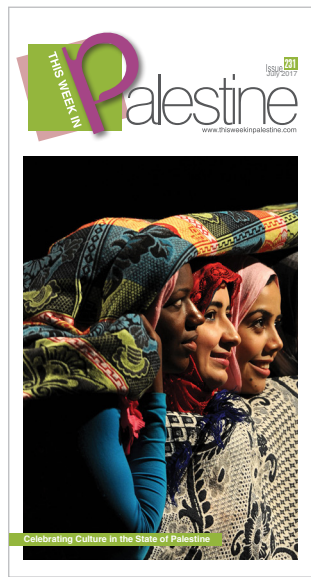


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This issue simply bursts with content, and the abundance of its material is an appropriate reflection of the importance of culture in the lives of Palestinians. In addition to a rich history with religious significance, historic sites, architectural treasures, traditional landscapes, as well as cultural artifacts and heritage, this small piece of land features two sites on the UN List of Cultural Heritage in Danger and is considering and preparing to nominate another eleven (of possibly twenty) sites for the World Heritage List. Arts and crafts have long served not only as enrichment to Palestinian lives but also as an assertion of identity and as a means for exercising and expressing steadfastness and resistance – which carries added significance in East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

You will find many examples and stories of beautiful, inspiring, successful initiatives, enterprises, and cooperation in cultural activities, artistic endeavor, and support for the arts. Many art festivals are held annually in the month of July. Let yourself be inspired to visit and enjoy!

Other articles highlight how urgently it is necessary to give the arts increased, yet well-deserved, attention and support. A number of such initiatives and programs are under way, and on behalf of the Palestinian people, TWiP would like to thank their local and international audiences, supporters, and donors. In the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals 2030, the international community has for the first time recognized how important and positive a contribution the arts can make to economic development and to the securing and increasing of livelihoods for youth, women, and disadvantaged members of a society and society at large. Diplomacy has long recognized the importance of culture in promoting the positive image of a country, in seeking to increase trade and tourism to secure incomes for a county's citizens, and in forging and fostering international relations to promote mutual understanding and peace.

There are too many authors in this issue to mention or thank them individually, however briefly (to fit all articles, we had to cut all listings, shorten some articles, and decline the acceptance of others). I would like to thank our authors collectively instead, and invite our readers to delve immediately into the material that has been so generously provided. Last, but not least, sincere thanks we would like to express also to our sponsors in this issue, the United Nations Development Programme / Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) and UNESCO!



From the entire team at TWiP, we wish you a good summer!

Sincerely, Tina Basem

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September 2017: **Palestine Pre 1948**

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