



*For immediate release*

## Art Jameel's special commission for digital art is awarded to Nadim Choufi

- The third edition of Art Jameel's multi-year commissions programme called for proposals that create interactive experiences and engage with global audiences online
- The 2020 commission and its particular theme was 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
- A world-renowned jury awarded the commission to Lebanese artist Nadim Choufi; his project will debut on Art Jameel's online platforms over the coming months
- The jury also chose to award honourable mentions to Nora Al Badri and duo Edwin Nasr and Bassam Saad, given the outstanding quality of their submissions

Dubai, United Arab Emirates | October 6, 2020, [Art Jameel](#), an organisation that supports heritage, education and the arts, announced today that Lebanese artist **Nadim Choufi** has been awarded **Art Jameel Commissions: Digital**. Choufi's winning proposal embraces the theme of smart cities and the time cycles that govern its foundations.

Launched earlier this year, Art Jameel Commissions: Digital invited artists to submit proposals through an online Open Call which attracted nearly 200 project submissions; the winning work is to be launched and exhibited online for at least six months in early 2021. The commission also provides an opportunity for mentoring by technical experts from MIT's Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab (J-WEL).

Responding to this year's theme of '**Time**', and thinking through how the concept of time has been challenged by technology and circumstance, the commission presented artists with an opportunity to rethink "digital art" and the ways in which it can question, investigate and form meaningful connections and experiences.

Choufi's winning project, titled ***The Sky Oscillates Between Eternity and Its Immediate Consequences***, digitally renders environments of a space colony on Earth, where two narrators attempt to unbound the perpetually promised possibilities in imagining the future and creating a space of multiple presents to question the clock running the planet through their lived experiences. The work will debut online and be accessible via Art Jameel's websites.

Choufi's proposal was selected by an esteemed, expert jury which included: **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.



Recognising the diversity of ideas and exceptional quality of the proposals received, the jury opted to also award honourable mentions to two applicants: German-Iraqi **Nora Al Badri**, a multidisciplinary and conceptual media artist based in Berlin, and Lebanese duo **Edwin Nasr** and **Bassem Saad**.

Al Badri's submission, titled **Neuronal Ancestral Sculptures Series**, expands on museum practices by generating synthetic Babylonian objects based on antiquities as a means of reclaiming the cultural datasets from Western museum collections.

Nasr and Saad's **Wound Contra Empire** is an ongoing research project that examines the geopolitics of digital image-making by way of the US military-entertainment complex, the cosmotechnics of the so-called "axis of resistance," and the reproducibility of ritual and trauma.

[Art Jameel Commissions](#) is an annual, multi-year programme foundational to programming at [Jameel Arts Centre](#), Dubai's contemporary arts institution and a hub for exhibitions, educational and research initiatives. This year's commissioning programme's digital focus simultaneously addresses Art Jameel's long-standing commitment to a diverse, global public and current heightened realities of physical isolation. The next iteration of Art Jameel Commissions will centre on painting and drawing, with the Open Call taking place in 2021.

In addition to an artist's fee of USD 7,500, plus a dedicated production budget for the project, Choufi will also receive curatorial support, both during the production process and launch, and technical mentorship and support in collaboration with MIT J-WEL. The work will enter into the Art Jameel Collection.

Full details on Art Jameel Commissions can be found [here](#).

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

Notes to Editors:

- Nadim Choufi lives in Beirut and primarily works with video, 3D animation, and sculpture. An alumnus of Ashkal Alwan Home Workspace fellowship, he exhibited his work regionally and internationally in Beirut Art Center, Abu Dhabi's Warehouse421, Sharjah Art Foundation, The New School in New York, and Macao in Milan.
- Nora Al-Badri is a multi-disciplinary and conceptual media artist with a German-Iraqi background based in Berlin. She graduated in political sciences at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt/Main and is the first artist-in-residence at the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and its Laboratory for Experimental Museology (eM+).
- Bassem Saad is an artist and writer trained in architecture. His work explores objects and economies that distribute violence, pleasure, welfare and waste, through video, sculpture and writing. He was recently a resident at Eyebeam in New York.
- Edwin Nasr is a writer and cultural worker based in Beirut. He is currently the Assistant to the Director at Ashkal Alwan in Beirut, and will serve as a Curatorial Fellow 2020-21 at De Appel in Amsterdam.



- J-WEL is a centre at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) working to transform education through technology and pedagogy innovations, 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. It 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.

**END**

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

### **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.