

Jerusalem today holds a special place in the hearts of millions of earth's citizens, as it has for millennia. Yet access is impossible for many who either call it home or wish to worship in its sacred spaces. The assertion "Jerusalem Lives" evokes a mix of feelings among

Christians and Muslims, be they of Palestinian or other nationalities, who have not been able to pray at the holy sites in Jerusalem or visit close or distant relatives there for many decades. Certainly, this assertion is true symbolically. And recent developments have shown the strong level of determination that unites the adherents of both faiths in the face of ongoing attempts to eradicate their presence in Jerusalem. The residents of East Jerusalem and the Old City strive not only to persevere but also to live fulfilled lives, despite the increase in taxes on shop owners, the decrease in the number of visitors and the consequent limited income from tourism, the difficulties in obtaining building permits, the house demolitions, and the revocation of residence permits, to name just the most obvious and tangible challenges and obstructions that Palestinian Jerusalemites face on a daily basis.

The inaugural exhibition at The Palestinian Museum in Birzeit documents these challenges that confront the Holy City and its residents, and highlights the signs of life to be found there, including acts of resistance, achievements, and failures. You will find sources of inspiration, reasons for compassion and outrage, and insightful documentation, as well as beautiful and touching artworks of high-caliber artists from Palestine and the rest of the world.

Our sincere thanks go to The Palestinian Museum for the generous financial contribution to this issue and to the members of the museum's support team for the content they provided and helped generate. Omar Al-Qattan, chairperson of the board of trustees of the A.M. Qattan Foundation, served two terms as chair of the Museum Task Force. Reem Fadda, the brilliant curator of the inaugural exhibition *Jerusalem Lives*, and Emily Riddle, a visiting curator and writer, provide background, introduction, and review of the exhibition that will tour internationally, giving our readers who are not able to visit Birzeit the chance to view this beautiful tribute to the Holy City in Europe or the United States.

And thanks go to the individuals who let us take a glimpse into their diverse and inspiring lives in Jerusalem. Jerusalemites love their city, support their fellow citizens, preserve their heritage and environment, create and engage in the city's diverse culture, and do much more.

The entire team at TWiP wishes you a good month ahead,

Tina Basem



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January 2018: **Photography in Palestine**

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