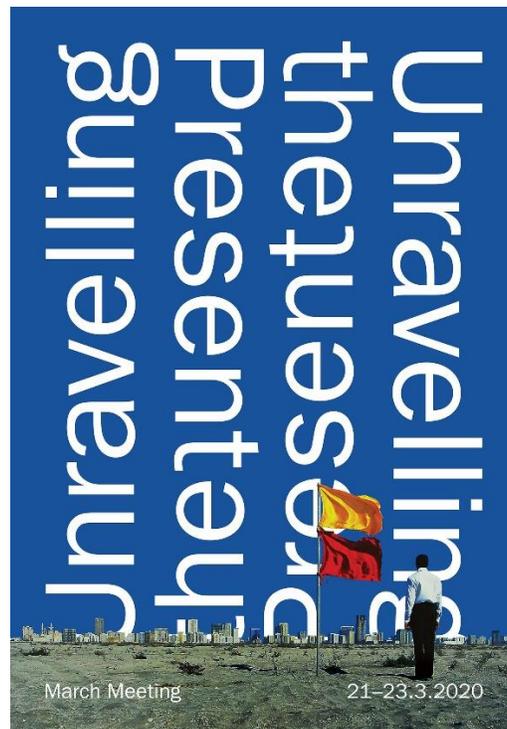




SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

For Immediate Release  
24 February 2020



## Sharjah Art Foundation's Annual March Meeting Returns from 21 to 23 March 2020

### Kicking off Sharjah Biennial 15, MM 2020: *Unravelling the Present* Examines the Evolution of the Sharjah Biennial and March Meeting

Sharjah Art Foundation's annual March Meeting (MM) returns from 21 to 23 March 2020, gathering leading artists, curators, and art practitioners from across the region and around the world for a series of talks, workshops and performances. The 2020 edition, titled *Unravelling the Present*, leads up to the 30th anniversary of the Sharjah Biennial in 2021 and is part of Sharjah Biennial 15: *Thinking Historically in the Present*, conceived by the late Okwui Enwezor.

March Meeting 2020 (MM 2020) will examine the history of the Sharjah Biennial and past March Meetings, bringing together former Biennial curators, participants and interlocutors, as well as art historians and critics to discuss the role of the Biennial as a catalyst for critical dialogue and transnational exchange. According



## SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

to Enwezor, the Sharjah Biennial is 'perceived as a module with which to deal with the disruptive power of artistic monolingualism.'

"Sharjah Art Foundation's annual March Meeting provides an opportunity for artists, curators and art practitioners from around the world to come together for reflection and to continue this ongoing dialogue on the most vital issues in contemporary art," said **Hoor Al Qasimi, Director of Sharjah Art Foundation**. "This year's edition is particularly special as we will be celebrating and examining the history of Sharjah Biennial and critical issues related to exhibition-making. We look forward to welcoming audiences and participants to be a part of this robust cultural exchange."

MM 2020 will also explore the evolution of the Biennial in its effort to break away from traditional modes of curating and displaying art and engaging with the public by activating non-institutional spaces and moving to non-geographic models of representation. Over the three days of the meeting, panels and roundtables will examine the 30-year history of the Sharjah Biennial as well as diverse issues around the MM 2020 theme. Crucially, MM 2020 will take a critical look at the reception, impact and relevance of the Sharjah Biennial in the regional and global contemporary art scenes. The proceedings of MM 2020 will be edited and published for the opening of Sharjah Biennial 15 in 2021.

MM 2020 speakers and participants include **Tarek Abou El Fetouh** (curator); **Thuraya Al-Baqsam** (artist, writer); **Mona Al Khaja** (artist); **Hisham Al Madhloum** (Chairman, Sharjah Arts Collection); **Noora Al Mualla** (Director of Learning and Research, Sharjah Art Foundation); **Hoor Al Qasimi** (President and Director, Sharjah Art Foundation); **Yousif Aydabi** (Cultural Advisor, Sheikh Dr Sultan Al Qasimi Centre); **Sammy Balaji** (artist); **Ute Meta Bauer** (Founding Director, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore and Professor, School of Art, Design and Media, NTU); **Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev** (Director, Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art and Director, Fondazione Francesco Federico Cerruti); **Lucrezia Cippitelli** (scholar, curator); **Iftikhar Dadi** (Associate Professor, History of Art and Director, South Asia Program, Cornell University); **Catherine David** (Deputy Director, National Museum of Modern Art, Centre Pompidou); **Manthia Diawara** (Professor, NYU, and filmmaker); **Ehab Ellaban** (Director, Center of Arts Cairo); **Reem Fadda** (Director, Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation); **Coco Fusco** (artist, writer and Professor, Cooper Union School of Art); **Thembinkosi Goniwe** (Assistant Professor of Art History, Rhodes University); **Hou Hanru** (Artistic Director, MAXXI); **Yuko Hasegawa** (curator); **Salah M. Hassan** (Director, The Africa Institute, Sharjah and Goldwin Smith Professor, Cornell University); **Geeta Kapur** (art critic, curator); **Mohammed Kazem** (artist); **Omar Kholeif** (Director of Collections and Senior Curator, Sharjah Art Foundation); **Vasif Kortun** (curator); **Arshiya Lokhandwala** (art historian, curator and Founder, Lakeeren Art Gallery); **Margarita González Lorente** (Vice Director, 13th edition of Havana Biennial and Curator, International Contemporary Art, National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana); **Amina Menia** (artist); **Otobong Nkanga** (artist); **Chika Okeke-Agulu** (Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Art & Archaeology, Princeton University); **Jack Persekian** (Director, Al Ma'amal Foundation); **Qudsia Rahim** (Executive Director, Lahore Biennale Foundation); **Enrique Rivera** (Director, Biennial of Media Arts of Santiago); **Nada Shabout** (Professor, Art History and Coordinator, Contemporary Arab and Muslim Cultural Studies Initiative, University of North Texas); **Suha Shoman** (Founder and Chair, Darat Al Funun, The Khalid Shoman Foundation); **Aisha Stoby** (curator/researcher); **Alia Swastika** (curator); **John Tain** (Head of Research, Asia Art Archive); **Christine Tohme** (Founding Director, Ashkal Alwan); **Françoise Vergès** (political scientist, curator, author); **Octavio Zaya** (Executive Director, Cuban Art Foundation), and **Tirdad Zolghadr** (Associate Curator, KW Institute for Contemporary Art and Artistic Director, Sommerakademie Paul Klee).

The programme will also include evening performances led by renowned artist and musician **Tarek Atoui**, as well as the announcement of this year's Production Programme grant cycle winners.



## SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

Coinciding with MM 2020, the exhibitions *Zarina Bhimji: Black Pocket* and *Tarek Atoui: Cycles in 11*, both curated by Sharjah Art Foundation Director Hoor Al Qasimi, and *Art in the Age of Anxiety*, curated by Sharjah Art Foundation Director of Collections and Senior Curator Omar Kholeif, will open on 21 March 2020. Special curator and artist-led tours of the exhibitions will take place throughout MM 2020.

MM2020 is free to attend. To register, [click here](#). For more information, visit [sharjahart.org](http://sharjahart.org).

--

### **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 organizations 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 centers. A growing collection reflects the foundation's support of contemporary artists in the realization 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 organizations, corporate sponsors and individual patrons. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

### **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 Mohammed 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.

### **Media Contact**

Alyazeyah Al Reyaysa  
+971(0)65444113  
[alyazeyah@sharjahart.org](mailto:alyazeyah@sharjahart.org)