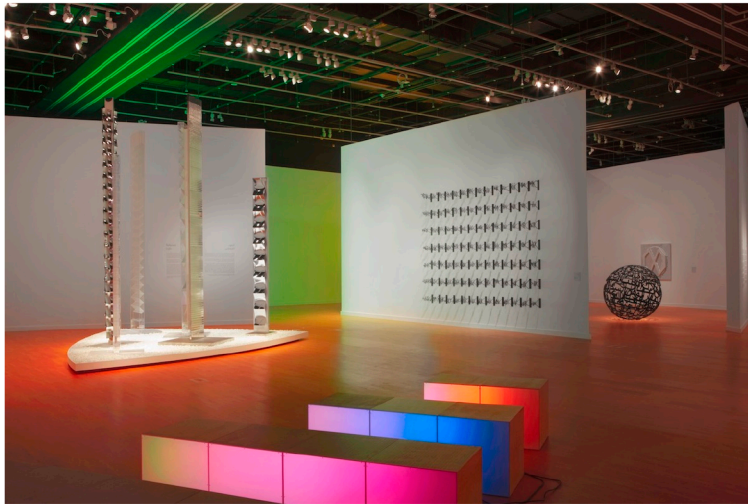


NEW YORK

# GUGGENHEIM



## Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority Celebrates the Inauguration of *Seeing Through Light: Selections for the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Collection*

**Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's first exhibition will showcase renowned international and regional artists, together with a series of talks, events, and workshops held throughout the exhibition period**

Exhibition: *Seeing Through Light: Selections from the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Collection*

Venue: Manarat Al Saadiyat Cultural District, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Dates: November 5, 2014–January 19, 2015

Download a [PDF](#) of the release.

(ABU DHABI, UAE, November 3, 2014)—Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority will present the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's pre-opening exhibition, *Seeing Through Light: Selections from the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Collection* at the Manarat Al Saadiyat on Saadiyat Island. The exhibition, which will run from November 5, 2014 until January 19, 2015, will feature artworks by 19 international artists from the 1960s to today, all of which explore the theme of 'light.'

Rita Aoun-Abdo, Executive Director, Culture Sector, TCA Abu Dhabi commented: "The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is not yet a physical place, but it is already providing a dynamic platform for interrogating the history of art and contemplating both the present and future of contemporary art. This exhibition introduces visitors to the type of special exhibitions that will be exhibited at the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, with the intent to foster a transcultural perspective on the history of art and to encompass various legacies of modernism and the emergence of contemporary art in the region. Through the artwork exhibited and various supporting community and education programmes, TCA Abu Dhabi aims to foster this perspective and encourage the emergence of home-grown talents."

The artwork displayed is presented through five sections that examine the exhibition's theme of 'light' in various iterations: Perceptual, Reflected, Transcendent, Activated, and Celestial.

Perceptual Light examines the work of five artists who were early practitioners of the light art movement: **Larry Bell**, **Dan Flavin**, **Robert Irwin**, **Keith Sonnier**, and **Douglas Wheeler**.

Reflected Light assembles **Heinz Mack** and **Otto Piene**, who were active in the 1960s as founders of the Zero group (and whose work is part of a major retrospective, *ZERO: Countdown to Tomorrow, 1950s-60s*, currently on view at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City) and artists of a younger generation, **Ghada Amer** and **Rachid Koraichi**.

Transcendent Light is comprised of the artists **Monir Farmanfarmian, Samia Halaby, Shirazeh Houshiary,** and **Y.Z. Kami,** all of whom are painters who use light thematically to explore the contemplative.

The Activated Light section examines artists **Angela Bulloch, Hassan Khan,** and **Rafael Lozano-Hemmer,** whose artwork depends on advanced technologies to activate light.

Celestial Light brings together three artists: **Bharti Kher, Yayoi Kusama,** and **Song Dong,** who use a range of media to produce artworks that emulate the infinite.

"We wanted to represent the theme of light in all of its aspects; whether natural or artificial, directed or reflected, interior or exterior, transcendent or celestial. The space of the exhibition has been turned into an environment that visitors can move around in and through the different mediums so that one could be truly immersed in and can experience light in all of its spatial, sensory, and perceptual phenomena," commented Susan Davidson, Senior Curator, Collections and Exhibitions, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

In line with the exhibited artwork, the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's pre-opening exhibition will also host a series of talks, events, and workshops designed to engage a range of age groups.

As part of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Talking Art Series, a panel discussion with artists **Angela Bulloch, Shirazeh Houshiary,** and **Rachid Koraichi** was held on November 3, 2014 to discuss their creative process of utilizing light as an aesthetic.

Later in the year, *Artscape: An Evening of Light and Live Electronic Music* will also be held at the Manarat Al Saadiyat on Thursday, December 11, 2014. Inspired by artworks exhibited in *Seeing Through Light: Selections from the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Collection*, the festival will include interactive light-themed activities, workshops, and live electronic music that explores the cross-currents of light, art, music, and technology. In addition, it will be introducing a special performance by one of the featured artists, **Hassan Khan**. This special event provides audiences a chance to explore this experience-rich exhibition and engage directly with artists, designers, and performers from around the world. Unique to *Artscape*, audiences are invited to stay late and enjoy an extended evening of electronic music.

Extending the activities to beyond Manarat Al Saadiyat, the city of Abu Dhabi will turn into a canvas with an enlightening public art performance by Mexican-Canadian artist **Rafael Lozano-Hemmer** entitled *Pulse Corniche* (2014-2015), from January 8 to 17, 2015. A display of an interactive canopy of powerful light beams projected into to the sky by some of the world's strongest robotic searchlights whose brightness and orientation is controlled by the heart rate of visitors to the Abu Dhabi's Corniche.

Maisa Al Qassimi, Programmes Manager for Guggenheim Abu Dhabi said, "Taking Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's concepts out of the *Seeing Through Light* exhibition space and to the capital gives the exhibition a new dimension and wider audiences to connect with. Our public programmes are growing in diversity and it's important that our first preview is supported by such multi-faceted engagement."

*Pulse Corniche* is the culmination of a series of interactive public artworks that debuted at the 2007 Venice Biennale with *Pulse Room*. People are free to participate by holding a sensor placed in the centre of the plaza that converts the electrical activity of their heart into a unique lighting sequence. The intensity and direction of the lights makes visual the different biometric rhythms of each participant.

In addition, starting from November 13, 2014 through January 17, 2015, the exhibition will hold a variety of enlightening, engaging, and educational hands-on workshops and short courses designed for children (aged 6 to 8), juniors (aged 9 to 12), teens (aged 13 to 16), and adults (aged 17 and over) that explore the themes and concepts of *Seeing Through Light: Selections from the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Collection*.

*Seeing through Light: Selections from the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Collection* is curated by Susan Davidson, Senior Curator, Collections and Exhibitions, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, with Sasha Kalter-Wasserman, Assistant Curator, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Project, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, and Maisa Al Qassimi, Programmes Manager, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority.

For more information about the workshops, please visit [www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae](http://www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae).

All programmes in line with the exhibition are free. Due to limited spaces, prior booking and registration is required.

To make a booking, please call +971 2 657 5800 or email [manaratalsaadiyat@tcaabudhabi.ae](mailto:manaratalsaadiyat@tcaabudhabi.ae).

### **About Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority**

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority conserves and promotes the heritage and culture of Abu Dhabi emirate and leverages them in the development of a world-class, sustainable destination of distinction, which enriches the lives of visitors and residents alike. The authority manages the emirate's tourism sector and markets the destination internationally through a wide range of activities aimed at attracting visitors and investment. Its policies, plans and programmes relate to the preservation of heritage and culture, including protecting archaeological and historical sites and to developing museums, including the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Zayed National Museum, and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. TCA Abu Dhabi supports intellectual and artistic activities and cultural events to nurture a rich cultural environment and honour the emirate's heritage. A key authority role is to create synergy in the destination's development through close co-ordination with its wide-ranging stakeholder base.

### **About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation**

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. The Guggenheim network that began in the 1970s when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was joined by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, has since expanded to include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (opened 1997), and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (currently in development). Looking to the future, the Guggenheim Foundation continues to forge international collaborations that take contemporary art, architecture, and design beyond the walls of the museum, including with the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, and with The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative. More information about the Foundation can be found at [guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org).

### **About Guggenheim Abu Dhabi**

Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will be a preeminent platform for contemporary art and culture that will present the most important artistic achievements of our time. From its location in the Middle East—a central axis between Europe, Asia, and North Africa—the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will contribute to a more inclusive and expansive view of art history that emphasizes the convergence of local, regional, and international sources of creative inspiration rather than geography or nationality. At the same time, the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will acknowledge and celebrate the specific identity derived from the cultural traditions of Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates, as well as other countries comprising the Middle East.

The museum's collection will encompass art from the 1960s to the present day produced around the world and in all media. Through its collection, exhibitions, and educational programs, the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will bring attention to under-researched and lesser-known histories. In parallel, it will reevaluate those chapters that have defined the art historical canon to date.

The museum will be a catalyst for scholarship in a variety of fields, chief among them the history of art in the Middle East in the 20th and 21st centuries. A dynamic program of changing exhibitions will explore common themes and affinities among the work of artists across time and place. An ambitious program of commissions created for the collection and the exceptional spaces of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will reinforce the museum's commitment to working with artists and supporting contemporary artistic production.