



**54th Venice Biennale 2011
Special Features**

United Arab Emirates

March, 2011



Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, installation, including engravings on rocks, drawings, objects, etc, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

Second Time Around

Artists:

Reem Al Ghaith

* 1985 Dubai, UAE; lives there.

Lateefa bint Maktoum

* 1985 Dubai, UAE; lives there.

Abdullah Al Saadi

* 1967 Khorfakkan, UAE; lives there.

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Curator: Vasif Kortun

Writer, curator and educator. * 1958. Lives in Istanbul, Turkey.

Commissioner: Dr. Lamees Hamdan

Member of the Board of Directors of the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority.



Reem Al Ghaith, Dubai What's Left of My Land. 2011, installation, mixed media, 8 x 8 m, in the background the artist being interviewed, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

The title of the exhibition for this year's UAE Pavilion is "Second Time Around". It refers to the UAE's debut appearance at the biennial in 2009. A newcomer to the Venice Biennale, the UAE Pavilion found itself in a position of answering demands and curiosities to which it addressed brilliantly with its cheerful self-criticality and artistic strength. The second Pavilion is in turn a sign of slowly coming of age. The title "Second Time Around" is in fact purposefully modest and refers to the barebones of the exhibition. The same attitude adopted while choosing the title is echoed in the approach to the exhibition.

Kortun elaborated, "The nascent art scene developing throughout the UAE and the effects of a vertical urbanization that every citizen has to answer day in and day out constituted the rapid transformation of the nation. Likewise, the UAE artists were early on called upon to perform the role of chroniclers and represent the burdens of this sea change but are now negotiating and processing the complexities of what is becoming a predominantly visual culture".

"No longer contextualized in what have become the absolute clichés of the international reception of the UAE, the UAE Pavilion for 2011 does not aim to treat the exhibition as

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curatorial conceit; but rather chooses to realize the theoretical foundation in the immanence of the works in the exhibition," Kortun notes. "The Pavilion will not be 'curated' around concepts but around artistic positions, as if three independent projects form a coherent exhibition structure pivoting around the works of three artists, Reem Al Ghaith, Abdullah Al Saadi and Lateefa bint Maktoum." "Second Time Around", gently underscores the individuated sophistication of artists from the UAE the three of whom are in the Biennial.

The architecture firm Superpool has been selected to create the scenography of the UAE Pavilion exhibition. Superpool has recently completed Mapping Istanbul, a book commissioned by Garanti Gallery with nearly a hundred maps and information graphics.

Mobius Design Studio, which was founded in 2010 by a group of female designers from different parts of the Middle East, will create the graphic elements of the exhibition.
(From a press release, March 2011)

Organizer:
National Pavilion UAE,
la Biennale di Venezia
PO Box 62086
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



Lateefa bint Maktoum, view of her presentation, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

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The Pavilion of the UAE at the Arsenale, in front, the works of Abdullah Al Saadi, © Photo: Courtesy of the organizers



Lateefa bint Maktoum, view of her presentation, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

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Lateefa bint Maktoum, *The Last Look*. 2009, photo montage on archival paper, 219 x 148 cm, © Photo: Courtesy of Lateefa bint Maktoum



Reem Al Ghaith, *Dubai What's Left of My Land*. 2011, installation, mixed media, 8 x 8 m, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

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Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, engravings on rocks, © Photo: Haupt & Binder



Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, engravings on rocks, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

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Abdullah Al Saadi, the artist in front of his drawings, © Photo: Haupt & Binder



Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, drawings, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

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Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, drawings, © Photo: Haupt & Binder



Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, installation, objects, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

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Abdullah Al Saadi, Naked Sweet Potato. 2000 – 2010, part of the installation, © Photo: Haupt & Binder

<http://u-in-u.com/en/venice-biennale/2011/tour/uae/>