

Art Jameel

For Immediate Release

Project Space Art Jameel's latest Collection Focus features major work by Hazem El Mestikawy

May 22, 5.30-7.30pm: Opening in the presence of the artist (all welcome)

May 23–July 22, 2017: Exhibition

Project Space Art Jameel, Alserkal Avenue, Dubai

Collection Focus 02

Dubai, United Arab Emirates | May 16, 2017 – Art Jameel, a non-profit organisation that supports arts, education and heritage in the Middle East, today announced the launch of the second Collection Focus, which is dedicated to a major work by Hazem El Mestikawy at Project Space Art Jameel, Alserkal Avenue, Dubai.

Alif Beh (2006-2009) is a sculptural installation that comprises 60 parts representing 30 Arabic letters based on the idea of negative and positive, suspended and placed on the floor. *Alif Beh* is accompanied by a set of drawings, in part a study for the installation. The exhibition is part of a series that features key works from the Jameel Art Collection, in advance of the opening of the Jameel Arts Centre Dubai in winter 2018.

Commenting on the exhibition, Antonia Carver, Art Jameel's Director said: "We are delighted to host Hazem El Mestikawy in Dubai for the opening of this Collection Focus, featuring his major work, *Alif Beh*. All are welcome to come along and meet the artist at Project Space Art Jameel, Alserkal Avenue, on Monday May 22, and visit the exhibition throughout its run. Hazem has a remarkable interest in form and material, transforming cardboard and recycled paper into intricate, geometric sculptural shapes. He has been an integral part of the Egyptian scene, and a strong influence on other artists, for many years."

El Mestikawy cites both aesthetic and environmental reasons for his choice of material; as he has explained, "I love the construction, and I love the hollowness. I love that the work appears so solid and yet is very light and easy to pack and carry. I sometimes make huge exhibitions that come out of a very small box. I love the shock on curators' faces when I open my bag and start pulling the pieces out."

El Mestikawy's work is based on the principle of duality and oscillates between the positive and the negative, lightness and heaviness, and light and shadow. With flawless precision and a geometric complexity, El Mestikawy carefully overlaps and arranges different sections or modules and ultimately locks or glues them together – like a puzzle – to create a homogeneous unity.

The first Collection Focus at Project Space Art Jameel was a five-channel video installation by **Basel Abbas** and **Ruanne Abou-Rahme**. This Collection Focus series features single works from the Jameel Art Collection. The Jameel Arts Centre Dubai -- currently under construction in Jadaf, on the Dubai Creek – is set to open in the winter of 2018; its multifaceted programme will in part feature curated exhibitions drawn from the Collection.

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Project Space Art Jameel, a temporary space supported by Alserkal Avenue, features year-round programming, including exhibitions, research, and educational and collaborative initiatives. All events are free and open to all.

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For more information visit www.artjameel.org and join the conversation on Instagram [@art_jameel](https://www.instagram.com/art_jameel) | Facebook [@art_jameel](https://www.facebook.com/art_jameel) | Twitter [@art_jameel](https://twitter.com/art_jameel) | [#artjameeldxb](https://twitter.com/art_jameel)

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Project Space Art Jameel is located in The Yard, Alserkal Avenue, Dubai. Regular opening times are Monday-Thursday, and Saturday, 10am-7pm. Please see our website for Ramadan and Eid timings.

Hazem El Mestikawy lives and works in Cairo and Alexandria. Born in Cairo in 1965, he holds a Bachelors in Art Education from the Sculpture department of Menya University. He has exhibited consistently since the 1990s: recent group shows include 'AGENDA', Alexandria Bibliotheca Gallery, Alexandria; 'Why Not?', Place of Arts, Cairo; 'Modulus', Oxyd Art Spaces, Winterthur, Switzerland; collection 'Shoes Or No Shoes', Museum Kruishoutem, Belgium; '3rd Kokaido Art Show', Iwate Prefecture Civic Centre, Morioka, Iwate, Japan; 'New Formalism', Bidoun at Art Dubai, UAE; 'Land of the Hyperreal' Contemporary Egyptian Art, Cuba; and collection of North Carolina Museum of Art, USA.

El Mestikawy's most recent solo shows took place at Art Talks Gallery, Cairo, and Galerie Atrium ed Arte, Vienna, Austria.

His works are held in the collection of the Museum of Egyptian Modern Art, Cairo, and the North Carolina Museum of Art, USA, among other institutions. *Patent Pattern* won the grand prize at the 13th Asia Art Biennale in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2008. In 2011, El Mestikawy was short-listed for the Jameel Prize.

El Mestikawy also previously held the position of Director and Chief Curator of the MEMA Museum of Egyptian Modern Art; Head of the Jury for the 1st International Media Art Forum (2008); and member of the High Committee 11th Cairo International Biennial (2008).

Art Jameel is a not-for-profit organisation that supports artists and creative communities. Our programmes foster the role of the arts in building open, connected communities; at a time of flux and dramatic societal shifts, we see this role as more crucial than ever.

Art Jameel's current initiatives include running heritage arts schools and restoration programmes, plus a broad range of arts and educational initiatives for all ages. In 2018, we open the Jameel Arts Centre, a not-for-profit contemporary arts institution in Jadaf, Culture Village, Dubai.

Our model is collaborative: major institutional partners include the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Prince's School of Traditional Arts; locally, the foundation 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.