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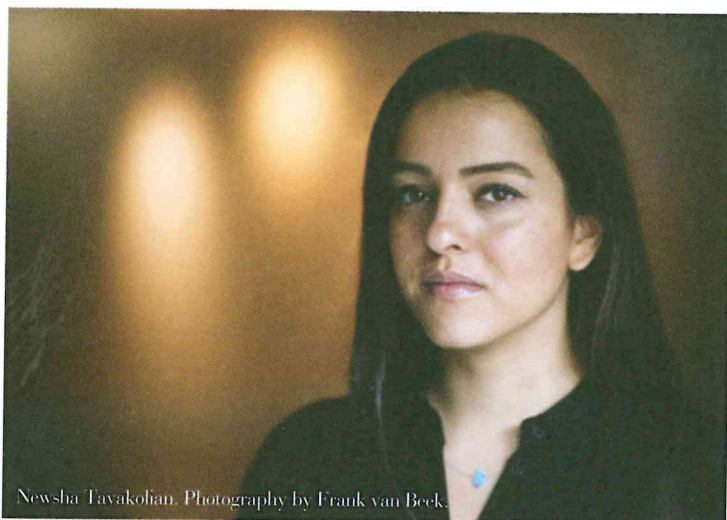
ART AND CULTURE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARAB WORLD

YEAR IN REVIEW
2015

DECEMBER

NEWSHA TAVAKOLIAN

Iranian photographer Newsha Tavakolian was honoured as the principal Prince Claus Awardee on 2 December among an additional 10 artists and cultural role models. Presented her award in the presence of the Dutch Royal Family at the Royal Palace Amsterdam, Tavakolian's works will be on display at the Prince Claus Fund Gallery in Amsterdam until 4 March 2016. Tavakolian has been chosen alongside other laureates including Iraqi photographer Latif Al-Ani, Syrian filmmaker ossama Mohammed and artists and creators from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Cameroon, Argentina/Chie, Albania, Kazakhstan and Senegal. Tavakolian was also one of six laureates for the Foundation Carmignac Award, with works on display at a retrospective exhibition at London's Saatchi Gallery. Founded in 2009, the Carmignac Photojournalism Award seeks to support photographers who visit areas of the world at the centre of geostrategic conflicts, with a focus on 'emphatic global concern'.



Newsha Tavakolian. Photography by Frank van Beck.

2015

ZAHA HADID CONTINUES STRONG

In 2015 Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid received multiple accolades for her work and contributions to architecture. On 4 June the AJ120 survey announced Zaha Hadid Architects the International Practice of the Year 2015. Later that month, on 23 June it was announced that Hadid had been presented with the Gold Medal for Services to the Republic of Austria by Culture Minister Josef Ostermayer, marking her 15 years of teaching at the Universität für angewandte Kunst in Vienna. Hadid has completed three seminal projects in Austria, including the 90-metre Bergisel Ski Jump in Innsbruck. 7 July saw Hadid being honoured as 'New Londoner of the Year' at the London Architecture Awards at Guildhall in the City, for her contributions to London's design industry. "My own work developed entirely because I live in London," explained Hadid, who moved to the British capital 43 years ago. "The city has traditionally given a platform to those from around the world who want to research and innovate."

On 21 September, Hadid was bestowed the Louise Blouin Foundation Award, recognising creative leadership and excellence for work that has had 'a positive social and political impact' locally and globally. The Award was presented at the 2015 Blouin Creative Leadership Summit in New York. Three days later, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) announced Dame Hadid would receive the 2016 Royal Gold Medal, marking her lifetime's achievements and also making her the first woman to be awarded the honour. "We now see more established female architects all the time," remarked Hadid, of the honour. "That doesn't mean it's easy. Sometimes the challenges are immense. There has been tremendous change over recent years and we will continue this progress."



Dame Zaha Hadid. Photography by Mary McCartney.

DECEMBER

INAUGURAL NEST PRIZE IN BAHRAIN

Under the patronage of HE Sheikh Rashid Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa, founder of ArtBahrain, Al Riwaq Art Space announced the first ArtBahrain/The Nest Annual Art Prize. The joint initiative seeks to offer 'a new opportunity to discover and nurture local talent', by inviting emerging artists to submit artwork proposals in any media. The winner was announced on 2 December as Yousif Abdulghani for his work *Bench Harmony* and awarded a cash prize of \$1300 (BD 500) along with an exhibition of his artwork at The Nest and an international residency. Second place went to Basma Ajoor for *Digital Detox* who received \$660 (BD 250) and an exhibition of her work, also at The Nest. Originally designed to have two winners, judges were so delighted with the standard of entries that a special third prize went to Samar Ali Merza Meshaima's *Super Mario ME*.

DECEMBER

THE VINCENT AWARD SHORTLIST

On 11 December, the shortlisted artists for The Vincent Award 2016 were announced as Nairy Baghramian (Iran, lives and works in Berlin), Manon de Boer (Netherlands, lives and works in Brussels), Joao Maria Gusmao + Pedro Paiva (Portugal), Jutta Noether (Germany) and Slavs and Tatars (established in Eurasia, based in Berlin). "From Portugal to beyond the Balkans," commented Benno Temple, director of the Gemeentemuseum Den Haag and chairman of the jury. "The work of this amazing group of artists shows the breadth and richness of contemporary art in Europe today." The Vincent Van Gogh Biennial Award for Contemporary Art in Europe (known more commonly as 'The Vincent Award') is awarded to mid-career artists who live and/or work in Europe and whose work is regarded as influential on international developments in Contemporary art. The works will be exhibited on 24 September, and the winner announced on 17 November 2016.