



SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

For Immediate Release
12 September 2019



Akram Zaatari, *On Photography, Dispossession and Times of Struggle*, 2017. Courtesy of the artist and Sfeir-Semler, kurimazutto and Thomas Dane and Galleries.

Sharjah Art Foundation Presents Autumn 2019 Programme

Featuring Solo Exhibitions of Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Akram Zaatari, Adam Henein, Bani Abidi, and Marwan Rechmaoui

**Also Includes Annual
FOCAL POINT Art Book Fair and Sharjah Film Platform**

Sharjah Art Foundation's (SAF) autumn 2019 programme features major solo exhibitions of influential artists, as well as the return of annual programmes bringing together artists, curators, scholars and the public to explore new innovations in both film and printed matter.

The foundation's autumn 2019 season includes a major retrospective of artist **Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian** (1922–2019) exploring the artist's six-decade practice across sculpture, jewellery and collage; an exhibition reflecting on the evolution of the

Arab Image Foundation and its collections through the work and contributions of its co-founder **Akram Zaatari**; a survey of paintings and sculptural works by artist **Adam Henein**; the first solo exhibition in the region of multi-disciplinary artist **Bani Abidi** which includes two new SAF commissions; and a solo show of 2019 Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art winner **Marwan Rechmaoui**.

In addition, the foundation will present the second exhibition in a series planned to run over four years, **Sharjapan**, celebrating aspects of contemporary Japanese art, this year focused on performance and sound-based installations; as well as the second edition of the annual **Air Arabia Curator in Residence Exhibition**. The foundation will also mount an exhibition of commissioned works created by the **March Project 2019** artists in residence.

Two annual programmes will also return for their second editions in autumn 2019, including **FOCAL POINT**, Sharjah Art Foundation's art book fair devoted to presenting printed matter from publishers, artists and collectives across the UAE, the MENASA region and the world; and **Sharjah Film Platform**, a celebration of emerging filmmakers from around the region and across the globe.

Additional information on SAF's autumn 2019 programmes follows below.

Lasting Impressions: Adam Henein

21 September–16 November 2019

Sharjah Art Museum

Sharjah Art Foundation, in collaboration with Sharjah Museums Authority, presents the exhibition *Lasting Impressions: Adam Henein*, a survey of the artist's paintings and sculptures from the 1950s until today. Recognised as one of the most prominent sculptors in the Arab world, Henein uses simple lines and abstract forms to create sculptures and modernist figures in a poetic manner. Curated by Sheikha Noora Al Mualla, this exhibition showcases more than 70 works referencing universal themes, Egyptian heritage, and Ancient Egyptian symbols.

Akram Zaatari: Against Photography

An Annotated History of the Arab Image Foundation

27 September 2019–10 January 2020

Galleries 3 and 4, Al Mureijah Square

Akram Zaatari: Against Photography reflects on the evolution of the Arab Image Foundation, the Beirut-based foundation dedicated to collecting, studying and disseminating the photographic heritage of Middle East, North Africa and the Arab diaspora through the work and contributions of its co-founder, Akram Zaatari. Zaatari's interdisciplinary practice combines the roles of image-maker, archivist, curator and critical theorist, often exploring the Lebanese postwar condition, particularly the televised mediation of territorial conflicts and wars.

Over the past twenty years, Zaatari's work with the Arab Image Foundation has pushed to expand the definition of photography and has explored the importance of the medium to Lebanon and the region at large. This exhibition engages directly with the debates that have coexisted within the Arab Image Foundation about provenance, preservation and authorship in image-making.

Organised by Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona and the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, in collaboration with Sharjah Art Foundation, this exhibition is curated by Hiuwai Chu (Curator, MACBA) and Bartomeu Mari (Director, MALI, Lima). It was previously presented at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2018); K21, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2017); and Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (2017).

The exhibition opening will be accompanied by a talk between the artist and the curator. Further details are available on the foundation's website.

'32: *The Rescore*

Air Arabia Curator in Residence Exhibition

27 September 2019–10 January 2020

Gallery 6, Al Mureijah Square

Sharjah Art Foundation, in partnership with Air Arabia, presents *'32: The Rescore*, a research project and exhibition developed by the second Air Arabia Curator in Residence, Bhavisha Panchia. Taking the First Congress of Arab Music, held in Cairo in 1932, as both anchor and point of departure, the exhibition attends to the dis(continuities) of identity, history and culture embedded in music. Instruments, notation, scale and composition are taken as sites of enquiry, addressing ideological and epistemological schisms between differing world views through musical traditions, registers and practices.

The exhibition will feature a range of media, including vinyl records, sound works, video, performance and installation, to show how music is an agent of cultural and political force.

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian: Sunset, Sunrise

12 October–28 December 2019

Al Hamriyah Studios, Al Hamriyah

Sharjah Art Foundation presents a major retrospective of the prominent Iranian artist Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian (1922–2019) bringing together more than 70 works spanning her six-decade career. *Sunset, Sunrise* offers a rare opportunity to rediscover the breathtakingly kaleidoscopic nature of Farmanfarmaian's 1970s sculptures and to encounter drawings, jewellery and previously unseen collages from the 1980s, alongside some of the last drawings the artist ever created.

Encapsulating histories of both East and West, *Sunset, Sunrise* reflects a life lived between two cultures, as the artist's early involvement with graphic design and experimental modern abstraction in New York City gave way to a period of intense research into traditional craftsmanship and folk art in Iran's more remote regions. Western avant-garde principles were maintained by the artist while she delved into Persian mysticism and simultaneously evoked the socio-political Islamic landscape as well as the easily recognisable geometry of Iran's artistic and architectural heritage. Embedded in this collision of cultures, Farmanfarmaian navigated a path to her own distinct form of rich geometric abstraction.

Sunset, Sunrise is organised by IMMA, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Ireland, in collaboration with Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE. The exhibition is co-curated by Rachel Thomas (Senior Curator: Head of Exhibitions, IMMA) and Hoor Al Qasimi (Director, Sharjah Art Foundation). Previously on view at IMMA from August to November 2018, the exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue co-published by IMMA and Sharjah Art Foundation.

Bani Abidi: Funland

12 October 2019–12 January 2020

Bait Al Serkal, Arts Square, Al Shuwaiheen

For more than fifteen years, artist Bani Abidi's work has engaged with questions of personal memory, patriotism and geopolitics through the lens of present-day Pakistan and the larger histories of South Asia. With a wry sense of humour and attention to the performative aspects of daily life, the artist has approached her subject matter through a cast of minor protagonists—real and imagined, human and inanimate—which come to define a place and its culture.

The major survey of Abidi's works at Sharjah Art Foundation includes well-known video, photography, sound and installation works as well as two new commissions. *The Lost Procession* (2019) is a video and sound installation that focuses on the persecuted Hazara community, who have relocated from the Pakistani city of Quetta to Germany in recent years. The exhibition will also feature a presentation of objects, prints, books and other materials that reflect on the vitality of the 1990s Karachi art scene, which was formative to Abidi's development as an artist.

The exhibition is co-curated by Hoor Al Qasimi (Director, Sharjah Art Foundation) and Natasha Ginwala (Associate Curator, Gropius Bau, Berlin).

March Project 2019 Exhibition

12 October 2019–20 January 2020

Baid Obaid Al Shamsi, Arts Square, Al Shuwaiheen; Bait Al Hurma, Al Mureijah Square; and Calligraphy Square

An exhibition of site-specific commissions in photography, sculpture and installation will be presented as the culmination of this year's March Project, an annual educational residency programme that provides opportunities for young artists from the region and beyond to research, realise and present site-specific works at Sharjah Art Foundation. During the seven-month residency, March Project participants conduct extensive research through a series of site visits and discussion sessions with the foundation's professional support.

The March Project 2019 artists are Asma Belhamar, Farah Al Qasimi, May Rashed and Saeed Almadani from the United Arab Emirates, Filwa Nazer from Saudi Arabia and Mario Santanilla from Colombia.

Marwan Rechmaoui: Slanted Squares

2 November 2019–2 February 2020

Galleries 1 and 2, Al Mureijah Square

Sharjah Art Foundation will present the 2019 Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art (BACA) exhibition *Marwan Rechmaoui: Slanted Squares*. The most important award for international contemporary art in the Netherlands, the award granted by the Bonnefanten Museum is a tribute to a living artist with an exceptional oeuvre and demonstrable influence on other artists, exhibition makers and art professionals.

Using industrial materials such as concrete, rubber, tar and glass to create work to investigate the geographical, architectural, cultural dynamics and history of Beirut, Lebanese artist Marwan Rechmaoui's BACA exhibition brings together three bodies of works which are centred around the course of construction buildings. Rechmaoui takes physical construction sites and the foundations of buildings to document history as well as using them to create metaphors for the processes that take place as part of the archaeology of a city, such as digging, excavating, stabilizing and possibly rebuilding.

The jury for BACA 2019 was led by chair Hoor Al Qasimi (Director, Sharjah Art Foundation), alongside Zeina Arida (Director, Sursock Museum); Stijn Huijts (Artistic Director, Bonnefantenmuseum); Frances Morris (Director, Tate Modern); Suha Shoman (Founder and Chair, Khalid Shoman Foundation and Darat al Funun); and Christine Tohmé (Founder of Ashkal Alwan, The Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts).

Slanted Squares is organised by the Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht and Sharjah Art Foundation on the occasion of the Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art 2019 (BACA). The exhibition is curated by Zeynep Öz and is accompanied by a book, *Marwan Rechmaoui: Slanted Squares*, including texts and illustrations by Marwan Rechmaoui, Zeynep Öz, Hoor Al Qasimi, Stijn Huijts, and Akram Zaatari, realised through a collaboration between Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht and Sharjah Art Foundation.

FOCAL POINT 2019

14–16 November 2019

Bait Obaid Al Shamsi, Arts Square, Al Shuwaiheen

Sharjah Art Foundation's annual art book fair, FOCAL POINT, returns for its second edition with a wide range of printed matter and a larger representation of independent publishers. The platform caters to the interdisciplinary nature of art publishing and aims to present a focus on independent and alternative publishing practices presented alongside a select number of larger, more established publishing houses.

The three-day fair will feature regional and international artists and publishers who will present their content individually or within curated sections. As part of the broader presentation, this year's content will include a special focus on zines and comics.

SHARJAPAN2

20 December 2019–15 February 2020

Bait Obaid Al Shamsi, Arts Square, Al Shuwaiheen; Calligraphy Square; Mirage City Cinema, Al Mureijah Square; and Sharjah Institute of Theatrical Arts

SHARJAPAN2, the second iteration of a four-year collaboration with Yuko Hasegawa, Artistic Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Professor at Tokyo University of the Arts and curator of Sharjah Biennial 11 (2013), will focus on performance and sound-based installations that imagine new ecologies of nature and materiality.

Reflecting the links between individual agency and collective humanlike relationality, Yuko Mohri's project will contain a group of self-playing readymades that, as in her other works, convey intangible energies in everyday life. Elsewhere, a live installation by sound artist Tomoko Sauvage will feature an amplified sound recording of a large block of slowly melting ice, centring the oft-marginalised experiences of hearing and listening alongside the more conventional visuals of the looming threat of climate change.

Musical performances will include traditional Japanese drumming that is highly technical and sophisticated, yet also affects or gives impact to the fundamentally visceral, physical and primal senses. *SHARJAPAN2* will also feature an Android Opera by Keiichiro Shibuya conducted by a humanoid AI dubbed 'Alter2'. This performance, *Scary Beauty*, will explore the relationship between terror and beauty, and humanity's fear of being made redundant in the future.

Introducing the unique Japanese philosophy of animism– which imbues respect for the mutual relationships between human and non-human beings in contemporary art, this selection of installations and performances considers the past, present and the future of non-human realms.

Sharjah Film Platform (SFP)

14–21 December 2019

Mirage City Cinema, Al Mureijah Square and Al Hamra Cinema

Sharjah Art Foundation will present the second edition of the Sharjah Film Platform from 14 to 21 December 2019 at Sharjah Art Foundation's open-air Mirage City Cinema and the nearby Al Hamra Cinema.

Sharjah Film Platform is an annual Sharjah Art Foundation initiative launched in 2018 as a resource to support filmmaking in the United Arab Emirates, the region and beyond. In addition to the film programme, SFP supports two other core components: a public programme featuring workshops and discussions, and the Short Film Production Grant, which results in the grant recipients' films. Together, the three-pronged platform continues the foundation's longstanding commitment to film programming, commissions and productions, and to the support of emerging and established filmmakers, film producers and critics.

Further Information

All Sharjah Art Foundation exhibitions are free and open to the public. For more information, visit sharjahart.org.

About Sharjah Art Foundation

Sharjah Art Foundation is an advocate, catalyst and producer of contemporary art within the Emirate of Sharjah and the surrounding region, in dialogue with the international arts community. Under the leadership of founder Hoor Al Qasimi, a curator and artist, the foundation advances an experimental and wide-ranging programmatic model that supports the production and presentation of contemporary art, preserves and celebrates the distinct culture of the region and encourages a shared understanding of the transformational role of art. The foundation's core initiatives include the long-running Sharjah Biennial, featuring contemporary artists from around the world; the annual March Meeting, a convening of international arts professionals and artists; grants and residencies for artists, curators and cultural producers; ambitious and experimental commissions and a range of travelling exhibitions and scholarly publications.

Established in 2009 to expand programmes beyond the Sharjah Biennial, which launched in 1993, the foundation is a critical resource for artists and cultural organisations in the Gulf and a conduit for local, regional and international developments in contemporary art. The foundation's deep commitment to developing and sustaining the cultural life and heritage of Sharjah is reflected through year-round exhibitions, performances, screenings and educational programmes in the city of Sharjah and across the Emirate, often hosted in historic buildings that have been repurposed as cultural and community centres. A growing collection reflects the foundation's support of contemporary artists in the realisation of new work and its recognition of the contributions made by pioneering modern artists from the region and around the world.

Sharjah Art Foundation is a legally independent public body established by Emiri Decree and supported by government funding, grants from national and international nonprofits and cultural organisations, corporate sponsors and individual patrons. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

About Sharjah

Sharjah is the third-largest of the seven United Arab Emirates and the only one bridging the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Reflecting the deep commitment to the arts, architectural preservation and cultural education embraced by its ruler, Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Sharjah is home to more than 20 museums and has long been known as the cultural hub of the United Arab Emirates. In 1998, it was named UNESCO's 'Arab Capital of Culture' and has been designated the UNESCO 'World Book Capital' for the year 2019.

Media Contact

Alyazeyah Al Reyaysa
+971(0)65444113
alyazeyah@sharjahart.org