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For immediate release

ART DUBAI CLOSURES ITS MOST DIVERSE AND EXCEPTIONAL EDITION TO DATE

The tenth edition of the leading art fair of the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia attracted a record 27,516 visitors

- 27,516 visitors throughout the week, including capacity crowds of 5,142 during the Collectors' Preview – an increase on last year – and a further increase to 7,211 during Wednesday's VIP Preview
- 95 museums, curators and institutions in attendance from across the world; many brought groups of curators and museum boards and patrons
- A successful fair for participating local, regional and international galleries with exceptional feedback on sales
- Over 2000 attended the Global Art Forum – the highest attendance to date
- Nearly 1000 students visited the fair through the fair's schools and colleges' programme; 560 children participated in the children's Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program

MARCH 20, 2016, DUBAI, UAE: Art Dubai's tenth edition closed last night with participating galleries and artists reporting one of the most successful years of the fair to date. Art Dubai reaffirmed its position as the world's most global fair, welcoming international and regional artists, collectors, private museums, institutions and curators from over 90 countries worldwide.

Art Dubai 2016 celebrated the highest numbers to date of galleries participating from India, Africa, Russia and Central Asia as well as galleries from Georgia, Ghana, Lithuania, Sri Lanka, Oman, Palestine and the Philippines participating for the first time; the fair continues to offer unparalleled insight into the dynamic art scenes burgeoning outside Europe and America. Major galleries with an international outlook and roster continue to do exceptionally well at Art Dubai, tapping into a market that remains underrepresented at artworld events in the West.

Defying apparent market trends, Art Dubai saw solid sales from the VIP preview through to the last day, with around a quarter of galleries selling out, and the vast majority reporting healthy interest and acquisitions from a diverse collector base. Sales ranged from emerging artists under \$10,000 through to works well beyond the \$300,000 mark by artists such as **Ai Wei Wei, Shakir Hassan al Said, Yayoi Kusama, Monir Farmanfarmaian, Marwan, Nasreen Mohammadi**, among others.

Antonia Carver, Art Dubai's Director, said: "With our tenth edition, we're looking forwards not back. The exceptional comments received from collectors, galleries, artists, museums and curators and the ever-increasing attendance figures from both local and international audiences – from ever more diverse locations – illustrate the maturity of the fair and the crucial role it plays in both the wider region and the artworld calendar."

Throughout the week, galleries reported interest from major collectors and institutions, representing the role Art Dubai plays as a site for curatorial research, cultural exchange and in establishing a greater understanding of the evolution of the art scene within the region.

95 museums and institutions visited the fair, with museum directors and curators from, among others, **Centre Pompidou** (Catherine David and Christine Macel), **Museum of Modern Art, New York** (Glenn D. Lowry), the **Solomon R. Guggenheim** (Richard Armstrong), **Serpentine Galleries** (Hans Ulrich Obrist), **LACMA**, **British Museum**, the **Metropolitan Museum, Museu Serralves, V&A, Tate, Qatar Museums, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Kunsthalle Zurich** and representatives from numerous private museums including the **Elgiz Museum** and **Yinchuan MOCA**. Many museums brought groups of curators and patrons to the fair, taking advantage of Art Dubai's extensive, Gulf-wide VIP programmes.

A group of UK institutions visited the fair for the first time as a result of Art Dubai's ongoing partnership with the **British Council**, including the **Whitworth, Ikon Gallery, Ashmolean Museum, Glasgow Sculpture Studios, National Galleries of Scotland** and **Iniva**, among others.

Most major biennial directors—including **Venice, Kochi, Sharjah, Liverpool, Berlin** – were also present.

GALLERIES: CONTEMPORARY, MODERN AND MARKER

Art Dubai Contemporary's two halls were dominated by large-scale installations and stand-out works by internationally acclaimed artists, presented alongside works by the most exciting emerging artists from the region. Indian contemporary art was well represented, with eight of the leading galleries from Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata; Dubai's role as an international hub for collectors, artists and galleries from South Asia is growing fast.

Across its wider programming, Art Dubai presented an extremely strong representation of female artists, particularly from the Middle East and South Asia region, with over 45% of the artists participating in the fair being women.

Art Dubai Modern - the only exhibition of its kind worldwide, focusing on the masters of the Middle East, Africa and South Asia – attracted particularly significant interest from international museum representatives. Comprised of solo and two-person exhibitions of museum-quality works from 1903 to the 1980s, the sector illustrated the development and artistic history of the region and the fast-growing market demand for these historical works.

Marker, Art Dubai's thematic gallery programme, was curated this year by artist and writer **Ringo Bunoan** and featured works by emerging artists from artist-run spaces in Manila, the Philippines. Throughout the week, in this highly popular and dynamic section of the fair, artists established new connections and interest in their work, with sales of pieces by emerging and established artists from the Philippines– reasserting the fair as a site of discovery.

THE ABRAAJ GROUP ART PRIZE

Now in its eighth year, the Abraaj Group Art Prize is the most significant annual artists' prize in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, and part of the Abraaj Group's dedicated philanthropic support for both emerging and mid-career artists. Curated by Nav Haq, Abraaj Group Art Prize 2016 exhibition, which included a major new film commission awarded to Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, plus works by shortlisted artists Dina Danish, Mahmoud Khaled and Basir Mahmood, was particularly well-received.

ART DUBAI PROJECTS & EDUCATION

Art Dubai's not-for-profit programme, the largest programme of its kind in the world, included residencies, commissions, radio and film programmes, plus new site-specific commissions by eight rising artists from the region. Curator of Art Dubai Projects 2016 **Yasmina Reggad** presented ambitious interventions throughout the fair, such as transforming the lower ground floor of Madinat Jumeirah into a Sleep Therapy Clinic by Emirati artist/musician **Jumairy**, which visitors could check into throughout the opening hours of the fair. Jumairy was one of a group of artists that has spent the past two months in-residence at Tashkeel through A.i.R (Artist in Residence) Dubai, a collaboration between Art Dubai, Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, Tashkeel and Delfina Foundation.

Fulfilling its aim to embrace the eclectic fabric and economy of an art fair, the Projects programme this year enabled visitors to become unknowing participants in a performance by **Lydia Ourahmane**, which used the hotel's Wi-Fi network as a platform for a new video commission, realised on visitors' own mobile phones. Additional highlights included performances by **Doa Aly** and **Areej Kaoud** that took place throughout the grounds of the fair, plus major new installations by **Shreshta Rit Premnath** and **Massinissa Selmani**.

The educational role the fair plays in the region also continues to grow: a revamped volunteers programme saw 123 young UAE-based enthusiasts involved in all aspects of the fair, while an expanded student programme welcomed over 1000 young people to the fair.

The **Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program**, a partnership between Art Dubai and The Cultural Office of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, featured artist **Polly Brannan** leading theatrical workshops for children aged 5-17, plus a range of discovery tours for all ages. The programme also included visits to schools in the week before Art Dubai, plus the commissioning of a limited edition poster by **Khalid Mezaina**, among other additional activities. 2016 saw a record 510 children participate in the programme.

THE GLOBAL ART FORUM

The Global Art Forum, now established as the leading annual arts conference in Asia, attracted capacity audiences throughout its three-day run at Art Dubai with record attendance to date. Supported by Dubai Culture and Arts Authority and Dubai Design District (d3), the Forum continues to consolidate its reputation as one of the world's most innovative and eclectic talks programmes and, this year, under the title 'The Future Was,' hosted more than 50 speakers from across art, science, technology and architecture.

PARTICIPATING GALLERIES COMMENTED ON THEIR EXPERIENCE OF ART DUBAI 2016:

Carlier Gerbauer | Berlin Marie-Blanche Carlier, Director

“This was our first year. We had everything to gain. I met new artists, new collectors – overall our experience has been very, very positive. Art Dubai is an exciting platform for all these different countries to meet and interact, like India and the Arab world. It’s an interesting, communicative platform for us. We sold and had really extraordinary interest in our artists from Brazil, Sweden and Spain. These collectors were from Dubai – people from here – and they were interested in our European and South American artists.”

The Third Line | Dubai Thibault Geffrin, Associate Director

“A lot of curators came. We had good sales at the booth and at the gallery. All the collectors from the region are here. For us, it’s an event we can’t miss. This is the week in the art schedule when everyone is in Dubai.”

Jeanne Bucher Jaeger | Paris Véronique Jaeger, General Director

“This year has been a great success for us, as our 4th year participating here. Every year we consolidate our relationships with clients who we see each year, and we always meet new collectors as well. This week we have sold work by all of the artists that we brought. We have met new collectors from countries including Lebanon, India, Switzerland, and Pakistan. We have also had proposals for our artists from museums and institutions, all through being here at Art Dubai. We have really enjoyed the week, and really feel the people have a genuine interest in the art. We cross the world each year to find a place with real activity and each year we build on the last.”

Experimenter | Kolkata Prateek Raja, Founder

“Usually we see a rush on the first day but this year we have had stable visits throughout the week – including an important work closed on the last day. I think the fair has seen a lot of new faces, also general buzz or feel is good. Lots of detailed thought has gone into how to make the fair more navigable for collectors, galleries and visitors. We feel comfortable at Art Dubai, it’s like a home fair for us. The other collateral events like The Wedding Project and RCA Secret have brought a lot of attention. The Global Art Forum plays its role and brings the intellect to the fair. Everyone looks forward to it.”

Galerie Lelong | New York Myriam Attali, Deputy Director

“It was really a good fair. We saw collectors from all over the world. This year was much better than before – much more interesting for us. We met good and new contacts. We sold some important works like our Jaume Plensa sculpture and works by Etel Adnan who has huge success in this region. We had a lot of very serious interest in Barthelemy Toguo’s painting.”

Galerie Daniel Templon | Paris, Brussels Tessa de Caters, Director

“It was a wonderful fair for us. Every day was a good day, active and busy - we even made a sale on the last day. There was no ‘dead’ day.”

chatterjee & Ial | Mumbai Mortimer Chatterjee, co-Director

"For us Art Dubai is crucially important as it functions as an important bridge between global and local art discourses. The fair attracts a great mix of collectors and curators. This week, all of our high value works have sold to new clients/collectors, which makes the whole week really worthwhile for us."

Kalfayan Galleries | Athens, Thessaloniki Roupén Kalfayan, Arsen Kalfayan, Directors

"This was our ninth participation at Art Dubai. We are very happy with the results. We came originally without knowing anyone, and now we know almost everyone! Over the years we have noticed an increase in collectors from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, and also galleries exhibiting from that region."

Marianne Boesky | New York Serra Pradhan and Adrian Turner, Directors

"We've met some great new people from across the region; lots of new collectors - a lot of serious collectors - and it extends even to the last day."

Agial Art Gallery | Beirut Carol Chebab, Director

"Art Dubai is a very successful art fair. I've seen all the people I wanted to see: institutions, collectors, and more. We love being a part of it - we wouldn't have come back every year for the past decade if we didn't!"

Grosvenor Gallery | London Conor Macklin, Director

"The fair and Art Dubai Modern has been a great success. We made sales to local and European collectors. We have two potential museum shows that have come out of this fair, and an institutional acquisition as well."

Karim Francis | Cairo Karim Francis, Director

"This year's Art Dubai Modern was great. We had lots of museums visit and make potential acquisitions, which was important for our artist Adam Henein. Besides, we had a lot of private collectors - for each piece on the stand we have had many potential buyers."

Gallery One | Ramallah Samar Martha, Director

"Art Dubai went above and beyond our expectations - the exposure, the institutions, the patrons - we were able to build invaluable connections. We're hearing from other gallerists the same kind of feedback as well."

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NOTES TO EDITORSABOUT ART DUBAI:

Art Dubai is held under the Patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Art Dubai is held in partnership with The Abraaj Group and is sponsored by Julius Baer and Piaget. Madinat Jumeirah is home to the event. The Dubai Culture and Arts Authority is a strategic partner of Art Dubai and, along with Dubai Design District (d3), supports the fair's year-round education programme.

Art Dubai 2016 included 94 galleries, presented across three programmes - Contemporary, Modern and Marker. Art Dubai's extensive not-for-profit programme includes Art Dubai Projects; an exhibition of works by winners of the annual Abraaj Group Art Prize; a range of educational programmes including the Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program and the community school Campus Art Dubai; and the critically-acclaimed Global Art Forum.

The tenth edition of Art Dubai took place March 16-19, 2016.

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