



الجناح الوطني لدولة
الإمارات العربية المتحدة
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بينالي البندقية

The National Pavilion of
the United Arab Emirates
The International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia

Press Release

For Immediate release

The Venice Internship Program Awards Specially Selected Fellows the Opportunity to Live and Work in Venice with the National Pavilion of the United Arab Emirates for the 55th International Art Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia

March 17, 2013 – Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates – The National Pavilion of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)- la biennale di Venezia, initiated by the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Community Development and supported by the Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation is pleased to announce the selection of the fellows that will be trained and based in Venice for a month long tenure managing the National Pavilion art exhibition from 29 May to 24 November, 2013.

The specially selected candidates were drawn from across the UAE through a nation-wide recruitment campaign. After a rigorous screening and interview process, the selected fellows are now participating in an extensive training program aimed at enabling them to engage fluently with the content of the exhibition in Venice. They will also have the opportunity to work alongside distinguished curator for the National Pavilion in 2013 Reem Fadda, and engage with Featured Artist Mohammed Kazem in conversations about his works. The three-month training program that precedes the Venice Biennale will also include field visits to Sharjah Biennial 11, Art Dubai, Sikka Art Fair, Maraya Art Centre, Manarat Al Saadiyat and twofour54.

This year, the Venice Internship Program will be partnering with the prestigious Ca'Foscari University in Venice, which will facilitate the inclusion of six specially selected Italian interns working side-by-side with the Emirati fellows. This partnership has been developed to foster a true exchange of cultures between the interns and to allow Emiratis to engage further with Italian customs, language and knowledge thus enhancing their local experience in Venice.

Once deployed to Venice, the fellows will then serve in the National Pavilion as exhibition managers, while also engaging in a comprehensive art education program based on partnership with leading cultural institutions in Venice, and Ca' Foscari University.

The fellows will also participate in the Venice Media Project, initiated by the National Pavilion of the UAE. This project will enable fellows to document their training and time in Venice through using the Venice Internship's official Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. The fellows will have the chance to post their views, perceptions, activities and new knowledge using the Venice Internship's official social media platforms. This experiment will be enhanced with daily posts on a blog dedicated entirely to the Internship Program.

HH Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan, whose Foundation is supporting both the UAE Pavilion and its internship program, noted: "We are delighted to be supporting the internship program. In the arts funding strategy of our foundation we are placing a very strong focus on nurturing and supporting the next generation of Emirati artists and cultural industry leaders. The rich learning experience which the program will provide the interns will no doubt be an invaluable contribution to their professional development and over time to the growth and strengthening of the arts in the UAE." She added: "The interns are an exceptional group of young people who will no doubt be excellent representatives of the UAE and an inspiration to the many international Biennale visitors with whom they will interact."

"We are very happy with our selected fellows this year; they are a diverse group of Art students, practitioners, professionals, and entrepreneurs. The Venice Internship Program promises to be even more successful this in 2013, especially with the collaboration with Ca' Foscari University which adds a strong academic element to this program. We are also grateful for the generous support of The Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, which made all of this possible." Dr. Lamees Hamdan, Commissioner.

The names of the selected fellows are: Adel Al Jabri, Omar Al Busaidy, Talal Al Ansari, Mohammed Al Serkal, Mohammed Al Ameri, Ahmad Al Areef, Hasan Al Sheikh, Khalid Al Ali, Nidal Touma, Munira Al Sayegh, Mouza Al Matrooshi, Alyazia Al Qubaisi, Ghaleya Saeed, Mariam Al Mazroui, Khawla Darwish, Sara Al Haddad, Tala Worrell, Hajera Al Hammadi.

From Italy: Benedetta Lanza, Lorenzo Tel, Fahmi Garbaia, Gabriella Quagliato, Ilaria Balestra, Maria Bagnara

You can follow their developments and their blog posts on the Venice Internship Program Blog: <http://uaepavilion.wordpress.com/>.

Follow them also on Twitter: @Ven_Intern_UAE

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. **National Pavilion of the UAE at the 55th International Art Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia**

Universally recognized as the world's most prestigious contemporary art event, the Venice Biennale will present its 55th International Art Exhibition from June 1st through November 24, 2013. In recognition of the emergence of the UAE as a cultural hub, the Biennale has provided a large and highly visible site in the Arsenale for the National Pavilion.

2. **Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation**

The Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation works to contribute to the creation of positive futures for the citizens of the United Arab Emirates & the full realization of their potential and aspirations. To that end, it develops and supports charitable initiatives in the areas of education, arts, culture & heritage, and the environment. In the arts, the Foundation works toward three strategic goals:

- To support emerging and future Emirati artists in developing their talents at the earliest stages of their growth
- To educate and engage the public in art and to build new audiences in the UAE for the arts
- To introduce the international community to Emirati artistic talent

The Foundation was established by Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan in 2010.

3. **Ministry of Culture, Youth & Community Development**

The Ministry of Culture, Youth & Community Development was launched in 2006 to highlight the UAE's fast-growing community & thriving youths while not losing sight of its heritage and cultural scene. The Ministry aims to revive the UAE's heritage by inspiring and encouraging the creative talents abundant among the youths of today.

It is responsible for promoting and investing in the energies of young people, inspiring them and adding to their artistic abilities. In doing so, the Ministry has raised much awareness towards the community's cultural practices and in turn, has promoted innovation and enrichment of cultural communication. It is constantly working at creating an integral framework for providing detailed information regarding the country's culture, youth & community development. In addition, the Ministry also organises ongoing activities and develops mechanisms to secure the necessary support required to achieve its goals.

4. **Reem Fadda, (b.1979)**

Focusing on a number of projects in her native homeland of Palestine, Fadda was Director of the Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA) and worked as Academic Director to the International Academy of Art – Palestine, which she helped found in 2006. She co-curated and had been involved in many projects such as: "Liminal Spaces", a 4 year long artistic & political project, consisting of conferences, tours, art residencies and exhibitions in Palestine, Israel & Germany; "Ramallah Syndrome", a project showcased at the 53rd Venice Biennale; "Tarjama/Translation" which was an ArteEast program, showcasing 30 artists from the Middle East and Central Asia at the Queens Museum & Herbert E. Johnson Museum; and the "3rd RIWAQ Biennale", which she curated alongside Charles Esche in Ramallah. She is a member of the general assembly of both the International Academy of Art, and the Kamandjati Association, the selection jury of the Young Arab Theatre Fund and the steering committee of Decolonizing Architecture. Additionally, she was a recipient of both Chevening and Fulbright scholarships.

5. Mohammed Kazem, (b.1969) Kazem's works have been selected for Biennials and Exhibitions around the world for over two decades, including, Holland, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland, Egypt, Lebanon, Bangladesh, India, Spain, Japan, The USA, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Cuba. He has taken part in several Sharjah International Art Biennials and has been awarded first prize for installation. Kazem went on to curate the 8th Sharjah Biennial in 2007. Since then, he was the curator of The Flying House from 2007-2011, while simultaneously curating exhibitions in Spain, Switzerland, and in the UAE. Kazem opened his own studio, Empty10, in Al Quoz, Dubai in 2012. Most recently Mohammed curated the annual MinD exhibition at the DUCTAC Gallery of Light in Dubai. Mohammed graduated with an MFA from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, USA in December 2012.

6. Fikra Design Studio Fikra is a multidisciplinary design studio specialized in bilingual graphic design; Arabic and English. Founded by Salem Al-Qassimi in 2006, Fikra works across a variety of media, time-based and print including book design, data-visualizations, environmental graphics, bilingual typography; Arabic and English, identity creation, interaction design, and motion graphics. The studio's philosophy is deeply rooted in investigating new pathways for problem-solving through design exploration and education. Fikra gained its reputation as one of the leading graphic design studios in the UAE.

7. Venice Internship Program Initiated in 2009 in conjunction with the National Pavilion of the UAE at the Venice Biennale, the Venice Internship Program offers a range of opportunities to young Emiratis keen to engage with culture & arts at the highest international level. The program focuses on a 1 month internship opportunity for an elite group of Emirati nationals based on-site in Venice acting as custodians of the National Pavilion. These interns manage the exhibition and participate in a rigorous educational program utilizing the wealth of museums, galleries and cultural institutions found throughout Venice. The Program runs throughout the 6 month duration of the Art Biennale and will return to Venice in 2013.