

Design Diary: Art springs in the UAE in March

From curated gallery shows and talks to performances and special showcases, this is the month when art blooms. Here's an edit of events that make the year's art season worth the buzz



Cardboard and Coir, 1999 - Hassan Shari

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But We Cannot See

Them: Tracing a UAE Art Community, 1988-2008

Community has played a key role in every historic modern art breakthrough, with artists banding together around manifestos, or innovations. Art communities grow out of critical and creative exchange among peers and mentors. *But We Cannot See Them* focuses on one community of artists, sometimes called 'the five', at an intersection of visual artists, writers, and filmmakers based in the UAE. Its members identified with a new culture of encouraging radical, formal and conceptual experimentation. Eventually, some of these artists founded the celebrated Flying House. In tandem with this exhibition, The NYUAD Art Gallery is publishing a book of interviews with the artists. Together, the exhibition and book begin the process of tracing this pivotal artistic community in the key years of its formation.

The exhibit features artists Hassan Sharif, Mohammad Ahmad Ebrahim, Abdullah Al Saadi, Mohammad Kazem, Hussain Sharif, Vivek Vilasini, Jos Clevers, and Ebtisam Abdulaziz, with contributions from Cristiana De Marchi, Adel Khozam, Nujoom Al Ganem and Khalid Al Budoor. (At the NYU Art Gallery, Abu Dhabi, the exhibit closes on May 25.)

Tamawuj, Sharjah Biennale 13

Curated by Christine Tohme, *Sharjah Biennial 13*, *Tamawuj* continues to unfold through October 2017. *Tamawuj*, a noun in Arabic which is defined as a rising and falling in waves, but also a flowing, swelling, surging, fluctuation or a wavy undulating appearance outline or form, is reflective of SB13's aims to cultivate collaborations, infrastructures and strategies within Sharjah and the project localities. Featuring over fifty international artists, the biennial encompasses exhibitions and a public programme. In a region currently being invested with larger institutions and lesser infrastructures, SB13 presents a bridge between the ideal to the material. Vital interventions stretch the idea of the biennial in order to traverse rooted contexts, harnessing the agility and fragility of present informal networks. (Visit www.sharjahart.org for more information.)

The Big Ideas

Hammad Nasar, curator of The National Pavilion United Arab Emirates (UAE) at the 57th International Art Exhibition at la Biennale di Venezia (Venice Biennale) will speak at Al Serkal Avenue as part of the Majlis Talks Series. The exhibition entitled *Rock, Paper, Scissors: Positions in Play*, will explore artistic practices in the UAE through the analogy of play. (March 16, 5pm, Nadi Al Quoz, Alserkal Avenue, Dubai.)

Manuel Rabate, Louvre Abu Dhabi director, and Dr Zaki Nusseibeh, cultural adviser in the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, discuss the Louvre Abu Dhabi's opening — what it means for the UAE and the wider region, from both, a cultural and intellectual point of view. The talk will also touch on the architecture of the Jean Nouvel designed building as well as some key highlights from the collection and how the museum will facilitate the cultivation of an art-appreciating society. (March 16, 5pm, Art Dubai, Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai.)

Art in Motion

A beacon among the emergent next generation of classical European artists, Spanish pianist Juan Perez Floristán is an extraordinary rising virtuoso. Winner of the 2015 Paloma O'Shea Santander International Piano Competition, Floristan delivers an intimate recital on 18th March. (8pm at the Black Box, The Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi.)

With a prolific career spanning more than four decades, thousands of songs and more than 30 albums, Mohamad Abdo is a distinguished master. Known as *The Artist of the Arabs*, Saudi Arabia's most loved musician who first performed in the early '70s at the behest of the late Shaikh Zayed will leave you spell bound on March 14. (8pm at the Emirates Palace Auditorium, Abu Dhabi.)