

Press Release: 25 March 2019

ART DUBAI'S 13TH EDITION CLOSES WITH REPORTS OF STRONG SALES THROUGHOUT THE FAIR

- The 13th edition presented the fair's most internationally diverse programme to date with a particular focus on artists and galleries from the Global South
- New section UAE NOW spotlighted independent home-grown subcultures, profiling UAE's evolving and diverse cultural landscape
- A meeting point for art professionals and collectors from all over the world, Art Dubai hosted a record number of collectors and institutions and launched the inaugural Curators Ideas Exchange Programme
- Visitor numbers increased to 28,500 visitors throughout the fair; with galleries reporting strong sales
 - Art Dubai will return to Madinat Jumeirah from March 18-21, 2020



Images from left to right; Solaroca by OPAVIVARÁ!, Art Dubai Commissions, Art Dubai 2019, Courtesy of Photo Solutions (1); Chourouk Hriech (France), Represented by Galerie Anne Sarah Benichou (Paris), March 21, Art Dubai 2019, Courtesy of Photo Solutions (2); Dastan's Basement (Tehran), Art Dubai Contemporary, March 19, Art Dubai 2019, Courtesy of Photo Solutions

March 25, 2019, Dubai, United Arab Emirates - 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, Art Dubai, the world's most international art fair and the Middle East region's most important commercial platform for art, closed its 13th edition to worldwide critical acclaim on Saturday March 23, 2019. The fair saw an increase of visitors to 28,500 and galleries reported strong sales across each of the fair's five days.

The fair's redesigned layout and its most extensive programme of performance, tours, music and talks, including the internationally renowned trans-disciplinary arts summit **Global Art Forum**, contributed to the fair's success.

Art Dubai continues to develop original content to redefine what an art fair can be and contribute to the UAE and wider region's cultural landscape. Focused on presenting artists and galleries from across the Global South, Art Dubai offered visitors greater access and deeper engagement with art from non-Western geographies presenting a holistic platform where the gallery and community-driven programmes coalesced to showcase a view of art which is inclusive, rooted in discovery, the promotion of new and alternative perspectives, community building and cultural dialogue.

For 2019, Art Dubai presented the inaugural edition of its new gallery section **Bawwaba** (meaning gateway in Arabic), which featured ten solo presentations from artists from, based in, and/or focused on projects about Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Central and South Asia and resonating deeply with narratives around global migration, socioeconomic structures and identity as a gateway into artistic notions of 'The Global South'. Elsewhere in the fair, Art Dubai's expanded **Residents** programme focused on Latin America with 12 artists from the continent's leading galleries exhibiting new works for the fair which were created during short-term artist residencies in the UAE. Complementing Residents was **SOLAROCA**, a commission by Brazilian collective **OPAVIVARÁ!**, which invited visitors to mingle and engage in intercultural dialogue; and an after-dark music programme which mirrored the fair's focus on the Global South.



Committed to providing an international platform for the UAE, Art Dubai introduced a new segment, **UAE NOW**, spotlighting local independent artist-run platforms and subcultures, their place in the UAE's evolving landscape and contribution to creating new ways of thinking, theory and artistic movements. This year's artists of **Campus Art Dubai**, the first programme of its kind in the UAE, comprising an intensive six-month seminar and residency programme for early-career UAE-based artists, showcased their new artworks under group show: "Mirror Mirror on the Wall: Contemporary Art in the City". In partnership with **The Cultural Office of Her Highness Sheikh Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Sheikh Manal Little Artist Program**, now in its seventh edition, offered hands-on workshops and discovery tours through the fair to encourage young people to get involved and excel in the arts.

Initiated by the **Art Dubai Group** and supported by **Dubai Culture & Arts Authority**, the ninth edition of **Art Week**, which ran March 16-23, was testament to the UAE's thriving and dynamic cultural scene, with over 500 events taking place over seven days across three Emirates - Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah - a 25% increase in events. Art Week's broad programme offered residents and visitors alike a packed programme of fairs and festivals, one-off happenings, special performances and installations and included the opening of new private institution, **Ishara Art Foundation**; **SIKKA Art Fair**; new exhibitions at **Louvre Abu Dhabi**; and the **16th Abu Dhabi Festival**.

As the highlight of the region's cultural calendar, Art Dubai exhibited the **Ithra Art Prize 2019** winning commission, a prize supporting and promote emerging Saudi contemporary artists on a truly global platform developed by **Art Dubai** and the **King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture**; announced the India Pavilion at the forthcoming **Venice Biennale of Art**; and held a revised-format **Modern Symposium** which attempted to map out the cultural shifts and trends instigated by modernity in four key cities in the region during the 20th century - Baghdad, Beirut, Dakar and Lahore.

A global meeting point for art professionals and collectors from all over the world, Art Dubai hosted a record number of international institutional representatives and launched the inaugural **Curators Ideas Exchange Programme** with the aim to strengthen and activate new local, regional and global networks that add value to the region's cultural dialogue and the fair's DNA as a multicultural hub. The Curators Ideas Exchange Programme offered key UAE institutions and independent spaces – such as **Jameel Arts Centre**, **Tashkeel**, **NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery**, **Salama Bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation** – with a platform to present and highlight their varied missions and programmes.

More than 130 international institutional representatives participated in the programme including museum directors and curators from some of the world's leading museums, as well as independent professionals working in key non-profit organisations and biennales that are delivering some of the most cutting-edge exhibitions globally. These included museum leadership from the UK, the USA and France, such as the **Tate** and **Serpentine Galleries** (London), **Guggenheim** and **MoMA** (New York), **LACMA** (Los Angeles), **the Pompidou** (Paris) and **LUMA Arles**. Crucially, especially given the focus that Art Dubai 2019 placed on the Global South, this representation also extended outside of the more developed art markets to key regional institutions across Africa, South Asia and Australasia. These include **Zeitz MOCAA** and **Norval Foundation** (Cape Town), **Centre for Contemporary Art** (Lagos), **Kiran Nadar Museum** (New Delhi), **M Woods Museum** (Beijing), **Queensland Art Gallery** (Brisbane), **MACAN Museum** (Jakarta), and **MACAAL** (Marrakech), among others.

The most global and diverse of art fairs, Art Dubai 2019 showcased 92 galleries from 42 countries, displaying 500 artists from 80 nationalities across its four gallery sections: **Art Dubai Contemporary**, **Art Dubai Modern**, **Bawwaba** and **Residents**. This year's **Art Dubai Contemporary** featured 59 galleries from 34 countries spread across its two gallery halls presenting work by some of the most notable contemporary artists working today. **Art Dubai Modern** - the only platform in the world dedicated to museum-quality works by 20th Century Modern masters from the Middle East, Africa and South Asia - was presented for the first time alongside **Art Dubai Contemporary**, giving context to the historical narrative being played out across the booths.

Exhibiting galleries particularly praised Art Dubai's global reach, knowledge of its audiences, and the fair's unique role as a meeting point for the local, regional and international art worlds.



Visiting institutions offered the following comments on their experience of Art Dubai 2019:

“Art Dubai has once again showcased the richness of our regional arts scene. It is a great privilege for us to collaborate with Art Dubai to expand the local arts agenda and push the boundaries of creative storytelling, whether through partnering on the Residents programme to immerse and inspire international artists in our creative spaces, or to representing Warehouse421 at the Curator’s Ideas Exchange Programme. We look forward to working with our new connections and are inspired to further develop the cultural scene in Abu Dhabi and the wider UAE,” said **Faisal Al-Hassan**, General Manager of **Warehouse421**.

“It was great to meet several of the Bawwaba section artists, and the many Latin American artists who had been in residency there (the residents programme) along with Emirati artist groups and projects like Bait15 and Warehouse421. There are plenty of new contacts now which I hope to make use of for BALTIC exhibitions research. As well as the art fair itself, I enjoyed attending some of the Global Art Forum talks “School is a Factory”, a strong programme of speakers, super distinctive for its way of crossing disciplines and carrying a loyal audience.” **Alessandro Vincentelli**, Curator of Exhibitions and Research, **BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art** (Gateshead, UK)

“Art Dubai’s **Curators Ideas Exchange Programme** opened my eyes to a whole new region and network. Institutional travel budgets are modest in the public sector: we seldom have the opportunity to meet curatorial colleagues from far afield and discuss projects together. This is such an important way to create long-lasting collaborations, which enable the international circulation of artists and art practices. By inviting us to Dubai and showing us its institutions - and also facilitating visits to Sharjah and Abu Dhabi – Art Dubai really provided a great insight into the way art operates in the Emirates, and its incredible connections to the rest of the world. I am still trying to process everything I saw and to filter out artists with whom we might work in the near future.” **Zoë Gray**, Senior Curator, **WIELS** (Brussels)

“It was such an amazing experience to meet with fellow curators from all over the world and to get to know the aspiring cultural scene in the UAE. I loved that you mixed up curators from institutions, directors as well as independent curators. The programme was really thought through.” **Marianne Dobner**, Curator, **mumok** (Vienna)

Participating galleries offered the following comments on their experience of Art Dubai 2019:

“Sales have been good - we have sold several works including two significant pieces. The highlight of the fair has been the new contacts made including notable institutions - Art Dubai’s strength is the programme to draw collectors and curators from all over the world, facilitating connections and introductions. We also support the “Global-South” focus which the fair has adopted, and this is one of the main reasons for our participation. This has been a totally new and worthwhile experience for us,” said **Baylon Sandri**, Director, **SMAC Gallery** (Johannesburg / Cape Town / Stellenbosch), exhibiting for the first time.

“We’ve been exhibiting at Art Dubai for several years and this has been a very good year. We have sold multiple works and made many new connections across the region including with local collectors and a range of private and major institutions.” **Galerie Templon** (Paris / Brussels) – returning exhibitor

“We have had a very strong fair this year. We presented two artists in contemporary; Rasheed Araeen and Mohammad Ali Talpur, and four abstract calligraphic artists in the modern section, which worked well. The preview day was excellent; we sold multiple works by Mohammed Ali Talpur and Syed Sadequain and this has continued throughout the fair. The audience is considered and we have sold to individuals and institutions.” **Charles Moore**, Director, **Grosvenor Gallery** (London) – returning exhibitor

“We have been delighted with this year’s fair. We sold five major works during the preview and the engagement we’ve made in the region over the last few years is really paying off.” **Mesai Haileleul**, Director, **Addis Fine Art**, **Addis Ababa** (Ethiopia) – returning exhibitor

“We’ve had an excellent fair – there has been serious local and regional interest in our artists and we have had an incredible response to our booth. We hit the local market more this year and made many new connections



in the region and beyond.” **Kristin Hjellegjerde, Founder, Kristin Hjellegjerde (Berlin and London)** – returning exhibitor

“This is our first ever fair and it’s been a Cinderella story for us. We came here confident in the work being presented and the week has exceeded all our expectations. The response and engagement with the work has been fantastic and we’ve met private and institutional collectors from all over the world.” **Artist Kristoffer Ardeña, solo representation at Art Dubai’s new Bawwaba gallery section, by 856G Gallery (Mandaue, Philippines)** – first time exhibitor

“This is our first time at Art Dubai and we have enjoyed it immensely. The audience has been very international, well educated and very engaged. We have met collectors from all over the world including Scandinavia, Pakistan, India and Western Europe – we very much look forward to next year.” **Walter Storms, Founder, Walter Storms Gallery (Munich)** – first time exhibitor

“Under Art Dubai’s Residents programme, Luiz Roque had the opportunity to make a phenomenal new work that he would never have been able to make elsewhere. The exposure he and the gallery received, particularly to international institutions, made the fair very worthwhile. We’re excited to see where those conversations might lead.” **Carolyn Drake Kandiyoti, Partner, Mendes Wood DM (Brussels / New York / São Paulo), representing Luiz Roque, one of 12 Latin American artists involved in Art Dubai Residents, artist residency and gallery section** – first time exhibitor

“We were delighted with our experience at this year’s edition of Art Dubai drawing a multi-national background of visitors, curators, institutions, collectors and art enthusiasts in general. As this is our ‘home-town’ fair, we anticipated a fruitful week in terms of dialogues, interactions and sales. We’re very happy with the outcome and resulting connections in regard to both pre-existing and new relationships established.” **Jonathan Ellis King, Director, Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde (Dubai)** – returning exhibitor

Art Dubai will return to Madinat Jumeirah from March 18-21, 2020.

Art Dubai 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. **Global Art Forum** and **Residents** is supported by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. **BMW** is the exclusive car partner of Art Dubai.

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The full list of Art Dubai 2019 galleries can be found [here](#); and the fair’s online catalogue [here](#).

PRESS INFORMATION can be found [here](#)

ABOUT ART DUBAI

Art Dubai is a leading international art fair as well as the world’s leading platform for Contemporary and Modern art from the MENASA region and 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.

Mirroring Dubai’s position as a centre of trade and junction between different cultures, Art Dubai further acts as a place of discovery for art from centres that are usually omitted from the Western mainstream dialogue on art; in geographical terms referring to a region which has recently become known as the 'Global South'.

Art Dubai promotes regional art and artists by featuring a unique mix of programming and commissioned works, often in partnership with other regional institutions. Redefining the role an art fair should play, Art Dubai cultivates an ecosystem for art, education and thought leadership beyond the commercial aspects of the fair.



Two examples of this are the fair's critically acclaimed Global Art Forum, the largest arts conference in the Middle East and Asia, and Campus Art Dubai, a one-of-a-kind educational programme in the UAE.

The fair further acts as a grassroots-type institution for art and art production through initiatives such as Residents, an annual residency programme and gallery section for international artists who are invited to the UAE for a 4-8 week residency to immerse themselves in the local scene.

Acting as a digital extension of Art Dubai's offering, Art Dubai Portraits is a commissioned film series profiling artists that are connected to the fair through its programming or participating galleries. This serves as a one-of-a-kind resource for curators and researchers working with art and artists from the region.

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