

# Marrakech Biennale 5: Where are we now?

**The upcoming 5th edition of the Marrakech Biennale, under the artistic direction of Alya Sebti, curated by Hicham Khalidi, will analyse the question of *Where are we now?* through the participation of around 70 artists in four different disciplines: Visual Arts, Literature, Cinema & Video and Performing Arts. This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the festival celebrating the arts and creativity of a city with a history of artistic exploration.**

The main theme of the 2014 edition investigates the subjective perspectives of Morocco today and its multiple axes of influence. This will be looked at in terms of how it relates to the idea of the contemporary as suggested by philosopher Peter Osborne in his essay *The Fiction of the Contemporary: Speculative Collectivity and the Global Transnational* (Pavilion, 2010). Through five concepts – and the work of The Atlas Group – Osborne explains that contemporary art fictionalizes its own authority and that this strategy leads to a global, transnational fiction of art.

Dutch-Moroccan curator Hicham Khalidi (1972, Kenitra, Morocco) will curate the visual arts exhibition of Marrakech Biennale 5, which will feature around 30 artists and more than 20 especially commissioned pieces. Using the question and main theme of the Biennale as a starting point (*Where are we now?*), the visual art element reworks the idea of the contemporary implied in the Biennale's title this year and takes it into an examination of contemporaneity, fiction, and identity, providing an opportunity to question the current and changing socio-political context of the region. Hicham Khalidi connects this idea of contemporaneity to artists' strategies and to both utilize and problematize these models in order to demonstrate how fictionalized identity can be used to produce

national identity.

With the theme 'Where are we now?', the curators from each of the four disciplines invite participants to respond through their own perspectives:

**Visual Art & Sound** is curated by Dutch-Moroccan Hicham Khalidi, who has invited 43 artists from Morocco and several other countries. The vast majority of the artworks will be site specific, produced in and inspired by the context of Marrakech, and presented in different venues throughout the city.

**Literature** is led by the Moroccan writer and theater author Driss Ksikes; the discipline promotes access to public space through a series of roundtables as well as performative lectures, connecting performing arts and literature.

**Cinema & Video** takes a look at contemporary creations from North Africa in dialogue with other regions, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. With the participation of the pioneering founder of film screening initiative Casaprojecta Jamal Abdenassar, video installation as an amalgamation of film, visual art, and performing art will be very present for this edition.

**Performing Arts** is organized by Khalid Thamer, the founder of the public space festival in Marrakech, Alwaln'art. He will create a circulation that reimagines the relationships of public space to both outsiders and natives between several venues of the Biennale. This movement is organized as a dialogue between the contemporary and the traditional.

Find the whole list of participating artists [here](#)

The **Parallel Program** highlights ten parallel projects that are independently organized and funded, but have been selected by the esteemed Artistic Steering Committee, including a number that are

focusing on sound art as a way of both disseminating and diffusing art in public space.

More information under:

<http://www.marrakechbiennale.org/5th-edition-2014/parallel-projects>

## Participating artists

Saadane Afif (1975, Vendôme, FR), Wafae Ahalouch el Keriasti (1978, Tanger, MA), Mustapha Akrim (1981, Rabat, MA), Can and Asli Altay (1975, Ankara, TR), Jelili Atiku (1968, Ejigbo, NG), Kader Attia (1970, Dugny, FR), Hicham Benhoud (1968, Marrakech, MA), Katinka Bock (1976, Frankfurt/Main, DE), Keren Cytter (1977, Tel-Aviv, IL), Lily Reynaud Dewar (1975, La Rochelle, FR), Cevdet Erek (1974, Istanbul, TR), Eric Van Hove (1976, DZ), Iman Issa (1979, Cairo, EG), Hamid El Kenbouhi (1976, MA), Gabriel Lester (1972, Amsterdam, NL), Tala Madani (1981, Teheran, IR), Clara Meister (1981, Munich, DE), Agnes Meyer-Brandis (1973, Aachen, DE), Walid Raad (1967, Beirut, LB), Pamela Rosenkranz (1979, Sils-Maria, CH), Khaled Sabsabi (1965, Tripoli, LB), Mounira Al Solh (1978, Beirut, LB) and Katarina Zdjelar (1979, Belgrade, RS).

Marrakech Biennale 5

*Where are we now?*

26 February – 31 March 2014

Press Preview: 25 February 2014

VIP & Professional Preview: 26 February 2014

Marrakech Biennale Association El Fenn (House of Art)

2 Derb Moulay Abdallah Ben Hezzian Bab el-Ksour, Medina Marrakech,

Morocco

**Hicham Khalidi** is a Dutch-Moroccan curator of contemporary art. From 2003 until 2011, he was artistic director of TAG (Audiovisual Art Institute in The Hague, The Netherlands). His favourite subjects are politics of the image and trans-disciplinary research in speculative art and design. Khalidi is a board member of V2\_: interdisciplinary centre for art and media technology in Rotterdam, and *The Naked*: a blog and event promoting a global vs. local understanding of the art world today. His latest curated exhibitions include: 'On Geometry and Speculation' (as part of the 4th edition of the Marrakech Biennale, Marrakech, 2012), 'Transnatural Festival' (Nemo Science Center, Amsterdam, 2012) and 'Alles, was Sie über Chemie wissen müssen' (Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2011).

### **About Marrakech Biennale**

In 2004 with the rise of global tensions, Vanessa Branson envisioned a cultural festival that would address social issues through the arts, using them as a vehicle for debate and discussion and to build bridges between diverse ideologies. Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2014, The Marrakech Biennale is the first major biennale held in the Maghreb focusing on cutting-edge contemporary art, literature and film. The Biennale seeks to promote the status of the art and contemporary culture in North Africa and to make the creative scene of the region more dynamic, enabling discussions with and between artists, writers, filmmakers, actors, musicians, choreographers and architects. Held every two years, this non-state funded Biennale promotes intercultural and interdisciplinary exchanges through an educational approach that addresses both art professionals and the general public.

[www.marrakechbiennale.org](http://www.marrakechbiennale.org)