



الجناح الوطني لدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
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The National Pavilion of
the United Arab Emirates
The International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia

New Release

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For Immediate Release

THE NATIONAL PAVILION OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES LAUNCHES THE **VENICE INTERNSHIP** FOR THE 55TH INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION – LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA, 2013

November 7, 2012 - Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates – The National Pavilion of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), initiated by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development and supported by the Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of Venice Internship, a highly competitive, specialized program which will see Emirati fellows trained and based in Venice for a month long tenure managing the National Pavilion art exhibition from 29th May to 24 November 2013.

Initiated in 2009, the National Pavilion runs this specialized opportunity to train UAE nationals to not only take part in the Venice Biennale but to also create a legacy of highly skilled art practitioners in the UAE equipped to take the national contemporary art and cultural scene boldly into the future. For the first time the Venice Internship will be partnering with the Department of Asian and North African studies at the prestigious Ca' Foscari University Venice which will facilitate the inclusion of six specially selected Italian interns working side-by-side with the Emiratis. This partnership has been developed to foster a true exchange of cultures between the interns and to allow Emirati's to engage further with Italian customs, language and knowledge thus enhancing their local experience in Venice.

"The National Pavilion of the UAE and its supporters aim to nurture contemporary culture in the Emirates by providing interns with an opportunity to establish both local and international networks which lead to further studies, gainful employment and exhibitions with prestigious artistic and cultural institutions. We will continue to build stronger ties internationally emphasizing our position in Venice while also giving our Italian interns the opportunity to learn about the UAE in depth." Dr. Lamees Hamdan, Commissioner.

The Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation will be supporting the Venice Internship for the first time. The Foundation's arts funding program supports emerging and future Emirati artists in developing their talents at the earliest stages of their growth, works to educate and engage the public in art and to build new audiences in the UAE for the arts, and supports efforts to introduce the international community to Emirati artistic talent.

"In the quest to empower our future cultural leaders, we believe that the Venice Internship provides an excellent platform for both local and international exposure to the top echelons of the artistic community as well as cultural exchange emphasized by the inclusion of Italian interns into the program."
Dr Salvatore LaSpada, Executive Director.

Once awarded a place in the program, the specially selected Emirati interns, drawn from across the UAE, are trained in a basic framework for conversing in the arts in order to engage fluently with the content of the exhibition. They will also have the opportunity to work alongside distinguished curator Reem Fadda, the National Pavilion office, and select practitioners from the greater UAE art scene in the lead-up to the Biennale. This group of 18 interns will then go to Venice to serve in the national pavilion as Exhibition Managers while engaging in a comprehensive art educational program based on the extraordinary art and cultural institutions in Venice and the temporary exhibitions of the Biennale.

"Hands-on experience is an ideal way to learn about best practices in the international arts context, the Venice Internship offers such experience and much more. I look forward to sharing my curatorial process with these bright young Emiratis." Reem Fadda, Curator.

Recruitment for the Venice Internship will formally begin at the dedicated booth at Abu Dhabi Art from the 7th to 10th of November 2012. An information booth will be set up whereby interested parties may apply to participate in the program or simply engage with staff and volunteers to find out more about the opportunity for 18 Emiratis to spend up to 4 weeks each in Venice from May to December 2013. Initiated and supported by His Excellency Abdul Rahman Mohammed Al Owais, UAE Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development, the National Pavilion is being developed and presented for the third time under the leadership of its Commissioner, Dr. Lamees Hamdan, and is supported for the first time by the Sheikha Salama Bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation. Serving as curator for the National Pavilion is Reem Fadda who will present a solo exhibition of esteemed Emirati artist Mohammed Kazem.

Media Requests:

Rosie Stubbs
press@uaepavilion.org
+971-4-401-9348

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The 55th International Art Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia Universally recognized as the world's most prestigious contemporary art event, la Biennale di Venezia (the Venice Biennale) dates back to 1895 when the first art exhibition was organized. It will present its 55th International Art Exhibition from June 1 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 UAE Pavilion. Additional to the art exhibition, La Biennale hosts Architecture Biennale, Film Festival, Music, Theater and Dance Festivals.

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 and the full realization of their potential and aspirations. To that end, it develops and supports charitable initiatives in the areas of education, arts, culture and heritage, and the environment.

In the arts, the Foundation works toward three strategic goals:

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

The Foundation is the family foundation of Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan and was founded by her in 2010.

3. Ministry of Culture, Youth & Community Development The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development was launched in 2006 to highlight the UAE's fast-growing community and 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 and 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, (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, (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 has 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 is currently an MFA candidate at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, USA where he will finish the degree 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 and 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.