

***Renowned Brazilian Playwright of Lebanese Descent Visits LERC***

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Reported by Elie Nabhan

After learning of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center through LERC's Latin America Liaison Officer, Mr. Roberto Khatlab, the renowned Brazilian playwright Mr. Samir Yazbek visited LERC to find out more about the Centre.

Mr. Yazbek's Lebanese parents emigrated from the village of Gebrayel in North Lebanon. in the 1950's. They stayed temporarily in Brazil, then went to Colombia, only to return back and settle down finally in Brazil, where Mr. Yazbek was born.

Mr. Yazbek is a renowned author and producer of several plays and pieces of high drama. He presented to LERC two of his books and a beautifully produced booklet containing copies of the reviews and accolades he received in the Brazilian press, especially those in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

The first of the two books he donated to LERC has three plays, *A Entrevista*, *O Fingidor* and *A Terra Prometida*. The second book is entitled *Os Gerentes* which is a drama based upon hotel managers and their interaction with hotel guests.



Brazilian playwright Samir Yazbek presents LERC Director Guita Hourani with two of his publications. (October 2009).

Mr. Yazbek met with the LERC Director and discussed Mr. Yazbek's career and interest in migration, as well as the mission and activities of LERC. During this meeting Mr. Yazbek expressed his amazement at the diversity of Lebanese society and its contradictions observed in the streets of Beirut in particular. He had seen Baalbeck and has been astounded by its architecture.

He was later shown around the Center and given a thorough presentation of the Lebanese Emigration Archives Database, LERC's electronic archives system, by LERC indexer Mrs. Liliane Haddad.

The playwright was amazed by the variety of LERC's collections and especially those related to Brazil. This was later confirmed with a tour of the Lebanon and Migration Museum at NDU, by LERC staff member, Mr. Elie Nabhan, where he saw first hand the variety of material that LERC collects.



Souvenir photo at LERC (from left-right) Mr. E. Nabhan, Ms. B. Abdul Khalek, Mr. S. Yazbek and Ms. G. Hourani (Oct 2009).

Before leaving, Mr. Yazbek told the team at LERC that his visit had been a truly wonderful experience and he complimented them heartily on the scope and vision of their work.