

**Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale announces  
participating artists for its inaugural edition**

*11 December 2021 – 11 March 2022*

*“Feeling the Stones”*

*Curated by Philip Tinari*



Maha Malluh, *Food for Thought “WORLD MAP”*, 2021 © Diriyah Biennale Foundation and the artist

*Diriyah Biennale Foundation (DBF), a platform for global dialogue and exchange, announces participating artists for the inaugural edition of Saudi Arabia’s first contemporary art biennale*

**Diriyah, Saudi Arabia, 13 October 2021: Diriyah Biennale Foundation (DBF)**, is delighted to announce the artists that will be participating in Saudi Arabia’s first contemporary art biennale, to be held from 11 December 2021 through 11 March 2022 in the JAX district of Diriyah, just outside of Riyadh.

Developed by a team of international curators led by Philip Tinari (Director and Chief Executive of UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, China) the Biennale will unfold in six sections, with works from national and international artists examining the theme “Feeling the Stones” and engaging visitors in a dialogue around contemporary art.

Commenting on the selection of artists, **Aya Al-Bakree, CEO of the Diriyah Biennale Foundation**, said, “As the Foundation prepares to open the first contemporary art biennale organized, conceived and hosted in Saudi Arabia, the selection of artists is emblematic of our commitment - to showcase Saudi artists in dialogue with leading artists from around the world. We see the development of cultural exchange and international dialogue in contemporary art as a crucial element in enhancing the cultural infrastructure in this country and look forward to welcoming artists and audiences alike to Diriyah.”

Curator **Philip Tinari, Director and Chief Executive of UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, China**, added: “The Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale presents an unprecedented opportunity for the wide audiences in Saudi Arabia to experience global contemporary art. Inspired by the notion of ‘Crossing the river by feeling the stones,’ the exhibition explores how social transformation happens in a way that is iterative yet directional, experimental yet pragmatic. We have chosen to focus on major projects by Saudi and international artists, including more than thirty site-specific commissions. We hope that viewers will come away with a heightened sense of enquiry and exploration, having made

new connections between the dynamic art scene now emerging in Saudi Arabia and positions from around the world.”

Established in 2020 with the support of the Saudi Ministry of Culture, the Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale will be the Kingdom’s first international contemporary art biennale, providing a platform for discovery, connection and dialogue. Details of the public programming and the opening symposium will be published in due course.

The list of artists participating includes, in alphabetical order by surname;

Omar Abduljawad (Saudi Arabia, 1989)	William Kentridge (South Africa, 1955)
Hmoud Al Attawi (Saudi Arabia, 1986)	Wolfgang Laib (Germany, 1950)
Manal AlDowayan (Saudi Arabia, 1973)	Lei Lei & Chai Mi (China, 1985)
Sarah Abu Abdallah (Saudi Arabia, 1990) & Ghada Alhassan (Saudi Arabia, 1970)	Lawrence Lek (Germany, 1982)
Fahad Al Hejailan (Saudi Arabia, 1957-2018)	Richard Long (United Kingdom, 1945)
Lulwah Al-Homoud (Saudi Arabia, 1967)	Maha Malluh (Saudi Arabia, 1959)
Mahdi Al Jeraibi (Saudi Arabia, 1969)	Bricklab (Saudi Arabia, est 2015) & Mammafotogramma (Italy, est 2008)
Abdullah AlOthman (Saudi Arabia, 1985)	Ahmed Mater (Saudi Arabia, 1979)
Monira Al Qadiri (Kuwait, 1983)	Mohamed Melehi (Morocco, 1936-2020)
Daniah Al Saleh (Saudi Arabia, 1970)	Sarah Morris (United States, 1967)
Mohammed Al Saleem (Saudi Arabia, 1939- 1997)	Munira Mosli (Saudi Arabia, 1954 - 2019)
Shadia Alem (Saudi Arabia, 1960)	Peter Mulindwa (Uganda, 1943)
Zahrah Al Ghamdi (Saudi Arabia, 1977)	Nabuqi (China, 1984)
Marwah AlMugait (Saudi Arabia, 1981)	Filwa Nazer (Saudi Arabia, 1972)
Jowhara AlSaud (Saudi Arabia, 1978)	Geof Oppenheimer (United States, 1973)
Rashed AlShashai (Saudi Arabia, 1977)	Miguel Angel Payano Jr. (United States, 1980)
Dana Awartani (Saudi Arabia - Palestine, 1987)	Faisal Samra (Saudi Arabia, 1956)
Larry Bell (United States, 1939)	Shao Fan (China, 1964)
Sultan Bin Fahad (Saudi Arabia, 1971)	Muhannad Shono (Saudi Arabia, 1977)
Birdhead (China, est 2004)	Timur Si-Qin (Germany, 1984)
Sarah Brahim (Saudi Arabia, 1992)	Tavares Strachan (Bahamas, 1979)
Colin Chinnery (United Kingdom, 1971)	Superstudio (Italy, est 1966)
Ayman Yossri Daydban (Palestine - Jordan, 1966)	Koki Tanaka (Japan, 1975)
Simon Denny (New Zealand, 1982)	Wang Luyan (China, 1956)
Ibrahim El Dessouki (Egypt, 1969)	Wang Sishun (China, 1979)
Osama Esid (Syria, 1970)	Wang Yuping (China, 1962)
Morris Foit (Kenya, 1940)	Andro Wekua (Georgia, 1977)
John Gerrard (Ireland, 1974)	Xu Bing (China, 1955)
Abdullah Hammas (Saudi Arabia, 1953)	Yukinori Yanagi (Japan, 1959)
Han Mengyun (China, 1989)	Ayman Zedani (Saudi Arabia, 1984)
Huang Rui (China, 1952)	Zhang Peili (China, 1957)
	Zheng Yuan (China, 1988)
	Zou Zhao (Singapore, 1989)



For the latest updates on the Diriyah Biennale, including artists, events and programming, follow Diriyah Biennale Foundation on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram @biennale\\_sa](#) join our conversation.  
#DiriyahContemporaryArtBiennale #DiriyahBiennale #DiriyahBiennaleFoundation

END

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**Notes to Editors:**

**ABOUT DIRIYAH BIENNALE FOUNDATION**

Inspired by the changes taking place in Saudi Arabia and the heritage site of Diriyah, the Diriyah Biennale Foundation assumes a critical role in nurturing creative expression and instilling an appreciation for culture, the arts, and their transformative potential. The Foundation aspires to be a catalyst for lifelong learning and serves Saudi Arabia's communities by offering opportunities to engage with the burgeoning local art scene. At this historic moment of evolution and growth in Saudi Arabia, these Biennales will showcase some of the world's leading artists, drive cultural exchange between the Kingdom and international communities, promote dialogue and understanding, and further establish Saudi Arabia as an important cultural center.

Established in 2020 by the Saudi Ministry of Culture, the Diriyah Biennale Foundation will organize Saudi Arabia's first-ever art biennale, the Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale, held from December 2021 to March 2022 in the JAX district of Diriyah; and a second biennale in 2022 will be focused on Islamic arts. The Contemporary Art Biennale will be one of Saudi Arabia's largest and most significant international displays of contemporary art to date, providing a platform for discovery and connection to Saudi Arabia's burgeoning cultural scene and creative communities.

**ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

The Ministry of Culture is leading a cultural transformation to develop a rich ecosystem that nurtures creativity, unlocks the economic potential of the sector and unleashes new and inspiring forms of expression. As part of these efforts, the Ministry of Culture is seeking to bolster the presence of Saudi heritage and culture at events across the Kingdom and abroad, enabling participants to engage with the Kingdom's rich and diverse history and preserve Saudi heritage for generations to come.

**ABOUT UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, China**

UCCA Center for Contemporary Art is China's leading contemporary art institution. Committed to the belief that art can deepen lives and transcend boundaries, UCCA presents a wide range of exhibitions, public programs, and research initiatives to a public of more than one million visitors

each year. UCCA Beijing sits at the heart of the 798 Art District, occupying 10,000 square meters of factory chambers built in 1957 and regenerated in 2019 by OMA. UCCA Dune, designed by Open Architecture, lies beneath the sand in the seaside enclave of Aranya in Beidaihe. UCCA Edge, designed by architecture firm SO – IL, opened in Shanghai in May 2021. Formally accredited as a museum by the Beijing Cultural Bureau in 2018, UCCA also operates non-profit foundations, licensed by the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs and the Hong Kong government. UCCA’s commercial ventures include the retail platform UCCA Store, the children’s education initiative UCCA Kids, and collaborations and projects under the rubric UCCA Lab. Opened in 2007 and revived by a committed group of Chinese and international patrons in 2017, UCCA works to bring China into global dialogue through contemporary art.

### **ABOUT JAX**

JAX is a refurbished estate comprising of over 100 warehouses in the area of Diriyah, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Culture of Saudi Arabia has initiated the regeneration of JAX for it to become the new reference arts and culture district for the country, with lineups of exhibition spaces, artist studios, art galleries, facilities and platforms.

JAX hosts local and international institutions, businesses, programs and galleries that can promote cultural exchanges and help artists produce works that can be showcased throughout the spaces.