



Press Release
March 20, 2018

THE 12TH EDITION OF ART DUBAI OPENS TOMORROW

March 20, 2018, Dubai, United Arab Emirates - Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the 12th edition of Art Dubai - the fair's most globally diverse to date - will open its doors to the public tomorrow. Art Dubai 2018 will welcome a variety of exhibitors from all over the world and premier a new gallery section, alongside a wealth of programming and talks around art and beyond.

Reaffirming its position as a leading international art fair and the preeminent place to discover art from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, Art Dubai 2018 features **105 galleries from 48 countries** across its Contemporary and Modern halls as well as its new section **Residents**.

Highlights of this year's programming include the unveiling of **Lawrence Abu Hamdan's** winning commission for the **10th edition of the Abraaj Group Art Prize** and Khaleeji artist collective **GCC** turning Art Dubai's **The Room** into a TV studio in **GOOD MORNING GCC** (صباح الخير جي. سي. سي.).

As part of Art Dubai's new partnership with the Misk Art Institute, the fair will present a museum-quality exhibition entitled, ***That Feverish Leap into the Fierceness of Life***, featuring rarely-seen Modern works from across the region as well as ***Reframe Saudi***, a Virtual Reality documentary film that explores Saudi Arabia by looking inside the studios of Contemporary artists based in the Kingdom.

Alongside gallery halls and exhibitions, Art Dubai will feature a comprehensive talks programme: the 12th edition of the **Global Art Forum** entitled **"I AM NOT A ROBOT"** that will explore the highly topical theme of automation; as well as the second edition of Art Dubai's **Modern Symposium**, which addresses the lives and cultural impact of 20th century masters from the Middle East, South Asia and Africa.

The **Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program** returns for its 6th edition, featuring Japanese-Australian Artist **Hiromi Tango** as the lead-artist, who will work with children throughout the week as part of her project ***Healing Garden***.

"Once more, Art Dubai reaffirms its position as the platform representing the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, where initiatives are formed or announced, artists' careers launched onto the international stage and where new partnerships and discoveries are made." **said Myrna Ayad, Director, Art Dubai.**

Pablo del Val, Artistic Director, Art Dubai, commented: "With each edition, we work towards stronger, more defined curatorial narratives that this year, are combined with the cultural offerings of 48 countries. It's been extremely rewarding to launch Residents and see it culminate at the fair; this initiative is in line with our objective to both engage communities and attract new energies to the fair and city."

Art Dubai is held in partnership with The Abraaj Group. The fair is sponsored by Julius Baer and Piaget, with Madinat Jumeirah as the home of the event. The Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) is a strategic partner of Art Dubai and supports the fair's year-round education programme. The Misk Art Institute is the exclusive partner of Art Dubai Modern. BMW is the new car partner of Art Dubai.

ART DUBAI CONTEMPORARY

With **78 galleries from 42 countries**, including first-time gallery participations from Iceland, Ethiopia, Ghana and Kazakhstan, this year's Contemporary gallery halls confirm Art Dubai's unique character as a platform for discovery for art from across the world and meeting point for art from established centres and emerging scenes alike. Spread across two gallery halls, Art Dubai's Contemporary section will see a strong representation of galleries from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, a significant contingent of returning galleries from Europe and North America, as well as a unique line-up of galleries from Africa and Latin America.

ART DUBAI MODERN

The 5th edition of Art Dubai Modern will feature a **16 galleries from 14 countries** and introduce, for the first time, collective exhibitions, in addition to solo- and two-artist shows. The only commercial platform for museum-quality Modern works from the region, galleries participating in Art Dubai Modern 2018 will feature renowned Modernists from the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Misk Art Institute is the exclusive partner of Art Dubai Modern.

RESIDENTS

Premiering in 2018, Residents is a programme-cum-gallery section at Art Dubai, which saw **11 international artists** come to the UAE for a 4-8 week residency, producing work which will be presented by the artists' respective galleries in this new section at the fair. During their residencies at **in5** and **Tashkeel** in Dubai and **Warehouse421** in Abu Dhabi, the artists had the opportunity to engage with the local community, work collaboratively with one another, participate in talks, and conduct open studios.

THE 10TH EDITION OF THE ABRAAJ GROUP ART PRIZE

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2018, the Abraaj Group Art Prize has become a cornerstone of the art scene in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, as well as a stepping stone for mid-career artists, many of whom have become well-known names in the international art world. The 2018 edition of the Prize is curated by **Myriam Ben Salah**. The commissioned work by winning artist **Lawrence Abu Hamdan**, will be unveiled alongside an exhibition of works by shortlisted artists **Basma Alsharif**, **Neil Beloufa** and **Ali Cherri**.

THE ROOM: GOOD MORNING GCC (صباح الخير جي. سي. سي.)

Art Dubai's interactive dining experience, which is created by different artists each year, will be produced by Khaleeji artist collective **GCC** in 2018. Titled **GOOD MORNING GCC (صباح الخير جي. سي. سي.)**, this year's edition of The Room will recreate a live TV show on site, using the tropes of daytime talk shows commonly featured on TV stations across the Arab world as an anchor for the programming, which will include daily segments such as fashion, cooking and health. A particular highlight will be the celebrity wedding singer and TV chef **Suliman Al Qassar**, an icon of food performance and much-loved TV personality in the region, who will launch the programme with a live cooking demonstration on the opening night of the fair. The overall experience of the set will develop over the duration of the fair with daily performances, and visitors being able to interact with the props, furniture and scenography.

THE GLOBAL ART FORUM

Part of Art Dubai's extensive cultural programming, the Global Art Forum is an annual arts conference – the largest in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia – and unique in that it examines culture from a variety of disciplines and in bringing together leading minds from a variety of fields to discuss a specific topic.

The 12th edition of the Forum will focus on the power, paranoia and potentials of automation. Entitled ***"I Am Not a Robot"***, the 12th edition of the transdisciplinary summit will be programmed by Commissioner **Shumon Basar**, with Chief Operating Officer and Futurist-in-Chief of the Dubai Future Foundation **Noah Raford**, and Curator of Digital Culture & Design Collection at the MAK, Vienna, **Marlies Wirth**, as Co-Directors.

Art Dubai's Global Art Forum is presented by the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) and supported by Dubai Design District (d3).

REFRAME SAUDI

As part of its partnership with the Misk Art Institute, Art Dubai will present ***Reframe Saudi***, a Virtual Reality documentary film that explores Saudi Arabia by looking inside the studios of contemporary artists. Art Dubai audiences are invited to experience a preview of the film, becoming witness to the vivid profusion of cultural narratives shaping life in the changing Kingdom. Directed by Matteo Lonardi and produced by CULTURUNNERS, the regional preview of Reframe Saudi at Art Dubai pre-empts the international launch of the final film at the World VRForum in June 2018.

The preview will be accompanied by a panel discussion on VR and Contemporary Art, moderated by Marisa Mazria Katz with World VR Forum Director, Salar Sahna, VR film maker Matteo Lonardi and Saudi Artist Ahaad Alamoudi.

THAT FEVERISH LEAP INTO THE FIERCENESS OF LIFE

Presented alongside Art Dubai Modern and supported by the Misk Art Institute, the museum-quality exhibition, ***That Feverish Leap into the Fierceness of Life*** presents over 75 artworks by some of the leading members of five modernist artist groups and schools spanning five decades from five Arab cities: the Contemporary Art Group in Cairo (1940s/1950s), the Baghdad Group for Modern Art (1950s), the Casablanca School of Art (1960s/70s), The Khartoum School (1960s/70s), and dār al-funūn al-sa'udiah (The House of Saudi Arts) in Riyadh (1980s). Curated by **Sam Bardaouil** and **Till Fellrath**, the exhibition derives its title from the 1951 founding manifesto of the Baghdad Group for Modern Art, reflecting these groups' passionate contributions to the intellectual and artistic discourse surrounding modernism within their respective socio-political contexts.

MODERN SYMPOSIUM

Returning for its 2nd edition in 2018, Art Dubai's Modern Symposium is a series of talks and presentations focused on the life, work and cultural impact of 20th century masters from the Middle East, South Asia and Africa. Renowned curators, scholars and patrons come together for a series of talks that delve into the styles, influences and practices of artists whose work contributes to the history of art produced in the 20th century. The Art Dubai Modern Symposium will take place in the Misk Lounge.

THE SHEIKHA MANAL LITTLE ARTISTS PROGRAM

The 6th edition of the **Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program** will welcome Japanese-Australian Artist **Hiromi Tango** as the lead-artist, presenting her project ***Healing Garden***, which will feature an interactive installation that invites children to participate in creating a nurturing environment based on local plants and flowers. The workshops and immersive installation will provide hands-on opportunities for children to create and explore the space that is energized through the interplay of light, colors, textures and shapes. Alongside the onsite workshops, the program will see the return of the popular **Discovery Tours** for children and teenagers at the fair, as well as a growing number of schools taking part in the **Artists-in-Schools Initiative**.

Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, President of UAE Gender Balance Council, President of Dubai Women Establishment, and wife of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs UAE, the program is a partnership between The Cultural Office of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Art Dubai, offering a unique educational opportunity for UAE-based children and teenagers, and encouraging them to excel in the arts. The program is part of Art Dubai's longstanding commitment to education and the development of the UAE's cultural landscape.

Partner Exhibitions:

JULIUS BAER AT ART DUBAI: *FROM PEN TO THREAD: "DES"*

This exhibition by Swiss-Egyptian artist **Karim Noureldin** will feature two large, site-specific textile installations based on drawings made by the artist and produced in India. Widely recognised and exhibited internationally, Noureldin's work continues his investigation into geometric abstractions.

PIAGET'S *SUNLIGHT JOURNEY*

For its third showcase at Art Dubai, Piaget presents its latest high jewelry and watchmaking collection: ***Sunlight Journey***. Inspired by the scenic beauty of the Amalfi Coast, the collection is an escapade punctuated by joyful effervescence and dazzling radiance. In collaboration with The Cultural Office of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Piaget reveals ***Summer Muse*** by **Emirati artist Jawaher Alkhayyal**, inspired by Maison Piaget's ***Sunny Side of Life*** high jewelry collection.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Art Dubai

A leading international art fair, Art Dubai is the preeminent place to interact with Contemporary art from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. For its 12th edition Art Dubai presents a unique line-up of 105 galleries from 48 countries, reaffirming the fair's position as a place of discovery with galleries from new markets rarely seen on the international stage exhibiting alongside leading galleries from established art centers. It will also showcase the largest edition of Art Dubai Modern – the world's only platform that exhibits museum-quality Modern works from the MENASA region, alongside the annual Modern Symposium of talks on the lives and legacies of artists operating in these regions in the 20th century.

Art Dubai 2018 inaugurates a new gallery section – Residents – that welcomes spaces whose artists will complete a residency in the UAE with work created during this period exhibited at the fair.

Beyond the gallery halls, the fair once again hosts an extensive collateral programme including the 10th anniversary of The Abraaj Group Art Prize, the Global Art Forum that takes on the theme of automation, and a series of commissions including the artist collective GCC, which will welcome audiences to Good Morning GCC at the fair and an engaging after-hours

programme, including private visits to collections and to cultural institutions across the United Arab Emirates.

In addition to its March programming, the fair aims to continue to grow the cultural fabric of the city and the region with year round engagement including the art school Campus Art Dubai, an internship programme aimed at supporting the next generation of art practitioners and professionals, and Art Dubai Portraits, a film series casting light on MENASA artists and their practices.

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