



Press Release
Date of issue: March 5, 2018

ART DUBAI ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH MISK ART INSTITUTE

MARCH 5, 2018, DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES – Art Dubai and Misk Art Institute today announced a partnership that will materialise through exhibitions and talks documenting and celebrating modern and contemporary art of the Arab world.

The collaboration will include Misk Art Institute's exclusive partnership of Art Dubai Modern, with a non-selling exhibition exploring significant modern art movements from the region entitled *That Feverish Leap into the Fierceness of Life*, curated by Dr. Till Fellrath and Dr. Sam Bardaouil; dedicated sessions in Art Dubai's Modern Symposium, taking place in the Misk Lounge, including the launch of MoMA's *Modern Art in the Arab World: Primary Documents*, a seminal publication sponsored by Misk Art Institute.

Elsewhere in the fair, Misk Art Institute will take a look into contemporary movements shaping Saudi Arabia through a limited-edition publication produced in partnership with Saudi Art Guide and a preview of *Reframe Saudi*, a virtual reality film that takes a look inside the working studios of artists in the Kingdom.

Art Dubai is held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Misk Art Institute is an artist-centred cultural organisation founded in 2017 under the auspices of the Misk Foundation, established by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Under the leadership of artist Ahmed Mater, the Institute aims to encourage grassroots artistic production in Saudi Arabia, seeking to record the Kingdom's artistic past, while instigating meaningful contemporary production as well as cultural diplomacy and exchange abroad.

The partnership and its physical manifestations at Art Dubai aim to strengthen and celebrate some of the objectives that Misk Art Institute and the fair have in common; education on art from the region, creating a platform for the regional cultural scene, and acting as an ambassador for Modern and Contemporary art alike.

Art Dubai Director Myrna Ayad commented: "We are delighted to partner with the Misk Art Institute, an organisation which shares our support for educational initiatives in the arts and culture sector. No doubt, Misk's activations in both the Contemporary hall by way of VR presentations, and the Modern hall through its support of the exhibition, *That Feverish Leap into the Fierceness of Life*, will augment the overall visitor experience to the fair."

Ahmed Mater, Director of Misk Art Institute added: "It feels particularly fitting to forge this partnership through the presentation of Art Dubai Modern. When considered in the context of wider Arab visual arts narratives, both Misk Art Institute and Art Dubai are relatively young, yet it is through these historical channels that we have come together. Though we are newly inaugurated, our focus does not depart from the past; instead, we embrace regional art histories and cultural archives as the substantial and essential foundations of sustainable future growth."

In many ways, the very existence of our institution is predicated on the strength, understanding and preservation of these cultural narratives – with them, we can build new, rooted stories for the future.”

About *That Feverish Leap into the Fierceness of Life*

The exhibition *That Feverish Leap into the Fierceness of Life* surveys five Modernist artist groups and schools spanning five decades and five Arab cities: the Contemporary Art Group in Cairo (1940s/1950s), the Baghdad Group for Modern Art (1950s), the Casablanca School of Art (1960s/70s), The Khartoum School (1960s/70s), and Dar Al-Funoon Al-Saudia in Riyadh (1980s). It derives its title from the 1951 founding manifesto of the Baghdad Group for Modern Art, reflecting these artists' passionate contributions to modernism within their respective socio-political contexts. By highlighting the contradictions, as well as the similarities between these groups, the show reveals the diverse expressions of modernism across the Arab world. The exhibition is curated by Dr. Sam Bardaouil and Dr. Till Fellrath, founders of Art Reoriented, chairmen of the Montblanc Cultural Foundation, and Guest Curators of Art Dubai's Selection Committee. The exhibition consists of 75 paintings and works on paper by 29 artists assembled from 25 lenders across 15 cities, and is accompanied by a fully illustrated bilingual English / Arabic catalogue with texts by five leading scholars. Dr. Nada Shabout, Professor of Art History and Coordinator of the Contemporary Arab and Muslim Cultural Studies Initiative (CAMCSI) at the University of North Texas and member of the Art Dubai Modern Advisory Committee, acted as academic advisor. This non-selling exhibition is presented by Art Dubai Modern, and is generously supported by Misk Art Institute.

About *Reframe Saudi*

Reframe Saudi is a Virtual Reality documentary film that explores Saudi Arabia by looking inside the studios of contemporary artists. Art Dubai audiences are invited to experience a preview of the film, becoming witness to the vivid profusion of cultural narratives shaping life in the changing Kingdom.

Directed by Matteo Lonardi and produced by CULTURUNNERS, the regional preview of *Reframe Saudi* at Art Dubai pre-empts the international launch of the final film at the World VRForum in June 2018.

The preview will be accompanied by a panel discussion on VR and Contemporary Art, moderated by Marisa Mazria Katz with World VR Forum Director, Salar Sahna, VR film maker Matteo Lonardi and Saudi Artist Ahaad Alamoudi.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Misk Art Institute

Misk Art Institute is a new cultural organisation operating under the auspices of the Misk Foundation, established by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Led by Saudi artist, Ahmed Mater, the Institute was created to encourage grassroots artistic production in Saudi Arabia and enable international cultural diplomacy and exchange. Focused on establishing itself as an artist-centered cultural innovator, Misk Art Institute will have its

headquarters building in Riyadh, an artist residency focused centre in Abha, located in Saudi Arabia's southwest region of Asir, and an international office in London. The Institute's program will incorporate exhibitions and events, artist-led communications and arts education programs aimed at training and investing in the career development of young artists.

About Art Dubai

A leading international art fair, Art Dubai is the preeminent place to interact with Contemporary art from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. For its 12th edition Art Dubai presents a unique line-up of 105 galleries from 48 countries, reaffirming the fair's position as a place of discovery with galleries from new markets rarely seen on the international stage exhibiting alongside leading galleries from established art centers. It will also showcase the largest edition of Art Dubai Modern – the world's only platform that exhibits museum-quality Modern works from the MENASA region, alongside the annual Modern Symposium of talks on the lives and legacies of artists operating in these regions in the 20th century.

Art Dubai 2018 inaugurates a new gallery section – Residents – that welcomes spaces whose artists will complete a residency in the UAE with work created during this period exhibited at the fair.

Beyond the gallery halls, the fair once again hosts an extensive collateral programme including the 10th anniversary of The Abraaj Group Art Prize, the Global Art Forum that takes on the theme of automation, and a series of commissions including the artist collective GCC, which will welcome audiences to Good Morning GCC at the fair and an engaging after-hours programme, including private visits to collections and to cultural institutions across the United Arab Emirates.

In addition to its March programming, the fair aims to continue to grow the cultural fabric of the city and the region with year-round engagement including the art school Campus Art Dubai, an internship programme aimed at supporting the next generation of art practitioners and professionals, and Art Dubai Portraits, a film series casting light on MENASA artists and their practices.

Art Dubai is held in partnership with The Abraaj Group. The fair is sponsored by Julius Baer and Piaget, with Madinat Jumeirah as the home of the event. The Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) is a strategic partner of Art Dubai and supports the fair's year-round education programme. Misk Art Institute is the exclusive partner of Art Dubai Modern.

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