

# Venice Biennale and the Arab World

## PRESENTATION

Venice Ca' Foscari 19-20 October 2017



Università  
Ca' Foscari  
Venezia

Dipartimento di Studi  
sull'Asia e sull'Africa  
Mediterranea



بركات  
BARAKAT

In the last decades, the **artistic scene of the Arab world** has been characterised by an increasing **dynamism**. The establishment of galleries and museums of modern and contemporary art, the organization of courses at university level and the presence in the international art market of a growing number of artists from the Arab world are witnesses to this trend. Through the years, Venice and the Biennale have become engaged in **promoting the art of the Arab world** and in providing fertile ground for the growth of new theories and practices and the establishment of cultural exchanges. The presence of **national pavilions** from Arab countries at the **Venice Biennale**, however, is **still limited**, perhaps as a consequence of the deep political and economic crisis that some of them have been experiencing in recent times.

By taking into account this dichotomy, the aim of the conference is to bring into **focus** some of the key features of the **Arab artistic scene** both in the dynamic international **context of the Venice Biennale** and the **academic world**. This 2-day conference wants to investigate where contemporary art from the Arab world is heading to and the role played by Venice as a long-term showcase for the international art scene.

Placing the Biennale at centre-stage and taking the artworks and installations of artists from the Arab world as a source of inspiration, the purpose of the conference is to create an **intellectual platform** which would bring together **academics, artists and professionals** actively engaged in the field of Modern and Contemporary Art in the Arab world. The conference will take place in Venice, a city whose past has been deeply intertwined with the commercial and cultural history of the Arab world and whose present, and we believe the future, still are.

### Topics addressed by the conference

- Collecting Arab art;
- Critical analysis of artworks by a single artist and/or a group of artists;
- Artistic movements in the Arab world;
- Modern Art at the Biennale;
- Art and politics, the impact and limitation of politics on art and vice versa;
- Arab women artists and the international scene;
- A glance to the artistic production of the neighbouring countries: Iran, Turkey and others;
- Interrelations between the Arab artistic scene, Venice and the Biennale;
- The future of Arab art at the Biennale and in the international scene

The conference is promoted by the **Ca' Foscari University of Venice**, Department of Asian and North African Studies, CEM (Centro Studi Medio Oriente Contemporaneo), with the Department of Humanities

**Organisers:** Cristina Tonghini, Roberta Marin

### Scientific committee

Stefano Carboni (Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth), Tamara Chalabi (Ruya Foundation), Melanie Gibson (New College of the Humanities, London), Giuseppe Moscatello (Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah), Silvia Naef (University of Geneva), Stefania Portinari (Ca' Foscari University, Venice), Nicola Stringa (Ca' Foscari University, Venice)

Email address: [venicebiennale.arabworld@unive.it](mailto:venicebiennale.arabworld@unive.it)