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Re:Visiting Tarab by Fouad Elkoury, commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation, Mirage City Cinema, 2014.
Image courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation

SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION CONTINUES TO SUPPORT ARTISTIC PRACTICE WITH BI-ANNUAL PRODUCTION PROGRAMME GRANTS

**AT SEVENTH ANNUAL MARCH MEETING, ARTISTS MARWA ARSANIOS, ELENA ARTEMENKO,
ALI CHERRI, AHMAD GHOSSEIN, JUMANA MANNA, ZINEB SEDIRA, AND RAED YASSIN
RECEIVED GRANT FUNDING TO PRODUCE NEW PROJECTS**

Sharjah, United Arab Emirates—Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF) places artists at the core of its mission by offering Production Programme grants to aid in the realisation of ambitious new projects. At the annual March Meeting in Sharjah, the Foundation selected seven artists to receive grants in 2014: **Marwa Arsanios, Elena Artemenko, Ali Cherri, Ahmad Ghossein, Jumana Manna, Zineb Sedira, and Raed Yassin.**

The 2014 recipients of the **Production Programme** grants were selected by an international jury comprising **Tarek Abou El Fetouh**, independent curator; **Pooja Sood**, Director of Khoj International Artists' Association, and independent curator; and **Hoor Al-Qasimi**, President and Director, Sharjah Art Foundation. Recipients were selected from nearly 500 applications—more than double the number received in previous years—responding to the Foundation's Open Call for Submissions earlier this year.

Al-Qasimi stated, "With so many strong applications for the Production Programme this year, the review process was both exciting and challenging for the jury. In the end, we selected seven artists whose proposals we found particularly compelling. We look forward to working with these artists to realise these new works in the coming years."

The Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF) Production Programme offers artists resources and a platform for experimentation and the production of ambitious new projects. Previous SAF Production Programme grantees include Bani Abidi, CAMP, Sean Gullette, Mario Rizzi, and Lindsay Seers.

About March Meeting 2014 (MM 2014)

SAF's seventh annual MM 2014 was held March 13-16, 2014, and the four-day symposium included conversations with leading international artists, scholars, and curators around the theme "Come Together." Conceived by **Sharjah Biennial 12 (SB12) curator Eungie Joo** as an integral part of the Biennial—opening in March 2015—MM 2014 sets a tone of collaboration and exchange for the coming year.

This year's March Meeting looked at the commitment of both institutions and artists to a specific place—the type of sustained engagement which requires that they develop multi-faceted approaches to ideas. **Tarek Atoui, CAMP, Rene Gabri, Ayreen Anastas, and Abdullah Al Saadi** each elaborated on their particular work and experience in Sharjah and the UAE, through performance, documenting the movement of goods between Sharjah and Somalia, or responding to the landscape and rural life of the region. Artists **Abraham Cruzvillegas, Michael Joo, Julie Mehretu, and Wael Shawky** presented key elements in their recent work in the context of developing a language of cultural production, moderated by Abdellah Karroum, director of Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha. **Iman Issa, Hassan Khan, Rayyane Tabet, and Danh Vo** explored how they as artists engage with a place, a moment, or a built environment. Artists **Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, Nikhil Chopra, Ntone Edjabe, Cinthia Marcelle, and Adrián Villar Rojas** discussed their recent work, drawing upon history to envision future possibilities.

MM 2014 featured three keynote sessions which each demonstrated the key questions fundamental to their approach: **Hisham Al Madhloum** (Sharjah Directorate of Art) traced the cultural history of Sharjah, **Tarek Abou El Fetouh** showcased his curatorial approach by inviting **Tarek Atoui** to join in a discussion of Atoui's work in Sharjah; and **Ahmad Ghossein** interviewed **Christine Tohme** (Ashkal Alwan) in which Tohme pointedly addressed the challenge of developing and nurturing an art scene while remaining self-reflexive and responsive to the needs of that scene.

Following presentations on their respective institutions, Eungie Joo moderated a timely conversation between **Hoor Al-Qasimi** (SAF) and **Rodrigo Moura** (Instituto Inhotim, Brazil) on building a collection and the key issues to consider in developing new institutions of contemporary art. **Doryun Chong's** presentation on *Tokyo 1955-1970: A New Avant-Garde* at MoMA raised questions about the curator's approach to shaping an exhibition about a particular time and place. **Kristine Khouri** and **Rasha Salti** gave a fascinating presentation on their magical and ongoing research about the 1978 *International Art Exhibition in Solidarity with Palestine*, which will be featured in an exhibition at MACBA in 2015. The conversation shifted to shaping emerging art scenes, as **Gabi Ngcobo, Mohammed Hafiz, Sarah Rifky, and Zeynep Öz** shared their experiences in Johannesburg, Jeddah, Cairo, and Istanbul.

For a full list of conversations and seminars that took place, please visit www.sharjahart.org.

About Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF)

Sharjah Art Foundation brings a broad range of contemporary art and cultural programmes to the communities of Sharjah, the UAE, and the region. Since 2009, SAF has built on the history of cultural collaboration and exchange that began with the first Sharjah Biennial in 1993. Working with local and international partners, SAF creates opportunities for artists and artistic production through core initiatives that include the Sharjah Biennial, the annual March Meeting, residencies, production grants, commissions, exhibitions, research, publications, and a growing collection. SAF's education and public programmes focus on building recognition of the central role art can play in the life of a community by promoting public learning and a participatory approach to art.

For more information about SAF and its programmes, visit www.sharjahart.org.

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