



For Immediate Release
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Second Lahore Biennale Curated by Hoor Al Qasimi to Open January 26, 2020

Lahore, Pakistan—26 September 2019—The Lahore Biennale Foundation today announced that it will present the second edition of the Lahore Biennale from January 26 through February 29, 2020. Curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, Director of the Sharjah Art Foundation, LB02 will critically explore dissonances between humans, and our increasingly strained relationship with the environment. With a focus on the Global South, where ongoing social disaffection is being aggravated by the emerging effects of climate change, LB02 will bring together artists from across the world to engage with these pressing issues using sites throughout Lahore.

“Questions of identity, recognition, and difference are among the most urgent and globally resonant of our time,” said **Hoor Al Qasimi, Curator LB02**. “In the Global South, colonial legacies and the rise of modern identities have hardened differences across ethnic, religious, linguistic, and national lines,” she added, pointing out that LB02 seeks to address this growing polarization by recuperating histories of coexistence, interaction, and solidarity in regions such as Asia. “The objective,” said Al Qasimi, “is to offer an expansive and generous vision of the future characterized by multiplicity and openness, rather than by homogeneity and closure.”

Among the artists whose work will be shown in LB02 are:

- Abdullah Al Saadi
- Afrah Shafiq
- Almagul Menlibayeva
- Amar Kanwar
- Ayesha Zulfiqar
- Ayman Zedani
- Bahar Behbahani
- Barbara Walker
- Basma Alsharif
- Bouchra Khalili
- Diana Al-Hadid
- Farideh Lashai
- Hrair Sarkissian
- Imran Ahmad
- Jeanno Gaussi
- John Akomfrah
- Mark Salvatus
- Rabbya Naseer & Hurmat ul Ain
- Shezad Dawood
- Slavs and Tatars
- Wael Shawky
- Zarina Bhimji
- Zulfiqar Rind

Historically a capital of the arts, culture, and literature, and a city known for its architecture and gardens, Lahore provides a rich and complex urban tapestry for artistic intervention. The city bears the imprint of epochal transformations spanning the Mughal,

Sikh, and British eras, as well as its more recent post-Partition sovereignty. An important node for the movement of people and ideas, and for material, cultural, and environmental exchange since antiquity, this hub of 11 million people is today a leading cultural center, home to prominent artists, writers, cultural practitioners, musicians, and art institutions.

The inaugural edition of the Lahore Biennale in 2018 used the city as a touchstone for illuminating the enduring impact of this dense and layered history in a wider South Asian context. Featuring more than 50 projects and commissions, it brought together artists from the region with those working internationally, including Bani Abidi, CAMP, Naeem Mohaiemen, and Shirin Neshat. LB 2020 builds on this success, consolidating these ties and extending them to explore fresh concerns and connections spanning Central Asia, West Asia, and Africa, as well as their diasporas.

Many works that feature in LB02 reflect the increasingly resolute mood among artists and activists to address the environmental crisis now confronting humanity. As such, curator Al Qasimi's vision of coexistence extends beyond the question of inter-human relations to encompass our troubled relationship with nature.

"The dissonances between and among humans we now witness are likely to be compounded by the climate emergency," said Al Qasimi. "Whilst there is growing awareness of climate change in Europe and America," she added, "its full implications for regions that will be hit hardest by global warming have yet to be addressed."

LB02 responds to the cultural and ecological history of Lahore while aiming to awaken an awareness of humanity's daunting contemporary predicament. Works presented will explore human entanglement with the environment while revisiting traditional understandings and cosmological underpinnings of self, with a view to forging new resonances and new imaginings of the future.

"Given the skewed representation of Pakistan in global media, and the relative scarcity of regional dialogues within South Asia, there is a pressing need to foster a deeper and multifaceted exchange within the region and with the rest of the world. Through LB02, we serve as a stimulus for these conversations and in fostering linkages with the wider region," said **Qudsia Rahim, Executive Director of the Lahore Biennale Foundation**. "The city of Lahore itself becomes a wonderful catalyst for contemporary art and ideas, engaging local audiences with contemporary art and weaving regional artists into the global art scene. This is especially important since Pakistan is yet to build an infrastructure of contemporary arts institutions."

Further details including the full list of participating artists and venues for LB02 will be announced in the coming weeks.

About Hoor Al Qasimi

Hoor Al Qasimi is President and Director of Sharjah Art Foundation. Her recent curatorial projects include solo exhibitions of Amal Kenawy (2018), Hassan Sharif (2017), Yayoi Kusama (2016), Robert Breer (2016), Farideh Lashai (2016), Rasheed Araeen (2014) and Susan Hefuna (2014). She co-curated *Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige: Two Suns in a Sunset* (2016) and major surveys such as *When Art Becomes Liberty: The Egyptian Surrealists (1938–1965)* (2016) and *The Khartoum School: The Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan (1945–present)* (2016–2017). Al Qasimi served as co-curator of Sharjah Biennial 6 (2003), she has since continued as Biennial Director. She curated the UAE National Pavilion for the Venice Biennale (2015).

Al Qasimi is President of the International Biennial Association; Chair of the Advisory Board, College of Art and Design, University of Sharjah; and President of The Africa Institute, Sharjah. Al Qasimi serves on the board of directors for MoMA PS1, New York; Kunst-Werke, Berlin; Ashkal Alwan, Beirut; and Sharjah Architecture Triennial; as well as advisory boards for Khoj, New Delhi; and Darat al Funun, Amman. She is also a member of the Prince Claus Award Committee (2016–present).

About Lahore Biennale Foundation

The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) is a non-profit organization based in Lahore, Pakistan, that seeks to provide critical sites for experimentation in the visual arts through its flagship initiative, the Lahore Biennale, and through year-round public art projects presented across Pakistan. Inclusivity, collaboration, and public engagement are central to LBF's mission to support art as an agent of social transformation. LBF partners with government entities and non-profit organizations at home and abroad, including the Government of Punjab, the Commissioner's Office of Lahore, the Parks and Horticulture Authority and the Walled City Authority of Lahore, as well as The British Council, the Goethe-Institut Pakistan, The New North and South Network (UK), to bridge institutional gaps between the public and private sectors in Pakistan and to build bridges between local and international arts communities. The first edition of the Lahore Biennale, LBF's flagship event, premiered across the city of Lahore in March 2018.

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