

Opening Hours: Saturday to Thursday: 9am to 9pm
Friday: 3pm – 9pm

Director: Hoor Al Qasimi - **Artistic Director:** Jack Persekian
Curators: Mohammed Kazem, Eva Scharrer, Jonathan Watkins

Programme: exhibitions; outdoor installations and performances; symposium in collaboration with RSA (London), *Latitudes* (Barcelona) and the American University of Sharjah; film programme curated by Mark Nash; Sharjah Biennial Art Prizes; UNESCO's Prize for the Promotion of the Arts and the Young Digital Creator Award; catalogue edited by Serene Huleileh.

The SB8's theme proposes art as a way of creating a better understanding about our relationship with nature and the environment, whilst considering its social, political and cultural dimensions in an interdisciplinary way. Aware of the critical ambiguity of its topic and its potentially controversial dimension, SB8 will attempt to explore the renewed role of contemporary art as a vanguard force, which could invoke active dialogues about possible future sustainable scenarios. SB8 will present various attempts in visual art, performance and film that address the growing social, political and environmental challenges that the world is facing due to excessive urban development, pollution, political ambition, and the thoughtless misuse, abuse and exhaustion of our natural resources. SB8 will not only be a platform for presentations, exhibitions and discussions related to these issues, but will also take an active role in commissioning artists to produce new work addressing the topic at hand, and will partner with various organisations to stimulate wider involvement with these concerns, particularly amongst educational institutions. The biennial will attempt to contaminate rather than insulate and to merge together art, society, and environmental issues, in order to implicate all sectors of society into questioning our social, political, and ecological praxis.

Venues

Sharjah Art Museum which comprises a total area of 17,200m² and is part of the Sharjah Art Area is situated in the historical section of the city. The Museum was launched in 1995, and has since hosted hundreds of projects and exhibitions, including the Sharjah Biennial and the Sharjah International Arabic Calligraphy Biennial. Its art collection includes works from 18th century orientalist to contemporary Arabic and international artists. The Museum has a publishing programme, two art libraries, a cafeteria and a shop.

Contact: Sharjah Art Museum
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Expo Center was established in 1977, and was taken over by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1991. Located on the road linking Sharjah to Dubai, the Expo Center hosts over 20 exhibitions per year including country-specific and specialised international trade fairs. The hall which will house part of the Sharjah Biennial exhibition is a flexible space of approximately 4,000m². In addition, several installations will be positioned outside the Expo Centre.

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Sharjah Heritage Area: a recently renovated complex of historical buildings in the local style of architecture, housing several archaeological and ethnographic museums in addition to centres for crafts and theatre and the headquarters of the Emirates Fine Arts Society. Several artists will present new work commissioned by the Sharjah Biennial 8, and specifically created for this area.

Khaled Lagoon: Artificial lagoon located in the centre of the city, and which will play host to an installation on a small island in the middle of it. Audiences will be able to access the island by boat.

Other venues will also extend to various outdoor spaces and locations such as a school, a cinema, and outdoor urban and natural sites.

The Sharjah Biennial was initiated in 1993 and is produced by the Department of Culture and Information of the Emirate of Sharjah. It occupies a key regional position, in the production and presentation of art and in fostering experimentation. The Biennial strives to encourage collaboration between artists, art institutions and organisations locally, regionally and internationally, and to promote cross cultural exchange. It also produces a large number of works many of which are site-specific and specially created for Sharjah.