



Mada Masr Independent, progressive media

Talking about the quietly fascinating 12th Sharjah Biennial

Wednesday, April 1, 2015 - 10:19

By: [Mai Elwakil](#), [Jenifer Evans](#)

The 12th Sharjah Biennial, taking place from March 5 to June 5, is curated by Eungie Joo and titled *The Past, the Present and the Possible*. There are over 50 participating artists from around the world, as well as various workshops and lectures. Mada's Jenifer Evans and Mai Elwakil of [Medrar.TV](#) attended the opening, and on returning to Cairo had the following conversation about their impressions. Elwakil had also [attended](#) Sharjah Art Foundation's "[March Meeting](#)" last year, billed as a starting point for this year's biennial.

Mai Elwakil: The March Meeting was quite retrospective — it walked attendees through projects from previous editions of the biennial, and included presentations by artists taking part in this one. It felt like a teaser, as Eungie Joo only mentioned the title of the upcoming exhibition. She said it would be about the possibilities of contemporary art and that it was inspired by a conversation she had with Dutch-Vietnamese artist Danh Vo. I kept searching for more information and a few months before the opening, I [read](#) that this biennial's theme was inspired by Henri Lefevbre's theory on people having a right to the city. I really looked forward to the opening week as I've been thinking about the residents' relationship to the biennial and city as a whole since my first visit to Sharjah.

Jenifer Evans: The artworks I found most interesting did relate to the city somehow. And one thing I liked was that we had to go on these trips around the city — and outside it — to try to find them, like going to see Asuncion Molinos-Gordo's [WAM \(World Agricultural Museum\)](#), which she originally made in Cairo in 2010, and [Michael Joo's *Locale Inscribed \(Walking in the desert with Eisa towards the sun, looking down\)*](#), a piece that involved creating large cracks and using silver nitrate on the wall of an old warehouse.



Michael Joo's *Locale Inscribed* (*Walking in the desert with Eisa towards the sun, looking down*).

Photo: Jenifer Evans

URL: <http://www.madamasr.com/sections/culture/talking-about-quietly-fascinating-12th-sharjah-biennial>