

**Press Release**  
**Date of issue: March 6, 2019**

**ANNOUNCING THE FULL PROGRAM FOR THIS YEAR'S  
 SHEIKHA MANAL LITTLE ARTISTS PROGRAM**

- Led by American artist Sally Curcio and five apprentice artists from the UAE, onsite workshops, Discovery Tours and the Art in Schools Initiative return
  - Under this year's theme of *Creating New Worlds*
    - Taking place at Art Dubai from March 20-23, 2019, at Madinat Jumeirah
- Registration for the much-loved children's program is now open via [artdubai.ae](http://artdubai.ae)



Sally Curcio, *Metropolis (Detail 1)*, Mixed media including Beads, buttons, jewelry, rhinestones, Lite Brite pegs, acrylic bubble

Sally Curcio (credit to Paul Sprecht Photography)

**MARCH 6, 2019;**

**DUBAI, UNITED ARAB**

**EMIRATES** – The full program for this year's Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program, under the theme of *Creating New Worlds*, is announced today. Led by American artist **Sally Curcio** with five apprentice artists from the UAE, the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the program comprises the popular annual on-site workshops and Discovery Tours for children and teens held at Art Dubai, as well as a growing number of artist-lead workshops at Dubai-based schools as part of the Art in Schools Initiative.

Held under the patronage of **Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**, President of the UAE Gender Balance Council, President of Dubai Women Establishment, and wife of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs, the program is a partnership between The Cultural Office of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Art Dubai, offering a unique educational opportunity for UAE-based children and teenagers and encouraging them to excel in the arts. The program is part of The Cultural Office and Art Dubai's longstanding commitment to education and the development of the UAE's cultural landscape.

**Al Maha Al Bastaki**, Director of The Cultural Office, commented: "*The Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program is one of the key initiatives in the ecosystem of art education in the UAE and we are delighted to see it grow and expand its scope each year. With Art Dubai, we increased the number of workshops and tours by 25% to allow for the program's growing popularity and increased the number of opportunities available for artists' school visits.*"

**THE FULL PROGRAMME**

### **Apprentice Artists**

Five apprentice artists from the UAE - **Asma Khoori, Hibah Hoque, Rabila Kidwai, Taqwa Alnaqbi** and **Zahia Abdul Hameed** - will join lead artist Sally Curcio to assist on the program. The Apprentice Artists program offers an excellent opportunity for UAE-based artists to develop their craft and advance in their art career, capitalising on the prospect of working with an internationally renowned artist such as Sally Curcio. Apprentice artists assist the lead artist in devising the program of workshops, while having the opportunity to exchange ideas and develop a practice that includes teaching/learning.

### **On-Site Workshops**

Under the theme of *Creating New Worlds*, Curcio and apprentice artists will invite children to explore and create cityscapes and urban landscapes through the use of miniatures and prototypes, allowing them to create their own imaginative utopia. Curcio's goal is to motivate an inventive spirit, embed a sense of cooperation, and encourage participants to explore how different materials can be composed to create new imagined environments. Materials such as coloured beads, balls, pipe cleaners, blocks, bottle caps, and other found and recycled material will be used to create the new worlds. Using such materials to represent cityscapes of varying scale and perspective enriches idea development and creative processes that are of value in a range of artistic and work endeavors.

### **Discovery Tours**

This year's program will also see the return of its sought-after Discovery Tours, led by UAE-based and international artists and art educators. This year's guides are **Alaa Amin, Fadia Ali** and **Khoulou Hussein Hamad**. The tailor-made tours are specially designed to enable young children to discover key pieces around the fair, with the works brought alive via thematic activity maps and the storytelling of the guides. The tours usually accommodate between 10-15 children and are split across three age groups: ages 5-7, 8-12 and 13-17.

**Registration for the on-site workshops and discovery tours are now open via the website:** <http://www.artdubai.ae/children-teens-2019/>

### **Art in Schools Initiative**

Part of the Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program, the Art in Schools Initiative, takes place on March 17, 18, and 19, and will feature workshops that play with a variation of the *Creating New Worlds* theme, offering a unique educational opportunity for UAE-based schoolchildren, and encouraging them to engage with and excel in the arts.

The popularity of the initiative manifests itself in a growing number of schools taking part in the program. The participating schools for 2019 include: Mohammed Bin Rashid School, Al Mizhar School for Boys, Latifa School for Girls, Rashid School for Boys and Jumeirah Model School.

The Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program is part of Art Dubai's wider educational programming, providing opportunities for school-age children, college students and graduates through to collectors and art enthusiasts. Other Art Dubai educational programs include the fair's critically acclaimed **Global Art Forum**, the only transdisciplinary arts summit of its kind in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia and a leading international platform for engaging cultural debate; **Campus Art Dubai**, a unique six-month educational programme for early-career artists, curators, writers, designers and cultural producers based in the UAE, and **Art Dubai Fellowship** that brings together exceptional young curators and writers from the Arab world. More information on Art Dubai's programming is available [here](#).

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## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About The Artist, Sally Curcio**

Sally Curcio has, over the past 18 years, created art that captures the imagination of both children and adults, by making playful miniature worlds that are both visually complex and accessible. She calls these works Bubble Sculptures, as the worlds are enclosed in a protective, transparent bubble. Many associations can be brought to the Bubble Sculptures as they summon nostalgia for the innocent perspectives of childhood, suggest the fragility of environments, and offer examples of imagined and utopian possibilities. As we long for a more harmonious world, Curcio's Bubble Sculptures counsel an openness to what may be possible.

Sally Curcio has exhibited her work throughout the United States and internationally. Her work is in the permanent collections of Smith College Museum of Art, the Fitchburg Art Museum, NYU Langone Hospital, and the Hassenfeld Children's Hospital, NYC. She has exhibited her work at the Peabody Essex Museum, the Bruce Museum, and the Children's Museum of the Arts, NYC.

### **About the Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program**

The Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program is held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, President of UAE Gender Balance Council, President of Dubai Women Establishment, and wife of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs UAE.

The Sheikha Manal Little Artists Program was launched by The Cultural Office of Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in partnership with Art Dubai in 2013. Featuring artist-led workshops, tours and other projects, the program provides access to skills and ideas for UAE-based children and teenagers aged 5-17 with the long-term aim of encouraging young people to get involved and excel in the arts. In its seventh year, the program continues to grow including the artist-led 'Art in Schools Initiative' giving exclusive opportunity to selected schools to experience the workshops on campus.

### **About The Cultural Office**

The Cultural Office of Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum was established in 2013 to serve as a leading platform to develop and activate substantial art movements as milestones within the region that will fortify the UAE's standing as a global hub for culture and creativity. Combining the best art practices and concepts from around the world, then tailoring it to respect and preserve our legacy and culture in the Arab world for International recognition, the projects undertaken by The Cultural Office are carefully selected to help raise the profile of the pool of talents existing in the region, based on the understanding that the cultivation and training of emerging talent is essential to ensure sustained excellence in the arts.

[theculturaloffice.ae](http://theculturaloffice.ae)

### **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.

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, a programme-cum-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.

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. BMW is the exclusive car partner of Art Dubai.

[artdubai.ae](http://artdubai.ae)

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