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Hassan Sharif's exhibition at Qasr Al Hosn secures international recognition

First major monographic exhibition of Hassan Sharif in Abu Dhabi, 'Experiments and Objects 1979-2011', wins Alice award for Best Solo Exhibitions in a Museum.

Middle East Online

ABU DHABI - The first major monographic exhibition of Hassan Sharif in the UAE and in Abu Dhabi, 'Experiments and Objects 1979-2011', curated by Catherine David and Mohammed Kazem, and held at Qasr Al Hosn, Cultural Quarter Hall in Abu Dhabi won the Alice award for Best Solo Exhibitions in a Museum. The award solidifies the work as among the best in the art world.

Inaugurated by the Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi), 'Experiments and Objects 1979-2011' exhibition began with the artist's early experiments and included many objects as well as series of his conceptual drawings and systemic works.



Strongly involved with materiality

Born in 1951 in the Emirate of Dubai, Hassan Sharif is a seminal artist who is deeply associated with the modern history and culture of Dubai and of the United Arab Emirates.

He is a major figure in the artistic community of the UAE and has developed a strong body of work. Sharif studied in Great Britain. He first started to draw caricatures producing abundantly and becoming well known for them. A book of his caricatures will be published in 2011.

Hassan Sharif was one of the artists shown at the ADACH Visual Arts Platform in Venice and further research on his practice culminated in this monographic exhibition and a publication about the artist, which was launched at the Venice Biennale on June 3rd, 2011.

Sharif's art practice is experimental and strongly involved with materiality. He uses cotton, textile, metal, chord and plastic in order to create a variety of objects. His choice of materials reflects the production conditions that he lives and works in: a post-modern, post-global society.

His materials also reflect different aspects of our time such as mass manufacturing, for example, through his use of cardboard and packaging – thus also reflecting an interest in human activity, not just his own process of art making but also that of others in other fields.

The centrality of the process of “making” is clear in Sharif’s art practice: it is a precise, painstaking process, often involving repetitive actions and motions in the knotting, folding, wrapping and tying of various materials.

Sharif’s work reflects his intentional “doing” and “making” and his consciousness of the conditions that he works in. Historically, his work did not have much public visibility in the UAE, yet he often represented the Emirates abroad. One gets a sense of this paradox and others in his work.

Launched in 2011, the Alice Awards is a unique peer-to-peer award whereby members of the Global Board of Contemporary Art recognize excellence in various fields of contemporary art linking artists, curators, critics, museum directors, gallery owners and other professional in a network stretching around the globe.

Reflecting the tremendous evolution of contemporary art, the Alice Awards extend the mission by honoring excellence in over 50+ categories and recognizing artists, curators, critics, and institutions that spread the ideas and forms of contemporary art in global society.



Sharif’s art practice is experimental

The Alice Awards is presented by the Global Board of Contemporary Art, an intellectually diverse group, which includes an Executive 100+ member jury body of leading creative luminaries, contemporary artists, critics, curators and, Associate Members who are former Alice Award Winners and Nominees and other contemporary art professionals.

Special achievement award went to Belgian professor of modern art and contemporary art theory Thierry de Duve. Winners of both the Alice Award and the Public’s Voice Award include Best Political Art; Astrid Mania and Gerrit Gohlke, Germany, Best Short-Form Writing in Contemporary Art; Claire Tancons, Guadeloupe, Best Emerging Critic; Reinhard Braun and Maren L bbke-Tidow, Austria, Best Group Exhibitions in a Public Gallery; Social Sculpture, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, Australia, and Best Group Exhibition in a Private Gallery; Altman-Siegel Gallery, San Francisco, United States.

Among the winners of the Alice Award: Best Emerging Artist; Mel Chin, United States, Best Use of Interdisciplinary Art; Lili Reynaud-Dewar, France, Best Artist Book; Jalal Toufic, Lebanon, Best Emerging Curator; Suzana Milevska, Macedonia, and Best Solo Exhibitions in a Museum; Hassan Sharif Experiments and Objects 1979-2011.