THE ART GALLERY AT NYU ABU DHABI ANNOUNCES ITS FALL SHOW, INVISIBLE THREADS: TECHNOLOGY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Abu Dhabi, 26 July 2016: The fall exhibition at The Art Gallery at NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) will explore the tensions that emerge in our everyday relationships with technology, looking at such issues as isolation vs. connectedness, and privacy vs. social media. With an opening reception on 22 September, and on through 31 December, Invisible Threads: Technology and its Discontents will feature works by 15 international artists, including such renowned names as Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and American artist Addie Wagenknecht.

The information age has given us modes and means of communication unrivalled in history, ranging from smartphones and social media to electronic financial and other transactions. Yet these same tools also generate anxiety about a user’s exposure via these modes, whether to risk of hackers or from technology’s effect on our environment.

Invisible Threads will present a nuanced discussion of a global topic, framed by the region’s complex relationship to the benefits and pitfalls that accompany technological advances. The artworks expose these institutional and aesthetic frameworks of control, pulling back the curtain on a part of our lives that we have come to take for granted. The curators hope to generate dialog and reflection around our use of these everyday tools.

Notably, Invisible Threads inaugurates one of NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery’s unique program strategies: inviting scholars and specialists from across the academic spectrum to guest-curate a major exhibition. Invisible Threads is co-curated by Professor Scott Fitzgerald, Program Head of Interactive Media at NYU Abu Dhabi, with Bana Kattan, a Curator at the NYUAD Art Gallery.


Co-curator Bana Kattan commented: "From the Industrial Revolution, to the dawn of space travel, and the creation of the internet, technological revolutions have had profound impacts on the arts. This universal theme is especially relevant in the UAE, a country that is home to extraordinary state-level technological innovations, as well as a remarkably tech-savvy, connected population. In keeping with the NYUAD Art Gallery’s mission to produce exhibitions that are both internationally significant and locally relevant, this exhibit showcases some of the most interesting artwork being made today around the topic of the individual’s experience with technology. I am honored to be bringing this theme to the forefront of the UAE art scene with the expertise of my co-curator, Professor Fitzgerald, without whom this project would not have been possible."

Co-Curator Professor Scott Fitzgerald said: "The ways we treat and use technology are central to my practice and teaching. This show is an exciting opportunity for me to work through these ideas in a new context. The artists in the show represent a spectrum of established and emerging talents who offer a broad and critical look at the way we have enshrined these tools in practically every aspect of our lives. Collectively, they help present a past, present, and future of our evolving relationship with technologies."
Built on the proposition that interaction with global ideas is beneficial to the society that sustains it, the NYUAD Art Gallery continues to push boundaries with curatorial premises that confront contemporary social themes. With *Invisible Threads*, as with previous shows such as the Slavs and Tatars’ *Mirrors for Princes: Both Sides of the Tongue*, the Art Gallery aims to foster curiosity and critical reflection in the growing arts audience of the UAE.

*Invisible Threads* will be complemented by a full public program of events and talks for all ages.

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For more information, please contact:

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Follow NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery on social media channels @nyuadartgallery:

www.nyuad-artgallery.org

Notes to Editors

About the Curators

**Bana Kattan** is a curator at the New York University Abu Dhabi Art Gallery and the manager of the NYUAD Project Space (http://nyuad-artgallery.org/en_US/arts-center-project-space/). During her graduate work at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, she worked with the Performance Department at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Curatorial Department of the Guggenheim- Abu Dhabi Project in New York. She also worked as a project manager for artist Michael Rakowitz. Kattan was one of the 2015 recipients of the Getty-CAA International Program Grants. She is born and raised in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

**Scott Fitzgerald** is a media artist whose work has been performed and exhibited throughout the USA, Europe, and Asia. His work explores the transition between the physical and digital world, using new technologies as expressive tools. In addition to his artwork, Scott runs a variety of workshops, including physical interaction design, projection mapping, and interactive lighting. Currently an Assistant Art Professor and the Program Head of Interactive Media at NYU Abu Dhabi, he was previously the head of documentation for Arduino, an open hardware platform created for artists and designers.
About NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery

The Art Gallery, which opened on November 1, 2014, and is located at the main entrance to NYUAD’s Saadiyat Campus, presents curated exhibitions of art and material culture across historical and contemporary topics, with a special emphasis on subjects of both regional concern and international significance. Through focused exhibitions, events, and publications, the gallery serves as a catalyst and locus of intellectual and creative activity, linking the University with the Abu Dhabi public and a worldwide community of artists, curators, and scholars.

The 664-square-meter (7,000-square-foot) exhibition space features soaring double-height ceilings and an outdoor installation space. It is fully equipped for exhibitions in all media, with custom walls and lighting allowing for experimental and traditional installations, from video art to ancient works.

The curatorial platform supports scholarly and experimental installations, artists’ projects, guest curators, and landmark exhibitions. The coming exhibition program centers on three themes: landscape and the built environment, Islamic art and culture, and art in global dialogue.

To contact the gallery, call +971-2-628-8000, or visit the website: www.nyuad-artgallery.org.

About NYU Abu Dhabi

NYU Abu Dhabi consists of a highly selective liberal arts and science college (including engineering), and a world center for advanced research and scholarship — all fully integrated with each other and connected to NYU in New York. Together, NYU New York, NYU Abu Dhabi, and NYU Shanghai form the backbone of a unique global network university, with faculty and students from each campus spending "semesters away” at one or more of the numerous study-abroad sites NYU maintains on six continents.

NYU Abu Dhabi graduated its first class in spring of 2014. It is attended by a diverse student body representing over 100 countries and speaking more than 100 languages.