

PRESS RELEASE

Abu Dhabi Art announces artists and curator selected for this year's *Beyond: Emerging Artists* programme

Curated this year by Lorenzo Fiaschi, Co-Founder of GALLERIA CONTINUA, the annual programme is designed to support emerging UAE artists, with three new commissions exhibited at the Fair

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Portrait of Lorenzo Fiaschi

Abu Dhabi, UAE, 04 November 2024: Abu Dhabi Art has announced details around its *Beyond: Emerging Artists* programme, which commissions new work by up-and-coming UAE-based artists each year. *Beyond: Emerging Artists 2024* will be curated by **Lorenzo Fiaschi**, Co-Founder of GALLERIA CONTINUA, who has selected the artists **Fatma Al Ali**, **Dina Nazmi Khorchid** and **Simrin Mehra Agarwal** to produce commissioned works to be exhibited at Abu Dhabi Art this year. The works will be on exhibition at Manarat Al Saadiyat from 20 – 24 November 2024, after which the exhibition will travel internationally to a new location.

Lorenzo Fiaschi, Curator for *Beyond: Emerging Artists 2024*, stated: "As we embark on this new journey with Abu Dhabi Art's *Beyond Emerging Artists* programme, we are excited

to contribute to the region's vibrant contemporary art scene. Celebrating 18 years of collaboration with Abu Dhabi Art, GALLERIA CONTINUA is eager to witness and support the dynamic evolution of the art world. We are committed to embracing diversity, which enriches our collective artistic experience. We look forward to guiding the selected artists—Dina Nazmi Khorchid, Simrin Mehra Agarwal, and Fatma Al Ali—and helping them develop exceptional projects of international calibre that showcase the creativity and potential of today's artistic landscape.”

The three selected artists were chosen from over 100 proposals reviewed by the Abu Dhabi Art organising committee and GALLERIA CONTINUA, and in consultation with **Friends of Abu Dhabi Art**, a group of individuals who are actively committed to supporting art and culture in the emirate and who support the *Beyond Emerging Artists* programme each year.

Abu Dhabi Art Director Dyala Nusseibeh commented: “During the selection process we were struck by how analytical and thoughtful each of the chosen proposals were, across diverse practices, unpicking issues that ranged from conflict and war to our relationship with the environment and the impact of colonialism on indigenous plant life in the Gulf. Together the commissioned artists navigate utopian or dystopian imagined landscapes, in often playful, often piercing ways, creating the space for new histories of the region to emerge.”

Participating artist **Simrin Mehra Agarwal** stated, “I am honoured and thrilled to be selected for *Beyond Emerging Artists 2024*. This platform will help me realise and showcase ambitious projects regionally and internationally, creating a niche in the global contemporary art world. I look forward to contributing to the UAE and Gulf art scene during this transformative time. With the support and guidance from GALLERIA CONTINUA, I anticipate expanding my practice and elevating my work. I am grateful to Abu Dhabi Art and GALLERIA CONTINUA for this incredible opportunity.”

Agarwal is a multidisciplinary artist based in Abu Dhabi. The commissioned installation for Abu Dhabi Art, titled *Subterraneous*, will be the outcome of her extensive research examining the war wrecks and artificial reefs of the UAE, conducted through field trips to dive sites several metres underwater. The monumental work encompassing mural, sculpture and video opens new perspectives and critically urgent dialogues, questioning our understanding of nature, and its various stages of bloom and decay within the context of histories of war, neglect, and contemporary issues of climate change. In the light of anthropogenic global warming and the accelerated extinction of species, the installation aims to inspire new possibilities for building worlds with the other-than-human in mind. The project seeks to create awareness and provoke thought about the destruction of natural resources and cultural heritage.



Portrait of Simrin Mehra Agarwal

Participating artist **Fatma Al Ali** commented: "I am thrilled to be selected for *Beyond Emerging Artists* and look forward to bringing my research to fruition by November. This platform will help share Emirati stories and history with a broader audience, preserving and celebrating our rich heritage. I am especially excited for the guidance and mentorship from Lorenzo Fiaschi and Salomé Zelic of GALLERIA CONTINUA, which will enhance the impact and appreciation of our cultural narrative."

Al Ali is a multidisciplinary artist whose diverse practice encompasses drawing, printmaking, video, sculpture, and installation. Inspired by an inquisitorial and academic archival approach, she delves into the realms of history, culture and sociology to inform her work. Al Ali's work is a reflection of her deep exploration of perception, materiality, memory, and societal constraints, all while challenging conventional notions of artmaking.

Her commissioned work for Abu Dhabi Art will explore the historical power dynamics that shaped Gulf societies including through use of archival documents and oral histories and with a focus on revealing how certain traditions, practices and knowledge have been altered over time, influencing our present-day understanding of the region.



Portrait of Fatma Al Ali

Participating artist **Dina Nazmi Khorchid** stated, "Working with GALLERIA CONTINUA is a tremendous honour. Having conversations with the curators, their expertise and support, along with a platform to bring my work home and exhibit at Abu Dhabi Art, will do wonders for my artistic development."

Khorchid is a visual artist who works primarily with printed and woven textiles. Her work constructs narratives of place and connections to lost bodies, through mark-making, photography and material studies, that manifest as textiles and works on paper. She explores themes of identity and geo-politics, grief, land and memory access. Khorchid completed a Master of Fine Arts in Textiles at the Rhode Island School of Design (2023) and has had her work showcased in the UAE, USA, Tunisia and Lebanon.



Portrait of Dina Nazmi Khorchid

Her commissioned piece will build on *Land, Untitled*, an ongoing body of work, continuing her quest for a place of rooting and rebuilding aspects of memory. The work gestures toward personal and national narratives through metaphor, drawing on nature to explore the complexities of human emotions and politics.

The large-scale textile-based installation created for Abu Dhabi Art will resemble a curtain or barrier, portraying a non-place-specific landscape of unnatural colour and brush strokes, featuring inverted and abstracted trees that are standing firmly in the ground, yet fleeting in water, in a haunting immersive atmosphere. Creating an interpretation of statelessness and transiency, the installation alludes to a search for belonging, an unvisited yet familiar place of solitude, wander and emotional rest.

Through the *Beyond Emerging Artists* programme, Abu Dhabi Art is committed to supporting emerging local artists in the development of their work. The support offered by Abu Dhabi Art for selected artists includes critical feedback and dialogue with the appointed guest curator each year alongside financial support in covering the costs of artwork production fees, materials, time, travel and research, to enable the artists to create new works. Abu Dhabi Art brings recognition for their ambitious art projects through exhibiting the works to visitors at the Abu Dhabi Art fair as well as abroad afterwards each year.

Taking place from 20 – 24 November 2024, Abu Dhabi Art returns to Manarat Al Saadiyat for its 16th edition this year, bringing together a number of galleries and artists from across the world. As part of its year-round programming, Abu Dhabi Art exhibitions that have already commenced in 2024 include the exhibition of the 2023 *Beyond Emerging Artists* held at Marignana Arte in Venice, Italy from 16 April – 15 May 2024 and the ongoing exhibition of their works and Gateway: Maqam which presents a mid-career survey show for Hashel Al Lamki in Durbar Hall, Kochi, India from 26 July 2024 – 18 August 2024.

This programme is now sponsored by Abu Dhabi Art's Global Partner HSBC.

For more information on Abu Dhabi Art 2024 and its year-round programmes, visit abudhabiart.ae and follow Abu Dhabi Art on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

About Lorenzo Fiaschi

Lorenzo Fiaschi is a co-founder and director of GALLERIA CONTINUA, which began in San Gimignano, Italy, in 1990, and now operates globally, including in Paris, Cuba, China, São Paulo, and Dubai. Established by Fiaschi, Mario Cristiani, and Maurizio Rigillo, the gallery has built a reputation for showcasing contemporary art in unexpected locations, bridging rural and urban, historical and modern, and local and global contexts. GALLERIA CONTINUA is known for its commitment to generosity and altruism, fostering dialogue between diverse artistic practices and geographies.

About Fatma Al Ali

Fatma Al Ali (b. 1994, UAE) is a multidisciplinary artist working in drawing, printmaking, video, sculpture, and installation. Her practice, informed by history and Gulf cultural sociology, explores themes of perception, materiality, memory, and societal constraints. Al Ali holds a bachelor's in fine arts from the University of Sharjah (2018) and was a Salama Bint Hamdan Emerging Artist Fellow (2019) in collaboration with Rhode Island School of Design. Her work has been featured in exhibitions such as The Nest Festival in Bahrain (2024) and the Dubai Calligraphy Biennial (2023). She currently resides in Sharjah.

About Simrin Mehra Agarwal

Simrin Mehra Agarwal is a multidisciplinary artist based in Abu Dhabi whose work explores nature through the lenses of war, neglect, and climate change. She holds an MFA and BFA with Distinction from the University of Delhi and further studied at Central Saint Martins, London. Her accolades include being a finalist for the Louvre Abu Dhabi Richard Mille Art Prize (2022) and winner of the Ras-Al-Khaimah Fine Arts Festival Award (2023). She has exhibited widely, including at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Tate Modern, and Sharjah Art Museum, and participated in major art fairs like Art Dubai and India Art Fair. Simrin's work is part of notable collections, including the Abu Dhabi Executive Office.

About Dina Khorchid

Dina Nazmi Khorchid (b. 1987, Kuwait) is a visual artist specializing in printed and woven textiles. Her work explores themes of identity, geo-politics, and memory, reflecting her experiences as a Palestinian artist and daughter of a Gulf War casualty. Dina holds an MFA in Textiles from the Rhode Island School of Design (2023) and a BFA in Visual Communication from the American University of Sharjah (2009). Her work has been exhibited in the UAE, USA, Lebanon, and Tunisia, including at Art Dubai and Tashkeel. She has been an artist-in-residence at Texere (Mexico, Feb 2024) and Vermont Studio Center (USA, Sept 2023), and has received fellowships from Ashkal Alwan (Lebanon) and the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Emerging Artists Fellowship (UAE).

About Abu Dhabi Art

Abu Dhabi Art expands beyond the notion of a traditional art fair, in placing strong emphasis on a diverse public engagement programme, including art installations and exhibitions, talks and events that take place in different locations throughout the year. The culmination of this year-long programme is the Abu Dhabi Art event in November, which provides an important sales platform for participating galleries whilst also offering these galleries an opportunity to showcase ambitious installations and site-specific works by their artists to a wide audience. abudhabiart.ae

About the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi:

The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) drives the sustainable growth of Abu Dhabi's culture and tourism sectors and its creative industries, fuelling economic progress and helping to achieve Abu Dhabi's wider global ambitions.

By working in partnership with the organisations that define the emirate's position as a leading international destination, DCT Abu Dhabi strives to unite the ecosystem around a shared vision of the emirate's potential, coordinate effort and investment, deliver innovative solutions, and use the best tools, policies and systems to support the culture and tourism.

DCT Abu Dhabi's vision is defined by the emirate's people, heritage and landscape. We work to enhance Abu Dhabi's status as a place of authenticity, innovation, and unparalleled experiences, represented by its living traditions of hospitality, pioneering initiatives and creative thought.