

H.E. Noura Al Kaabi opens National Pavilion UAE exhibition *Lifescapes Beyond Bigness* at 16th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale

- *Exhibition highlights the relationship between the built environment and everyday life in “human-scale” UAE landscapes*
- *Curator Dr. Khaled Alawadi is an Emirati architect and urban planner, and Assistant Professor of Sustainable Urbanism at Abu Dhabi’s Masdar Institute, part of Khalifa University of Science and Technology*
- *Lifescapes Beyond Bigness will run until 25 November 2018*

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Her Excellency Noura Al Kaabi, the UAE’s Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development, today opened *Lifescapes Beyond Bigness*, the National Pavilion UAE’s exhibition at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. The exhibition highlights the interplay between the urban environment and everyday social life in the UAE through images, technical drawings, case studies, maps and three-dimensional scale models.

Her Highness Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan, Founder of the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, commissioner of the National Pavilion UAE, said: “Since our inaugural participation in 2009, the National Pavilion UAE has presented a series of exhibitions that reflect the breadth of the nation’s cultural conversations from historical to contemporary, charting and contributing to the evolving landscape. The 2018 exhibition has produced thorough and lasting research that will become a significant milestone in understanding urbanism in the UAE, while celebrating the humanity and spontaneity of our cities.”

The inauguration of the National Pavilion UAE was attended by H.E. Saqer Nasser Alraisi, UAE Ambassador to Italy; H.E. Abdullah Hassan Al Shamsi, Consul General of the UAE in Milan; H.E. Sheikha Hoor bint Sultan Al Qasimi, President and Director of the Sharjah Art Foundation, and Ms. Angela Migally, Executive Director, Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation.

H.E. Noura Al Kaabi said: “In the Year of Zayed, *Lifescapes Beyond Bigness* pays tribute to the vision of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the UAE’s founding father, and reflects his belief that social needs and human happiness should be at the heart of urban development. The exhibition celebrates the diverse and vibrant communities that make up our nation. The success of the National Pavilion UAE over the years is a testament to the rich cultural heritage and discourse that has developed in the UAE, and the Venice Biennale offers us a prominent platform to share these stories with the world.”

The exhibition’s curator, **Dr. Khaled Alawadi**, an Emirati architect and urban planner, and Assistant Professor of Sustainable Urbanism at Abu Dhabi’s Masdar Institute, part of Khalifa University of Science and Technology said: “*Lifescapes Beyond Bigness* presents the simplicity of lifescapes in the UAE’s hidden urban pockets. The exhibition looks beyond the monumental scale of our iconic architecture. Instead, we have highlighted the human-scale landscapes of the UAE – places where people come together, from sikkak (alleyways) to neighborhoods. These are lively, rich spaces where cities come alive and the exhibition reflects this important angle of life in the UAE.”



Dr. Khaled Alawadi and his research team have used various spatial mapping and observation techniques to document and analyze the physical characteristics, morphology and social rhythm of four urban typologies: residential neighborhoods, networks of streets and sikkak (alleyways), urban blocks and natural landscapes. Case studies and detailed personal stories offer insight into the anthropology of each research site.

The National Pavilion UAE - La Biennale di Venezia is commissioned by the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation and supported by the UAE Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development. The UAE has hosted a national exhibition in the Venice Biennale's International Art Exhibition since 2009 and its International Architecture Exhibition since 2014. The Venice Biennale is one of the world's most significant cultural events, and this year's edition presents architectural exhibitions from over 60 nations and runs from May 26 until November 25, 2018.

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