



SHEIKH NAHAYAN MABARAK AL NAHAYAN OPENS NATIONAL PAVILION UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AT 56TH INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION OF LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

The United Arab Emirates participates in one of the most prestigious international contemporary art events with '1980 to Today: Exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates' curated by Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi



Left: Curator Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi tours the exhibition with H.E. Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan, Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development and H.E. Saqer Al Raisi, UAE Ambassador to Italy. Right: H.E. Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan; Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development; H.E. Saqer Al Raisi, UAE Ambassador to Italy; Curator Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi; Dr. Salvatore LaSpada, Executive Director of the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation; with the participating artists.

Venice, Italy – May 8, 2015— The National Pavilion United Arab Emirates (UAE) La Biennale di Venezia at the 56th International Art Exhibition was officially opened on Thursday, May 7 by H.E. Sheikh Nahyaan Mabarak Al Nahayan, UAE Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development.

The pavilion is commissioned by the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, and supported by the UAE Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development. Titled *1980 – Today: Exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates*, this is the UAE's fourth national pavilion at the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. It is curated by Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi, President and Director of the Sharjah Art Foundation.

The 56th International Art Exhibition will take place in Venice from 6 May to 22 November 2015 at the Giardini and the Arsenale. The UAE's pavilion is located in the Arsenale – Sale d'Armi. The exhibition features work by fifteen Emirati artists: Ahmed Al Ansari, Moosa Al Halyan, Mohammed Al Qassab, Abdul Qader Al Rais, Abdullah Al Saadi, Mohammed Abdullah Bulhiah, Salem Jawhar, Mohammed Kazem, Dr. Najat Meky, Abdurraheem Salim, Ahmed Sharif, Hassan Sharif, Obaid Suroor, Dr. Mohamed Yousif, and Abdulrahman Zainal. With over 100 diverse works featured, the show aims to create dialogues across artist practices and explore the emergence of contemporary art in the UAE over the past four decades.

Notable guests at the opening ceremony included H.E. Saqer Nasser Ahmed Abdullah Alrais, Ambassador of the UAE in Rome; H.E. Noora Juma, UAE Consul General in Milan; Dr. Salvatore LaSpada, Executive Director of the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation; Ms. Khulood Al Atiyat, Manager of Arts, Culture & Heritage of the



Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation; other VIP attendees included international curators, directors and tours from the Tate, MoMA, Guggenheim, Studio Museum Harlem, Serpentine Gallery, Pompidou, M+, Ullens (UCCC), Asia Art Archive, de Appel, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, LACMA, Creative Time, New Museum, British Museum, Whitechapel, Royal Academy, Aspen Art Museum, MACRO (Rome), National Gallery of Ireland, Contemporary Art Center Thessaloniki, Himalayas Museum, Qatar Museums Authority, Art Basel, Sotheby's, Christie's, CIMAM, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah Museums Department, Dubai Culture & Arts Authority, Tourism and Culture Authority Abu Dhabi, Delfina Foundation, Garage (Moscow), Pinchuk Art Center (Kiev), Ashkal Alwan (Beirut), Beirut (Cairo), Cobra Museum (Netherlands), Sabanci Museum (Turkey), MAMBA (Buenos Aires), Nationalgalerie (Berlin), National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Koji Biennial, Prospect New Orleans, and Lyon Biennial, as well as museum trustees Phil & Shelley Aarons, and Beth Swofford.

Participating artists in attendance included: Ahmed Al Ansari, Moosa Al Halyan, Mohammed Al Qassab, Abdul Qader Al Rais, Abdullah Al Saadi, Salem Jawhar, Mohammed Kazem, Dr. Najat Meky, Abdulraheem Salim, Obaid Suroor, Dr. Mohamed Yousif, and Abdulrahman Zainal.

For more information visit www.nationalpavilionuae.org

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. National Pavilion United Arab Emirates at la Biennale di Venezia

Initiated in 2008, the National Pavilion United Arab Emirates at la Biennale di Venezia manages the UAE's participation in various offerings of la Biennale di Venezia. The UAE has been participating at every edition of the International Art Exhibition since 2009, and debuted participation at the International Architecture Exhibition in 2014.

The office also organizes the Venice Internship, offering a range of opportunities to young Emiratis keen to engage with culture and arts at the highest international level through a 1 month internship on-site in Venice acting as custodians of the National Pavilion. These interns manage the exhibition and participate in a rigorous educational program.

2. Commissioner: The Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation

The Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation's mission is "to invest in the future of the United Arab Emirates by investing in its people." To that end, it develops and supports strategic initiatives in the areas of education; arts, culture, heritage; and health. The Foundation is the family foundation of Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan and was founded by Her Highness in 2010.

3. UAE 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 organizes ongoing activities and develops mechanisms to secure the necessary support required to achieve its goals.

4. La Biennale di Venezia

Universally recognized as one of the world's most prestigious contemporary art foundations, la Biennale di Venezia dates back to 1895 when the first art exhibition was organized. It is the oldest non-commercial art exhibition devoted to contemporary art in the world. It will present its 56th iteration in 2015. In addition to the International Art Exhibition, la Biennale di Venezia hosts the International Architecture Exhibition, Film Festival, Music, Theater and Dance Festivals.

