



*For immediate release*

## **Art Jameel announces a new commission for digital art, inviting artists from across the Middle East and beyond to apply via an Open Call**

- **The third edition of Art Jameel’s multi-year commissions programme calls for proposals that create interactive experiences that engage with global audiences online**
- **In addition to awarding a monetary prize, Art Jameel will support the production and promotion of the winning artwork**
- **Artists are invited to propose a digital project or artwork that engages with the theme of Time; applications are due by June 10, 2020**
- **Art Jameel Commissions follows a multi-year cycle: the first edition focused on Sculpture (2018) and the second on Arts Writing and Research (2019); the originally scheduled third edition, devoted to Drawing and Painting, will move to 2021**
- **The 2020 commission and its particular theme is part of a broader rapid-response programme, initiated in the wake of the global health crisis, that provides support for practitioners and digital experiences for audiences**

**Dubai, United Arab Emirates | April 13, 2020 – [Art Jameel](#)**, an independent, international organisation that supports arts, education and heritage in the Middle East, today announces an Open Call for proposals to **Art Jameel Commissions: Digital**. Responding to unprecedented global events, the third cycle of Art Jameel’s multi-year commissioning programme has been adjusted and expanded to include a new iteration designed for maximum audience engagement, regardless of location. The 2020 commission also provides an opportunity for mentoring by technical experts from MIT’s Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab (J-WEL).

[Art Jameel Commissions](#) is an annual, multi-year programme, foundational to the programming of the [Jameel Arts Centre](#), Dubai’s contemporary arts institution and a hub for exhibitions, educational and research initiatives. The digital focus of this year’s commissioning programme simultaneously addresses Art Jameel’s long-standing commitment to a diverse, global public and current heightened realities of physical isolation.

Artists are invited to submit proposals through an online Open Call by the deadline of June 10, 2020 (midnight GST); the winning work will be selected by an esteemed jury through the summer, with the work to be launched and exhibited online for at least six months through 2020-21. The 2020-2021 Art Jameel Commissions jury includes: **Nadim Samman**, Curator for the Digital Sphere at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Finnish word, living media and sound artist **Jenna Sutela**; **Ben Vickers**, publisher and Chief Technology Officer at the Serpentine Galleries, London; and members of Art Jameel’s curatorial team.

The first Art Jameel Commissions: Digital invites artists to propose engaging projects and artworks that create interactive experiences for online audiences. The commission focuses on the theme of ‘**Time**’ – thinking through how our usual concept of time has been challenged by technology and circumstance, and even at times appeared to be cancelled, lost or frozen. The commission also presents an opportunity



to rethink and reboot our understanding of “digital art” and the ways in which it can question, investigate and form meaningful connections and experiences. This commission is primarily interested in ideas and experiences, rather than technological hardware or software: submissions for Art Jameel Commissions: Digital should address a specific aspect of time today, and inventively translate this into a digital interface that helps us re-examine what time has been, is — or could be.

**Antonia Carver**, Director of Art Jameel, said: “Today’s announcement reflects both a continuation of Art Jameel’s longstanding interest in supporting practitioners to make new works, often for the public realm, and an inherent innovation in approach. Along with serving diverse communities across the UAE, Jameel Arts Centre has a long-term focus on engaging with audiences beyond its physical location, aware that for many in the Middle East and South Asia, travel can be a luxury. And as we all know, 2020 is sadly proving to be a year where many artists and arts institutions find themselves ‘on pause’, while audiences are more reliant than ever on engaging with art and with each other online. This commission allows us to address these realities, while also encouraging artists to challenge existing concepts of digital art, the impact of our daily online lives and the temporal nature of the human experience.”

**Art Jameel Commissions: Digital** will grant the awardee a prize of USD 7,500, in addition to a dedicated production budget for their project, which will be hosted and promoted on or via Jameel Arts Centre website. The winner will also receive curatorial support, both during the production process and during launch, and technical mentorship and support in collaboration with MIT J-WEL. The work will enter the collection of Art Jameel.

While the Jameel Arts Centre is temporarily closed, in support of the UAE’s efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19, the institution has launched a rapid-response programme that aims to support independent practitioners in the Middle East and provide global at-home audiences with innovative digital resources providing learning materials, insights into artists’ practices and creative experiences. Opportunities for artists include a new [Research and Practice Platform](#), intended primarily for those who work on a per-project basis and whose practices have been affected by programme cancellations and project changes, locally or globally. Digital offerings include *The Breakup*, a ten-part radio series by **Michael Rakowitz** live streaming from the Jameel’s Gallery 9, as part of the renowned Iraqi-American’s current show; access to the Jameel Library online catalogue; digital guided mediations and curator-led slow-viewing sessions; and the first bilingual (Arabic/English) free guide for children addressing current challenges presented by the COVID-19 virus.

Full details and the application form for **Art Jameel Commissions** can be found [here](#).

Digital experiences and resources from Jameel Arts Centre can be found [here](#).

Notes to Editors:

- J-WEL is a centre at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) working to transform education through innovations in technology and pedagogy, disseminating new approaches through its membership of government ministries, NGOs, universities and schools. J-WEL was co-founded in 2017 by MIT and [Community Jameel](#). <https://jwel.mit.edu/>

- The first edition of the Art Jameel Commissions series focused on sculpture and was awarded to Kuwait-based artists **Alia Farid** and **Aseel AlYaqoub**, culminating in the installation *Contrary Life: A Botanical Light Garden Devoted to Trees*. The second, focused on Arts Writing and Research, was awarded to Syrian, Palestinian and Greek writer **Nadia Christidi**, who spent her three-month residency at Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai, developing a publication exploring the impending water crises and potential responses. The fourth edition in the cycle, focused on Drawing and Painting, will take place in 2021-22.
- Art Jameel Commissions is open to artists from or based in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey, residing either in the region or the diaspora, as well as those from around the world regardless of nationality who have links to and a meaningful understanding of the various cultural scenes across this diverse and nuanced region.

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For more information visit [www.artjameel.org](http://www.artjameel.org) or [www.jameelartscentre.org](http://www.jameelartscentre.org) and join the conversation:

Jameel Arts Centre: Instagram [@jameelartscentre](https://www.instagram.com/jameelartscentre) | Facebook [@jameelartscentre](https://www.facebook.com/jameelartscentre) | Twitter [@jameelartsctr](https://twitter.com/jameelartsctr)

Art Jameel: Instagram [@art\\_jameel](https://www.instagram.com/art_jameel) | Facebook [Art Jameel](https://www.facebook.com/ArtJameel) | Twitter [@Art\\_Jameel](https://twitter.com/Art_Jameel) using the hashtag #artjameeldxb

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#### **About Jameel Arts Centre**

One of the first contemporary arts institutions in Dubai, [Jameel Arts Centre](http://www.jameelartscentre.org) presents curated solo and group exhibitions, drawn both from the Jameel Art Collection and through regional and international collaborations. Current exhibitions include artists Michael Rakowitz, Asunción Molinos Gordo, Sarah Abu Abdallah, Hassan Khan, Lubna Chowdhary and architects waiwai.

The Centre is a 10,000-square metre, three-storey, multi-disciplinary space designed by UK-based practice Serie Architects. The building is punctuated by seven gardens, designed by landscape architect Anouk Vogel, which reflect local and global desert biomes.

Located by the creek in Dubai's Jaddaf Waterfront neighbourhood, the Centre's galleries are complemented by the Jameel Library, an open-access research centre dedicated to artists and cultural movements in the Gulf states and beyond. The Centre also includes project and commissions spaces, a writer's studio, a restaurant and shop.



The Centre serves as a hub for educational and research initiatives for diverse audiences. Its wider programming embraces partnerships with local, regional and international artists, curators and organisations.

#### **About Art Jameel**

Art Jameel supports artists and creative communities. Current initiatives include running heritage institutes and restoration programmes, plus a broad range of arts and educational initiatives for all ages. The organisation's programmes foster the role of the arts in building open, connected communities; at a time of flux and dramatic societal shifts, this role is understood as more crucial than ever.

[Jameel Arts Centre](#), an innovative contemporary institution in Dubai, UAE, opened on November 11, 2018; [Hayy: Creative Hub](#), a major complex for the creative industries in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, is set to launch in 2021.

Art Jameel's model is collaborative: major institutional partners include [Delfina Foundation](#), [the Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), the [Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts](#) and [the Victoria and Albert Museum](#). Locally, the organisation works with individuals and organisations to develop innovative programming that embraces both ancient and new technologies and encourages entrepreneurship and the development of cultural networks.

Art Jameel is positioned alongside [Community Jameel](#), and complements its sister organisation's work in promoting positive social change, job creation and poverty alleviation across the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey.