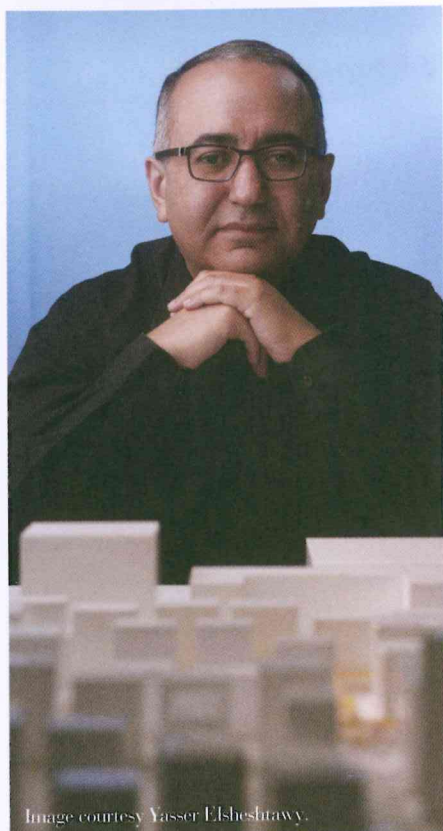


canvas

ART AND CULTURE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARAB WORLD

YEAR IN REVIEW
2015

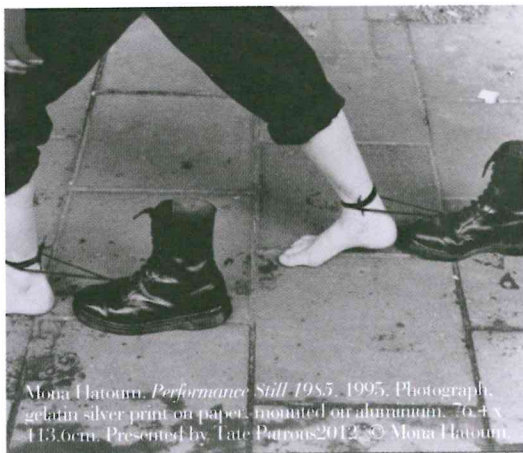


The UAE will make its second appearance at the 2016 Venice International Architecture Biennale. Paolo Barrata, chair of the event, announced the appointment of Chilean architect Alejandro Aravena as curator of the 2016 edition, under the theme *Reporting From The Front*. The biennale will revolve around architecture that makes a positive difference, improving the quality of the environment and, thereby, the quality of life of its inhabitants, a notion inspired by Aravena's work with social housing and community development.

The UAE Pavilion, under the curation of Yasser Elsheshtawy, has been commissioned by the Salama Bint Hamdan Al-Nahyan Foundation and is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development. "We would like to present an architectural and urban landscape that goes beyond the iconic and spectacular," says Elsheshtawy. "Instead, the focus will be on architecture that is a response to the need of its inhabitants, in order to demonstrate that there is an active architectural culture in the UAE that can offer positive lessons to the rest of the world and make a contribution to contemporary architectural discourse. We are attempting to move away from representation depictions – which have typically focused on history – towards a more contemporary expression."

To further encourage arts education, applications for the 2016 Venice Internship programme (which runs for the entirety of the exhibition) are now invited from Emiratis and long-term residents aged 21 and over. The internship includes a one-month stay in Venice, where those selected will act as custodians and docents of the UAE Pavilion to help them acquire first-hand managing experience.

2016 will mark the first London-based survey of work by Lebanese-born Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum at Tate Modern from 4 May–21 August 2016. The exhibition will include over 100 works, from performance to works on paper spanning 35 years of practice that captures Hatoum's political and aesthetic concerns.



Mona Hatoum, *Performance Still* 1985, 1995. Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper, mounted on aluminium. 70.4 x 113.0cm. Presented by: Tate Patrons 2012. © Mona Hatoum

Gallery Ward (Dubai/Riyadh/Cairo), which emphasises Contemporary Egyptian art, will reopen in Dubai's d3 in early 2016. The new gallery venue, previously in Al-Quoz, will include a space permanently dedicated to displaying innovative concepts alongside temporary exhibitions.

In early December a new London gallery, Sophia Contemporary Gallery was announced that will showcase Middle Eastern and Iranian art alongside Western work. Founded by Vassili Tsarenkov, Lali Marganiya and Lili Jassemi, the inaugural exhibition will feature Reza Derakshani from 9 March–23 April 2016.

The works of late Iranian artist Farideh Lashai will be presented as a retrospective exhibition at the Sharjah Art Foundation from 12 March–12 June 2016.

The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA) announced that from 7 March–13 May 2016 it will present a solo exhibition for Belgian artist Wim Delvoye. Organised by Vida Zaim and Leila Varasteh, this will mark the first time the institution will completely hand over its space to a non-Iranian artist. Delvoye has made efforts to respect Iran's culture and will omit works that may be deemed insensitive, such as a sculpture with bare shoulders.



Wim Delvoye, *Rimowa Classic Flight Multiwheel* 971.63.00.4. 2014. Embossed Aluminium. 71 x 47 x 25.5 cm. Image courtesy Leila Heller Gallery, New York/Dubai.