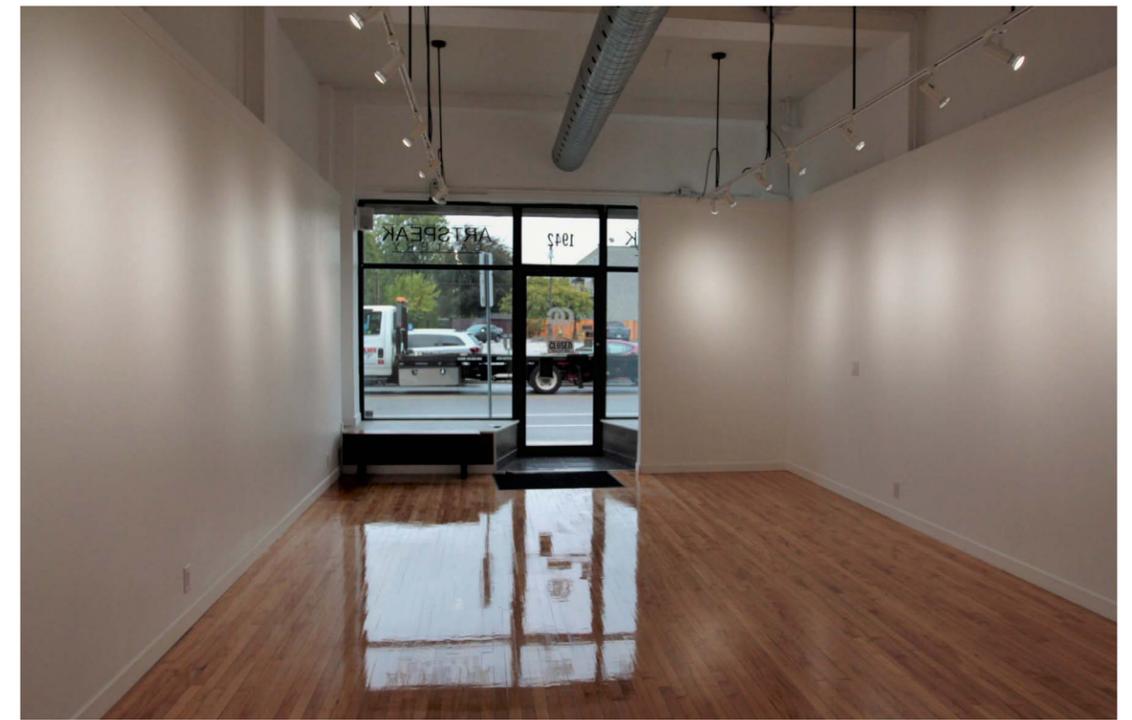


Figure 80: Artspeak Gallery interior view.

## Appendix D

### Exhibition Poster



Figure 81: "Welcome to the Holiday Inn (Beirut) exhibition poster.

## Appendix E

### Exhibition Labels

<p><b>"Peeping into the Holiday Inn (Beirut)"</b>          Mixed media, audio installation.          10" x 10"          2022</p> <p>In this installation, dioramas are used as a medium through which questions of place, emotion, memory, and vision – both perceived and created, are presented. They invite viewers to enter and occupy the spaces through an audio-visual experience that applies the condensing of scale. Each of the five dioramas represents a space within the hotel, with the inside, including a background depicting the hotel lobby, its leisure pool, a bedroom, a corridor, and the rooftop. Each diorama is clad in a material that offers a glimpse of the space contained within it.</p>	<p><b>"Lobby"</b>          Mixed media; door viewer, wood, inkjet print, chandelier medallion, acrylic paint, imitation gold leaf.          10" x 10"          2022</p> <p>The lobby diorama is covered in gold, responding to observations by author and broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby as part of the documentary "How the Holiday Inn Became a Symbol of the Lebanese Civil War," where he states, "...there was plenty of chrome, plenty of silver, plenty of gold-coloured drapes".</p>
<p><b>"Leisure pool"</b>          Mixed media; door viewer, wood, inkjet print, imitation tiling, acrylic paint.          10" x 10"          2022</p> <p>The leisure pool is clad in turquoise tiles, in reference to the bright colour of the pool as an idea of a tropical paradise.</p>	<p><b>"Bedroom"</b>          Mixed media; door viewer, wood, inkjet print, imitation tiling, acrylic paint.          10" x 10"          2022</p> <p>The finishing on the bedroom diorama references the tile-clad balcony walls, a colour of calm and stability intended for the hotel bedroom.</p>

Figure 82: "Welcome to the Holiday Inn (Beirut) exhibition labels.

<p><b>“Rooftop”</b> Mixed media; door viewer, wood, inkjet print, imitation tiling, acrylic paint. 10” x 10” 2022</p> <p>The rooftop diorama is clad in a glazed metallic blue tile. This finishing references the rooftop volumes containing the bar and service area, their glistering alluding to the glamour of this spatial commodity.</p>	<p><b>“Exploring the Holiday Inn (Beirut)”</b> Audio-visual installation, 00:04:25, loop. 2021</p> <p>Found video footage is used to explore the hotel and its spaces. The combination of video footage, associated soundscapes and personalities from moments of the hotel’s socio-political narrative - such as militants, heiresses and urban explorers - suggests the advance of geopolitical and social stories while exercising the inhabitation of the spaces in the impossibility of visiting the site whether physically, today, or in the past. The video installation is meant to reference the projection in transnationalism and warfare and invites visitors to interact with the projection to inhabit the projected space.</p> <p><b>“Lobby”</b> 00:00:29 Excerpt from a reading by Borhane Alaouié from <i>Letter from a Time of Exile</i>.</p> <p><b>“Leisure pool”</b> 00:00:18 Excerpt from a reading by Etel Adnan from <i>The Arab Apocalypse</i>.</p> <p><b>“Bedroom”</b> 00:00:35 Excerpt from a reading by Rabih Alameddine from his novel <i>The Angel of History</i>.</p> <p><b>“Corridor”</b> 00:00:32 Excerpt from a reading by Elias El Khoury of his novel <i>Yalo</i>.</p> <p><b>“Rooftop”</b> 00:00:21 Excerpt from a reading by Zeina El Khalil of her novel <i>Beirut, I Love You</i></p>
<p><b>“Corridor”</b> Mixed media; door viewer, wood, inkjet print, felt. 10” x 10” 2022</p> <p>The corridor is finished in a blue felt in reference to a comment by Gaby Gemayel, a veteran of the Lebanese Front who noted, “there was a corridor with a blue carpet...we used to sit in the corridor most of the time”.</p>	
<p><b>“Projecting the Holiday Inn Beirut”</b> Inkjet prints. 4” x 6” 2022</p> <p>a series of collaged postcards are developed as a medium for exploring the translational and non-linear notion of history and meaning. Collage is used to depict the change of use, meaning and commemorative value inherent in the Holiday Inn Beirut. Visitors can browse the postcards through the installation and experience and even more condensed and flattened space. This installation also invites visitors to expand the space on a transnational level by tacking and sending a postcard by postal mail.</p>	

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