

LAST CHANCE Hassan Sharif: I Am The Single Work Artist

September, 2017



This looks sure to be one of the highlights of the UAE's art season – a landmark retrospective for one of the pioneers of conceptual art and experimental practice in the Middle East, covering Sharif's diverse body of work from the early 1970s to his untimely death in 2016. The exhibition will encompass Sharif's early newspaper caricature and comic strip drawings, 'semi-system' works, performances, paintings and 'urban archeology' objects, plus artworks specifically commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation.

This retrospective is the culmination of Sharif's long and storied history with the Emirate of Sharjah, where he first began staging interventions and exhibitions of contemporary art when he returned to the UAE after graduating from the Byam Shaw School of Art in London in 1984. Moving between roles as an artist, educator, critic and writer, Sharif not only sought to

encourage Emirati audiences to engage with contemporary art in exhibitions but also on the page, through his Arabic translations of historical art texts and manifestos. His CV also includes the founding or co-founding of the Emirates Fine Arts Society, Sharjah (1980); Al Mareija Art Atelier, Sharjah (1984); Art Atelier in the Youth Theatre and Arts, Dubai (1987); and The Flying House, Dubai (2007).

His work is part of the collections at the Sharjah Art Museum and Barjeel Art Foundation in Sharjah; the Centre Georges Pompidou and Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha; and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi; He has been widely shown, most recently in the UAE as part of the group exhibitions *The Creative Act: Performance – Process – Presence* (Manarat al Saadiyat, 2017); *But We Cannot See Them: Tracing a UAE Art Community 1988-2008* (NYUAD Art Gallery, 2017); *Is Old Gold?* (Ductac, 2017); and *do it* (SAF, 2016) – not to mention eight Sharjah Biennials since 1993, most recently in Sharjah Biennial 12 (2015).

This exhibition is curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, director of the Sharjah Art Foundation.