

CLOSING OF THE 2ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY & CONVERSATIONS

By IBA Office Posted March 9, 2015 In Press Releases

The International Biennial Association (IBA) closed its 2nd General Assembly & Conversations, held from March 4 to 7 at the Sharjah Institute for Theatrical Arts and hosted by the Sharjah Art Foundation in time for the opening of Sharjah Biennial 12. The events were also sponsored by the City of Gwangju and Arts Council Korea.

The public Conversations event was underlined thematically by the decentralization of cultural production. The keynote lecture, “Rethinking Cosmopolitanism: Is Afropolitan the Answer?” by Salah Hassan, Goldwin Smith Professor and Director of the Institute for Comparative Modernities at Cornell University, focused on Afropolitanism and changing definitions of global art world terms. Hassan also highlighted the urgencies of cosmopolitanism, and the need for an infrastructure that promotes both creative and critical discussion.

This was followed by presentations of four biennials, the first two of which were introduced in a conversation between Christine Tohme (Home Works) and Khalil Rabah (Riwaq Biennale) as moderated by independent curator Tarek Abou el Fetouh. Soufiane Ouissi then gave a slideshow presentation on Dream City, followed by Patrick Mudekereza of Lubumbashi Biennale. Each biennial representative addressed issues specific to their event and locale, including cultural heritage, socio-political context, economic circumstance and relationship with the state.

Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi, president of Sharjah Art Foundation, said, “I thought it was very important to focus on different types of biennials. A lot of biennials are run by the state or government and follow a similar structure, but there are so many artist-led initiatives.”

The following day brought together participating members of the IBA who discussed practical issues and contributed suggestions for the location of the 3rd General Assembly, which is scheduled for spring 2016. Additionally, 16 biennial representatives located in emerging markets and developing economies were able to attend the 2nd General Assembly & Conversations with support provided by the Sharjah Art Foundation.

IBA President Yongwoo Lee opened the gathering and said, “As our numbers grow, so too, does the urgency with which we consider the role and effect of the biennial form...I have great hope for our association, as our philosophical and theoretical conversations begin to manifest throughout the world.”

The IBA further announced a plan to develop focused groups that will specialize in the areas of Programming, Research, Policy and Finance. These committees, each of which is headed by an IBA Board Member, will help diversify the association’s activities and provide a proactive outlet for members to discuss and resolve issues facing biennials and other periodic art events today.

The next official gathering of the IBA will be the 4th board meeting, to be held on May 9 at the opening of the Venice Biennale.

The International Biennial Association (IBA) is a nonprofit arts association composed of institutions, individuals and associates from the biennial community and arts-related industry. It was created to expand and share activities of curatorial, artistic creation and knowledge production through cooperation and exchange among biennials and other institutions. To become a member in the network of art professionals and take part in the General Assembly, apply online through the IBA website.

For more information, contact:

IBA Office

111 Biennale-ro 3rd Flr,

Buk-gu, Gwangju

Korea 500-845

info@biennialassociation.org