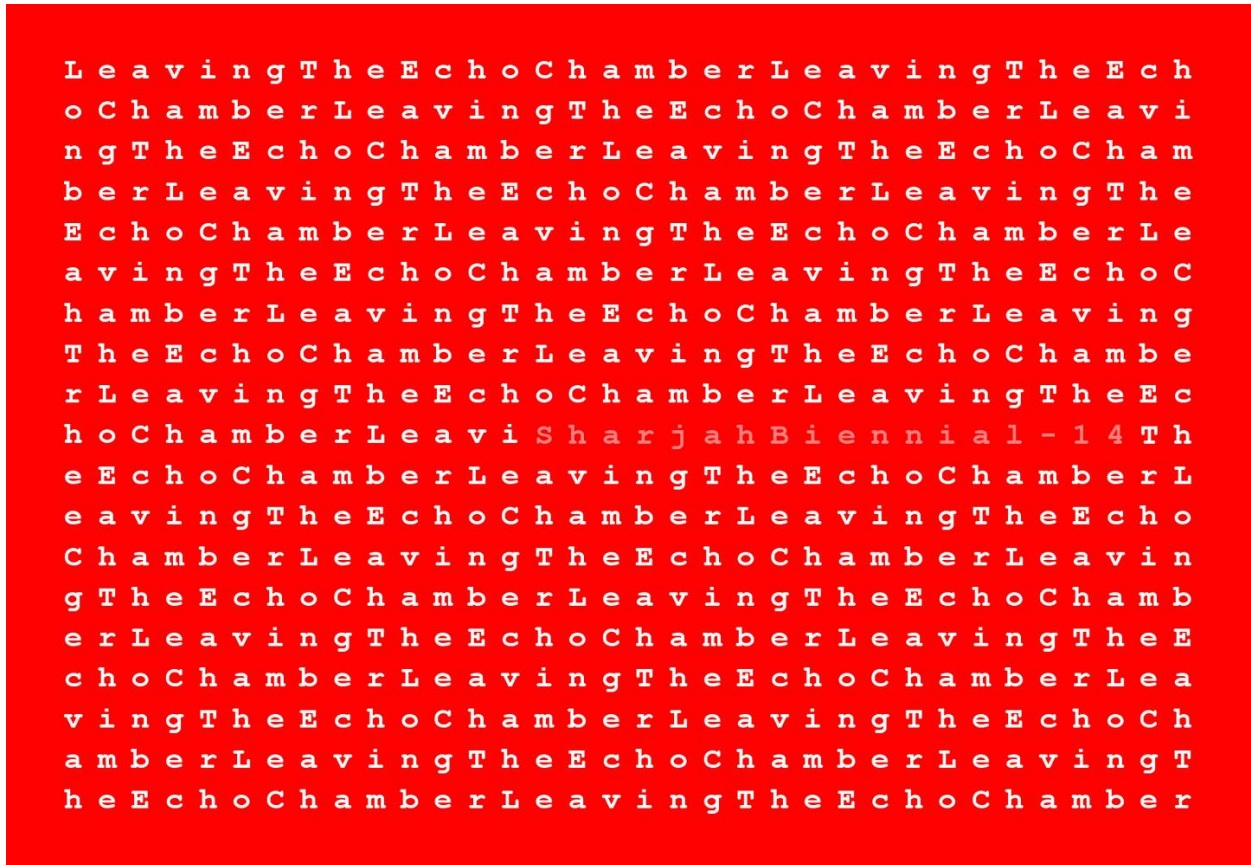




SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

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Sharjah Biennial 14: *Leaving the Echo Chamber*.

Sharjah Art Foundation Announces Initial Selection of Participating Artists for Sharjah Biennial 14 in March 2019

***Leaving the Echo Chamber* Will Include Three Exhibitions Featuring Artists from Around the Globe**

Sharjah Art Foundation today announced an initial selection of participating artists for the next Sharjah Biennial, opening in March 2019. Featuring established and emerging international artists from around the globe, the 14th edition of the Sharjah Biennial (SB14), *Leaving the Echo Chamber*, explores the possibilities and purpose of producing art when history is increasingly fictionalised, when ideas of 'society' are invariably displaced, when borders and beliefs are under constant renegotiation and our material culture is under the constant threat of human destruction and climate degradation. As

an internationally recognised platform for exhibition and experimentation for artists from the surrounding region and beyond, the Sharjah Biennial has explored themes as diverse as climate change, agriculture, political conflict and artistic production since 1993, working with curators from countries and institutions from around the world.

SB14 will feature exhibitions by curators **Zoe Butt**, **Omar Kholeif** and **Claire Tancons**, bringing together a range of experiences and works—including major commissions, large-scale public installations, performances and films to explore how contemporary life, enabled by rapid technological change, has created a seemingly inescapable ‘echo chamber’ of information, complex personal networks and shifting narratives that are physical, spiritual and virtual.

On view in the foundation’s buildings and courtyards across the city’s arts and heritage areas, as well as other spaces in Sharjah, *Leaving the Echo Chamber* will explore subjects ranging from migration and diaspora, to concepts of time and interpreted histories, in relation to today’s continuous loop of mediated information. Invited to respond to the overarching issues and concerns of *Leaving the Echo Chamber*, the curators will present three distinct exhibitions, for which they have invited a selection of artists from around the world, as well as from the United Arab Emirates and the surrounding region, to participate.

‘Contemporary life is dominated by competing information and fluctuating histories—a reality that raises important questions about the trajectory of contemporary art, as well as the conditions in which it is made,’ said Hoor Al Qasimi, Director of Sharjah Art Foundation. ‘Butt, Kholeif and Tancons bring incredibly different perspectives to these questions, and together represent the complexity of challenges faced by today’s artists and society as a whole. The aim of the Biennial is to deepen the context of these questions through thought-provoking and often experiential works of art.’

An initial selection of participating artists in each of the three exhibitions follows below with the complete line-up to be announced in the coming months:

Artist biographies and full curatorial statements are available at sharjahart.org/biennial-14.

***Journey Beyond The Arrow*, curated by Zoe Butt, will include works by:**

- **Khadim Ali**
- **Meiro Koizumi**
- **Nalini Malani**
- **Tuan Andrew Nguyen**
- **Ho Tzu Nyen**
- **Ahmad Fuad Osman**
- **Lisa Reihana**
- **Kidlat Tahimik**

Journey Beyond The Arrow gives deeper context to the movement of humanity and the tools that have enabled (or hindered) its survival. From spiritual ritual to cultural custom; from technological process to political rule of law; all such practices possess particular tools (object and action), which aid or abet mobility. In this exhibition, artists reveal the generational impact of a range of physical and psychological 'tools,' whose representation and meaning has shifted as a consequence of colonial exploit, religious conflict or ideological extremism. *Journey Beyond The Arrow* seeks to illuminate the necessary diversity of humanity and its exchange across the globe.

***Making New Time*, curated by Omar Kholeif, will include works by:**

- **Huguetta Caland**
- **Lubaina Himid**
- **Barbara Kasten**
- **Marwan**
- **Otobong Nkanga**
- **Jon Rafman**
- **Akram Zaatari**

Responding to the overall theme of *Leaving the Echo Chamber*, *Making New Time* is a provocation on how material culture can be reimagined through the lens of a group of artists whose political agency, whose activism and whose astute observations encourage us to extend beyond the limits of belief. The exhibition considers how economies have formed around technological culture, how narrative is created and deconstructed and how these forces enable a reconstitution, or indeed a restitution of a history lost, or even unknown. Drifting in and out of hegemonies and entrenched structures of power; here, the sensorial and the bodily intertwine, becoming archaeological sediments in the landscape of Sharjah, imploring the viewer to consider their complicity in a world that is forever fleeting from our hands.

***Look for Me All Around You*, curated by Claire Tancons, will include works by:**

- **Caline Aoun**
- **Aline Baiana**
- **Nikolaus Gansterer**
- **Eisa Jocson**
- **Isabel Lewis**
- **Ulrik López**
- **Carlos Martiel**
- **Wu Tsang**

Look for Me All Around You questions if obscurity is the harbinger of futurity, darkness the site of seeing and blackness the scene of unmasking. In *Look for Me All Around You*, what is being 'looked for' is not what is being 'looked at'—if only it could be seen. Standing witness to the imperilment of the contemporary in the atomised space between 'me' and 'you,' *Look for Me All Around You* seeks to eschew the sole realm of

the retinal embedded within hegemonic structures of looking, learning and feeling. It strives instead through mechanisms of repossession of perception, to reflect and deflect encroaching conditions of dispossession and diasporisation.

About Sharjah Art Foundation

Sharjah Art Foundation is an advocate, catalyst and producer of contemporary art within the Emirate of Sharjah and the surrounding region, in dialogue with the international arts community. Under the leadership of founder Hoor Al Qasimi, a curator and artist, the foundation advances an experimental and wide-ranging programmatic model that supports the production and presentation of contemporary art, preserves and celebrates the distinct culture of the region, and encourages a shared understanding of the transformational role of art. The foundation's core initiatives include the long-running Sharjah Biennial, featuring contemporary artists from around the world; the annual March Meeting, a convening of international arts professionals and artists; grants and residencies for artists, curators, and cultural producers; ambitious and experimental commissions; and a range of travelling exhibitions and scholarly publications.

Established in 2009 to expand programmes beyond the Sharjah Biennial, which launched in 1993, the foundation is a critical resource for artists and cultural organisations in the Gulf and a conduit for local, regional and international developments in contemporary art. The foundation's deep commitment to developing and sustaining the cultural life and heritage of Sharjah is reflected through year-round exhibitions, performances, screenings and educational programmes in the city of Sharjah and across the Emirate, often hosted in historic buildings that have been repurposed as cultural and community centres. A growing collection reflects the foundation's support of contemporary artists in the realisation of new work, and its recognition of the contributions made by pioneering modern artists from the region and around the world.

Sharjah Art Foundation is a legally independent public body established by Emiri Decree and supported by government funding, grants from national and international nonprofits and cultural organisations, corporate sponsors and individual patrons.

About Sharjah

Sharjah is the third-largest of the seven United Arab Emirates, and the only one bridging the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Reflecting the deep commitment to the arts, architectural preservation and cultural education embraced by its ruler, Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Sharjah is home to more than 20 museums and has long been known as the cultural hub of the United Arab Emirates. In 1998, it was named UNESCO's 'Arab Capital of Culture' and has been designated the UNESCO 'World Book Capital' for the year 2019.

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