

# SHIFTING EARTH SYMPOSIUM

JAMEEL ARTS CENTRE

26–27 03/2022

# SHIFTING EARTH SYMPOSIUM

26–27 03/2022

Asunción Molinos Gordo  
Charles Al Hayek  
Dr Eloisa Martin  
Jonathon Miller Weisberger  
Moza Almatrooshi  
Nahla Tabbaa  
Namrata Neog  
Shahina Ghazanfar  
Soledad Gutiérrez  
Sunoj D

Taking *Desert is a Forest*\* by visual artist Sunoj D and anthropologist/archaeologist Namrata Neog as a starting point, the inaugural edition of *Shifting Earth* brings together artists, botanists, anthropologists, historians and sociologists to explore the biodiversity and ethnobotany of the UAE landscape and the broader Arabian Peninsula in the context of the global biodiversity crises.

From the Arabian Desert to the ecological and biological processes of the tropics in Amazonia, the symposium brings together an array of voices challenging the anthropocentric understanding of our natural landscapes. Looking at indigenous traditions from different parts of the world, speakers will address the role of art and ecology in creating action and understanding around the ever-greater urgencies related to climate change, botany, conservation and sustainability; presenting a holistic understanding of the close connection between humans and plants.

Speakers are Sunoj D, Namrata Neog, Shahina Ghazanfar, Charles Al Hayek, Moza Almatrooshi, Jonathon Miller Weisberger, Asunción Molinos Gordo, Soledad Guitérrez, Dr Eloisa Martin and Nahla Tabbaa. Discussions will be moderated by Rahul Gudipudi, Nadine El Khoury, Nadia Christidi, Nora Razian, Azim Al Ghussein and Lucas Morin.

*\* Desert is a Forest is part of the biennial Artist's Garden commissions programme at Jameel Arts Centre. The commissions are researched-based projects spread over 2 years. Collaborative in nature, the garden aims to open up conversations around the complex entanglements that shape environmental concerns and practices on both a local, regional and international scale.*

*This event will be recorded and available at a later date on our website [jameelartscentre.org](http://jameelartscentre.org).*

## Saturday 26 March, 2022

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**2:00 pm**                      **Welcoming Remarks**  
Dawn Ross  
(Head of Collections, Art Jameel)

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### **Panel**                      **What Have Plants Done for Us?**

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**2:10 - 2:50 pm**            ***Desert is a Forest***  
(40 mins)                      Artist talk and conversation with Sunoj D and Namrata Neog

**2:55 - 3:35 pm**            **Preserving Culture Through Plants**  
(40 mins)                      Lecture by Shahina Ghazanfar

**3:40- 4:10 pm**            **Discussion and Q&A with Sunoj D, Namrata Neog and Shahina Ghazanfar**  
(30 mins)                      Moderated by Nadine El Khoury  
(Assistant Curator, Art Jameel)

**20 mins**                      **Coffee Break**

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### **Panel**                      **Living on Dry Land?**

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**4:30 - 5:20 pm**            **Green Roots**  
(50 mins)                      Lecture by Charles Al Hayek

## Saturday 26 March, 2022

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|-----------------------------|---|
| 5:20 - 5:40 pm<br>(20 mins) | <b>Discussion and Q&amp;A with Charles Al Hayek</b><br>Moderated by Nora Razian<br>(Head of Exhibitions, Art Jameel)                            |
| 5:45 - 6:45 pm<br>(60 mins) | <b>There Is An Edible Gold</b><br>Artist talk and conversation with Moza Almatrooshi<br>and Rahul Gudipudi<br>(Exhibitions Curator, Art Jameel) |
| 7:00 pm                     | <b>End of Symposium</b>   |

Sunday 27 March, 2022

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2:00 pm                      **Welcoming Remarks**  
Dawn Ross  
(Head of Collections, Art Jameel)

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**Panel                      The Deep Memory of the Earth**

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2:10 - 2:50 pm              **Rainforest Medicine: The Deep-Forest  
(40 mins)                      Perspective of the Waorani**  
Lecture by Jonathon Miller Weisberger

2:55 - 3:35 pm              **Barruntaremos ('Inklings')**  
(40 mins)                      Artist talk and conversation with Asunción Molinos  
Gordo and Soledad Gutiérrez

3:40- 4:10 pm              **Discussion and Q&A with Jonathon Miller  
(30 mins)                      Weisberger, Asunción Molinos Gordo and  
Soledad Gutiérrez**  
Moderated by Nadia Christidi

20 mins                      **Coffee Break**

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**Panel                      Food, Colour and the Multisensory**

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4:30 - 5:10 pm              **Tasting the Emirati Colours: Landscape and  
(40 mins)                      Place-Making Through National Food**  
Lecture by Dr Eloisa Martin

## Sunday 27 March, 2022

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**5:15 - 5:55 pm**

(40 mins)

**Shamsa**

Artist talk and conversation with Nahla Tabbaa and Lucas Morin

**6:00 - 6:30 pm**

(30 mins)

**Discussion and Q&A with Dr Eloisa Martin, Nahla Tabbaa and Lucas Morin**

Moderated by Azim Al Ghusseini

**6:40 - 7:00 pm**

(30 mins)

**Book launch and tasting session With Nahla Tabbaa**

**7:00 pm**

**End of Symposium**

PANEL

# WHAT HAVE PLANTS DONE FOR US?

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2:10 - 4:10 PM

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Interest in the botany of the Arabian Peninsula began as early as 420 BC; from Arabian explorers to colonial botanical expeditions, the landscape of the region has fascinated naturalists for centuries. Far from their perception as barren lands, the UAE and Arabian Peninsula deserts are complex and rich environments high in biodiversity.

Plants and trees are the basis of sophisticated traditional medicine practices, and used for thousands of years by the indigenous peoples of this region, with knowledge of plants' medicinal properties passed on orally from one generation to the next. In a region where social patterns are rapidly changing, traditional ways of life along with the knowledge and cultural memory they hold are being lost.



2:10 – 2:50 PM

# DESERT IS A FOREST

Artist talk and conversation with Sunoj D and  
Namrata Neog

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40 mins Sunoj D (Artist) and Namrata Neog (Archaeologist/  
Anthropologist), Lakshmi Nivas\*, Paradur, Kerala

In this talk artist Sunoj D and archaeologist/anthropologist Namrata Neog speak about the concept behind the current artist garden, *Desert is a Forest* at Jameel Arts Centre. Attempting to 'see' through the UAE landscape, *Desert is a Forest* begins with the prompt of how to think like a 'forest'. What kind of negotiations, relationships and hierarchies emerge and submerge in this thinking landscape? The garden translates this idea, exploring the biodiversity within the UAE and the interconnectedness of the goat, the human, the plant and the natural mineral deposits that form in the desert; looking at how these entangled connections make us part of the landscape.

*\* Lakshmi Nivas is an interdisciplinary space in Paradur, Kerala, India, founded by Namrata Neog and Sunoj D in 2018. Lakshmi Nivas' projects mainly emerge as interventions through the philosophy of thinking like a forest. These collaborative interventions tend to be artistic and anthropological, and involve conservation and experiments with food.*

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2:55 - 3:35 PM

# PRESERVING CULTURE THROUGH PLANTS

Lecture by Shahina Ghazanfar

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**40 mins**      **Shahina Ghazanfar, Botanist and Author, Cambridge, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London**

In every region of the world, plants hold significance associated with particular cultural practices. From marriage garlands to funerary wreaths, plants have played an important role in everyday life. Cultural practices associated with plants have helped us to preserve them. The diverse vegetation of the UAE and the larger Arabian Peninsula has also played an important role in preserving the cultural identity of the region. Shahina Ghazanfar looks at various plants found in the UAE that are associated with regional cultural practices and identities. Ghazanfar traces the origins of some of these plants and shows how their cultural value and use may have changed across the Arab World.

3:40 - 4:10 PM

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**30 mins**      **Discussion and Q&A**  
Sunoj D, Namrata Neog and Shahina Ghazanfar moderated by  
Nadine El Khoury, Assistant Curator, Art Jameel

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PANEL

# LIVING ON DRY LAND?

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4:30 - 7:00 PM

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4:30 - 5:20 PM

# GREEN ROOTS

Lecture by Charles Al Hayek

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**50 mins**      **Charles Al Hayek, History Professor and Cultural Heritage Consultant, Beirut, Lebanon**

Charles Al Hayek discusses the history of agriculture in the Middle East and the Arab World; focusing on the eight Neolithic crops native to this region including flax, bitter vetch, chickpea, pea, lentils, barley, einkorn and emmer wheat. He also discusses the Abbasid Agricultural Revolution that shaped medieval food production, Arab botanical manuals and culinary heritage. Al Hayek provides an introduction to the history of crops, skills and ancestral knowledge that has been passed down through generations.

5:20 - 5:40 PM

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**20 mins**      **Discussion and Q&A**  
Moderated by Nora Razian, Head of Exhibitions, Art Jameel

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5:45 - 6:45 PM

# THERE IS AN EDIBLE GOLD

Artist talk and conversation with Moza Almatrooshi and Rahul Gudipudi

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60 mins      Moza Almatrooshi, Conceptual Artist, Chef and Writer, Dubai, UAE with Rahul Gudipudi, Exhibitions Curator, Art Jameel

Moza Almatrooshi relays the findings encountered during the production of her film, *There is an Edible Gold* (2021), commissioned for the exhibition 'Staple: What's on your plate?' curated by Rahul Gudipudi and Dani Burrows at Hayy Jameel, Jeddah. Almatrooshi and Gudipudi share the ways in which the work engaged knowledge on multiple levels (conceptual to educational) and discuss strategies of how conceptual artistic endeavors that connect with urgent thematics, such as food, ecology and climate change, can carve space for learning capacities with the community.

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PANEL

# THE DEEP MEMORY OF THE EARTH

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2:10 - 4:10 PM

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The world is faced with a plethora of environmental concerns; with climate change, loss of biodiversity and tropical deforestation being the main issues impacting on plants. Ethnobotany, the study of the relationship between plants and people, is primarily concerned with the ways indigenous people use and relate to plants, providing deep insight into the human condition. Indigenous peoples are stewards of some of the most sensitive ecosystems on this planet and can inform current approaches to conserving natural resources. Traditional modes of planting and relating to the land including peasant practices, are violently superseded by the productivity and profit of mechanised farming. This mechanistic worldview is the darker side of western modernity. How might contemporary artistic practices offer tools of resistance and solidarity, making visible relationships and structural violence that might otherwise go unperceived?

2:10 – 2:50 PM

# RAINFOREST MEDICINE: THE DEEP-FOREST PERSPECTIVE OF THE WAORANI

Lecture by Jonathon Miller Weisberger

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40 mins      Jonathon Miller Weisberger, Ethnobotanist, Costa Rica  
and Quito, Ecuador

Chronicling the practices, legends and wisdom of the vanishing traditions of the upper Amazon, Jonathon Miller Weisberger's book, *Rainforest Medicine: Preserving Indigenous Science and Biodiversity in the Upper Amazon*, reveals the area's indigenous peoples' approach to living in harmony with the natural world. *Rainforest Medicine* features in-depth essays on plant-based medicine and indigenous science from four distinct Amazonian societies: deep forest and urban, lowland rainforest and mountain. In his talk, Weisberger focuses on his experience with the Waorani people and his work on the demarcation of the Waraoni territory, Waorani ethnobotany and mythology. He continues to collaborate with indigenous families in Ecuador on reforestation and rainforest conservation initiatives.

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2:55 - 3:35 PM

# BARRUNTAREMOS (‘INKLINGS’)

Artist talk and conversation with Asunción Molinos Gordo  
and Soledad Gutiérrez

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40 mins Asunción Molinos Gordo, Artist and Researcher, Madrid,  
Spain. Soledad Gutiérrez, Chief Curator and Executive  
Producer of TBA21 on st\_age, Madrid, Spain

Modernity and progress have led to a global abandonment of traditional forms of knowledge very much connected with rural areas. It is knowledge nurtured by a strong connection with the natural surroundings and emerges from the ability to sense nature; representing alternative ways of inhabiting the world. Asunción Molinos Gordo's talk explores those spaces of unexpected learning as a counter-strategy of worldmaking, referencing her film *Barruntaremos ('Inklings')* which looks into other ways of inhabiting the world and sensing landscape through the voice and experiences of Pedro Sanz Moreno, a shepherd from the region of Segovia (Spain) and knowledge-keeper of *Cabañuelas*.

3:40 - 4:10 PM

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30 mins Discussion and Q&A  
Jonathon Miller Weisberger, Asunción Molinos Gordo and  
Soledad Gutiérrez moderated by Nadia Christidi, Researcher,  
Writer and Art Practitioner, Venice, Italy

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PANEL

# FOOD, COLOUR AND THE MULTISENSORY

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4:30 - 7:00 PM

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Does food change the landscape or does the landscape change the way we consume food? The landscape has long been the tool of ideology and power, specifically the projection and enactment of imperial and nationalistic imagination. From contemporary appropriations of traditional pigment-making, hierarchies with genres of representation to developments of national cuisine, the panel discussions will examine the role of colour in food, landscape and our culinary imagination.

4:30 - 5:10 PM

# TASTING THE EMIRATI COLOURS: LANDSCAPE AND PLACE-MAKING THROUGH NATIONAL FOOD

Lecture by Dr Eloisa Martin

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40 mins      Dr Eloisa Martin, Associate Professor of Sociology, United Arab Emirates University and Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (on leave), Al Ain, UAE.

When referred to food, colours have been generally analysed in terms of their psychological and visual impact: from overall appeal and flavour expectations to visual aesthetics and class distinction when it comes to plating. But little attention has been given to how landscapes both impact and are signified by the colours served as food. This work departs from a sensory ethnography of the UAE national cuisine, which is currently in the making. This perspective considers food as a performative form of art that, as in any other art form, has its own materials, techniques, masters and, most importantly, has an agentic nature. Food changes not just the receptors' world (as Alfred Gell said) but indeed, the landscape.

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5:15 - 5:55 PM

# SHAMSA

## Artist talk and conversation with Nahla Tabbaa and Lucas Morin

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40 mins Nahla Tabbaa, Artist, Dubai, UAE with Lucas Morin, Exhibition Curator, Art Jameel

Nahla Tabbaa was commissioned by Jameel Arts Centre to produce a site specific intervention at Jaddaf Waterfront Sculpture Park. *Shamsa* is a series of time-based interventions that look at the passage of time through the impact of the sun. Tabbaa's commission has resulted in a limited-edition artist's book in collaboration with graphic designer Layan Attari, as well as a selection of flavoured salts, pigments and oil infusions. Bringing together the artist's visual arts and culinary practices, this publication features many recipes derived from ingredients dried on the roof of Jameel Arts Center. Tabbaa uses recipe writing as a way to draw up analogies and metaphors. Non-human elements are personified, given a wide range of feelings and put through evocative processes echoing emotional states such as uprooting or drying. Her recipes are instructional and emotional: they bring about a sense of sharing and imply a complex knowledge of the materials at hand. Nahla Tabbaa is in conversation with curator Lucas Morin about her process developing *Shamsa*. She will then invite audiences to sample the project's outcomes: salts, chocolates, compound butter and more.

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6:00 - 6:30 PM

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**30 mins**      **Discussion and Q&A**  
Dr Eloisa Martin, Nahla Tabbaa and Lucas Morin moderated by  
Azim Al Ghusseini, Artist and Library Coordinator, Art Jameel

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6:40 - 7:00 PM

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**20 mins**      **Book launch and tasting session with Nahla Tabbaa**

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MARCH 26, 27 & 28, 2022

## WHAT'S ON

# FILM PROGRAMME

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MARCH 26, 27 AND 28, 2022

10 AM TO 6 PM DAILY

GALLERY 9, JAMEEL ARTS CENTRE

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Programmed in conjunction with the artist garden commission 'Desert is a Forest' and 'Shifting Earth' symposium, the film programme features works by Asunción Molinos Gordo, Lyndsay Mann, Pedro Neves Marques and Moza Almatrooshi.

PLAYING EACH DAY AT 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM

# BARRUNTAREMOS (‘INKLINGS’)

ASUNCIÓN MOLINOS GORDO

SINGLE CHANNEL VIDEO, 2021, 9 MIN 37 SEC

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND THYSEN BORNEMISZA ART  
CONTEMPORARY FOR ST\_AGE



*Barruntaremos ('Inklings')* looks into other ways of inhabiting the world and sensing landscape through the voice and experiences of Pedro Sanz Moreno; shepherd from the region of Segovia (Spain) and knowledge-keeper of Cabañuelas, a traditional form of weather forecast transmitted from generation to generation based on the ability to read the landscape and surrounding natural elements. The film presents the elements that Pedro takes as a reference and which serve as milestones in his weather predictions for the forthcoming years.

MARCH 26, 27 AND 28, 2022

PLAYING EACH DAY AT 10:10 AM, 12:10 PM, 02:10 PM, 04:10 PM

# A DESIRE FOR ORGANIC ORDER

LYNDSAY MANN

SINGLE CHANNEL HD DIGITAL VIDEO, 2016, 56 MINS  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



*A Desire for Organic Order* examines institutional and individual concepts of nativeness. Filmed inside the Herbarium and Centre for Middle Eastern Plants at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, this location provides points of departure to explore belonging, dispersal and otherness. The film quietly follows the work of conservators meticulously maintaining the archive's international specimens. Each gently moving frame exposes the level of care given to these artefacts, while Mann's eerily neutral voiceover addresses the hidden violence rooted in the collection's origins.

PLAYING EACH DAY AT 11:10 AM, 01:10 PM, 03:10 PM, 05:10 PM

# LINNAEUS AND THE TERMINATOR SEED

PEDRO NEVES MARQUES

DIGITAL ANIMATION VIDEO, 2017, 15 MIN

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND GALLERIA UMBERTO DI MARINO



In *Linnaeus and the Terminator Seed*, Pedro Neves Marques raises the question, “is there a deterministic, evolutionary line connecting modern botany to contemporary transgenics?” Gathering botanical drawings by European naturalists in Latin America and Southeast Asia, plant genome representations, documents about transgenic seeds, as well as modern depictions of the reproductive systems of flowers and humans, this short film-essay explores eighteenth-century botanist, Carl Linnaeus’ classification system of plants to consider the post-natural conditions governing current biotechnology and the colonial management of reproduction.



MARCH 26, 27 AND 28, 2022

PLAYING EACH DAY AT 11:30 AM, 01:30 PM, 03:30 PM, 05:30 PM

# THERE IS AN EDIBLE GOLD

MOZA ALMATROOSHI

MOVING IMAGE, 2021, 27 MIN

COMMISSIONED BY ART JAMEEL



Bees have been collaborating with humans for at least 9,000 years, as a source of medicine and food as well as religious and cultural inspiration. Bees increase food quantity and quality through pollination; and there would be no cucumbers, mustard or almonds without bees. They play a vital part not only in agricultural production but also in forestry and climate regulation. Monocropping, pesticides and higher temperatures associated with climate change all pose serious problems for bee populations and, by extension, for us. Almatrooshi's works in the exhibition lyrically fuse the cares and conflicts that surround bees, their honey and their interactions with humanity. From the knowledge and experience of the beekeeper to the flora and fauna that make the perfect ingredient for honey, to carefully constructed travel cases through which the bees experience immigration issues, discrimination and identity crisis.

# BIOGRAPHIES

**ASUNCIÓN MOLINOS GORDO** (lives and works in Madrid, Spain) is a research-based artist strongly influenced by disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and cultural studies. In her practice she questions the categories that define “innovation” in mainstream discourses today, working to generate a less urban-centric way of understanding progress. The main focus of her work is contemporary peasantry. She employs installation, photography, video, sound and other media to examine the rural realm driven by a strong desire to understand the value and complexity of its cultural production, as well as the burdens that keep it invisible and marginalised. Molinos Gordo won the Sharjah Biennial Prize 2015 with her project WAM (World Agriculture Museum) and represented Spain official section at the 13th Havana Biennial 2019. Her work has been exhibited at venues including V&A Museum (London), Delfina Foundation (London), ARNOLFINI (Bristol), The Townhouse Gallery (Cairo), Darat Al Funun (Amman), Tranzit (Prague), ART BASEL Miami Beach (US), Cappadox Festival (Uchisar-Turkey); amongst others.

**AZIM AL GHUSSEIN** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) is the Library Coordinator at Jameel Library. His current role is centred on collection-building, management and programming within the library. He has a MFA in printmaking from VCU Arts, where he also taught printmaking and DIY publishing courses. He is interested in and creates comics, zines and other independent publications. His previous roles included education and outreach coordinator at Tashkeel and adjunct professor as part of a residency at VCUQ.

**CHARLES AL HAYEK** (lives and works in Beirut, Lebanon) is a history lecturer and cultural heritage consultant. He founded ‘Heritage and Roots’, a social media platform that posts Lebanese, Arab history and cultural heritage content in engaging and enticing ways. He has worked on projects that aim to reconnect citizens to their history and heritage in Lebanon. Al Hayek was a resident writer at the Centre of Arts and Humanities, American University of Beirut (AUB) (2020-2021) where he worked on writing and producing a series of short documentaries, *Lebanon’s centennial: a hundred years of fact and fiction*. Al Hayek is currently doing an MA in Arab and Middle Eastern History at the Centre for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies, AUB.

**DAWN ROSS** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) is Head of Collections at Art Jameel and oversees the Art Jameel Collection and associated exhibitions, both those at Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai and Hayy Jameel, Jeddah. She also leads on site specific artist’s projects at Jameel Arts Centre, including the Artist’s Garden commissions. Previously, she has worked in arts institutions and festivals in Australia, Scotland and the UAE, most recently heading up not-for-profit artist’s projects at Art Dubai. She has experience in museum collections, exhibitions, programming, audience outreach and community projects.

**DR ELOÍSA MARTÍN** (lives and works in Al Ain, UAE) is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the United Arab Emirates University and Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (on leave). She is the Vice-president for Publications of International Sociological

Association, and the co-chair of SEPHIS Programme. She has been a visiting professor in more than 30 universities in 27 different countries and has been working on qualitative research in Sociology of Culture for more than 20 years. Her research and publications have a focus on religion, popular culture, fandom, knowledge production, and more recently, food studies. Since January 2019 she has led a research project on Emirati Food and Culture, at UAE University and Al Qasimi Foundation, which is the first one in the area of social sciences in the UAE.

**JONATHAN MILLER WEISBERGER** (lives and works between Costa Rica, Ecuador) is an ethnobotanist and has spent the past 30 years studying rainforest plant medicine traditions. Since 1996 he has organised biannual 'Rainforest Medicine Council Gatherings', experiential workshops journeys, and ethnobotanical immersions for 'Personal, Community and Planetary Renewal', offering participants an intimate opportunity to meet and learn from cultural adepts, the mighty rainforest and the omnipotent plant teachers themselves. He is the author of *Rainforest Medicine - Preserving Indigenous Science and Biodiversity in the Upper Amazon*, a book brought forth as an offering to allow for some of the cultural wisdom related to sacred plant medicine traditions to follow the plants as they circulate the globe.

**LUCAS MORIN** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) is Exhibitions Curator at Jameel Arts Centre, collaborating closely with artists and researchers to deliver new exhibitions, publications and commissions for Jaddaf Waterfront Sculpture Park. Before joining, Morin was Curator at Bétonsalon - Centre for Art and Research, in Paris, and previously worked at the Sursock Museum in Beirut. He holds a particular interest in research-based practices with a social and historical emphasis and animals (particularly cats).

**LYNDSAY MANN** (lives and works between Edinburgh and Berlin) is an artist-filmmaker. She researches ways that embodied experiences can resist and transform structural pressures. Her work seeks routes for redress and reciprocity, examining institutional narratives of objective knowledge and how these infiltrate our personal perspectives. Voice and belonging are central subjects in her practice. Her observational yet intimate moving image works also integrate drawing, sculpture and writing. Lyndsay studied Fine Art at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London and completed a PhD in Art and Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh in 2017. Recent solo and group exhibitions, and screenings include Folkestone Triennial; Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; videoclub + ArtScience Museum, Singapore; Cooper Gallery, Dundee; LUX Scotland; Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; Glasgow Film Festival and MAP; Edinburgh International Film Festival; and Care of Center for Contemporary Art, Milan.

**MOZA ALMATROOSHI** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) is a conceptual artist, chef and writer. She obtained an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2019. Almatrooshi's practice operates within the study of erased mythology of the Arabian Peninsula, and correlates these myths with the structures that are upheld by the present regional political climate. Through a fictive lens, her themes materialise in performances, moving images, audio media, as well as text. Almatrooshi's work has been performed in the V&A Museum in London (2019), selected by the ICA London and BBC for the New Creatives project, and displayed in the second Lahore Biennale (2020).

**NADIA CHRISTIDI** (lives and works in Venice, Italy) is a Syrian, Palestinian and Greek researcher, writer and arts practitioner. Her work explores the political and economic

## BIOGRAPHIES

dimensions of environmental imaginaries, earth sciences, and their representation in literature, art and design. She has exhibited at Beirut Art Center; SALT Galata, Istanbul; and SALT Ulus, Ankara. Nadia was previously Assistant Director at Beirut Art Center and Interpretation and Learning Lead at Darat al Funun, Amman, and has worked on exhibition projects with Ashkal Alwan and the Young Arab Theatre Fund. Her writing has been published by Arteeast, ArtAsiaPacific and TandemWorks. Nadia holds a BA in History of Art (2006) from Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania and an MA in Historical Studies (2015) from the New School for Social Research, New York. She is currently a PhD candidate in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society at MIT.

**NADINE EL KHOURY** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) is Assistant Curator at Art Jameel working with the Exhibition and Collection teams on researching, developing and producing exhibitions and publications for both Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai and Hayy Jameel, Jeddah. She has a passion for agriculture and botany and has worked closely with UAE farmers on projects such as the biennial Artist's Garden commission. Previously she has had experience in art publishing and exhibition-making as well as being a practicing artist.

**NAHLA TABBAA** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) is an artist working with different mediums such as urban research, the culinary arts, ceramics and drawing alchemy. Her work has been presented at Art Dubai (2021, 2022), East East, Seaf Cohort 8 and Beynyn. She is currently earning a post graduate degree at Inland Academy- Art, Agriculture and Territories. She earned her MA in Curatorial Practice from the Bath School of Art and Design (2012), and her BFA in Sculpture from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (2009). She previously led and developed the community programme

at Sharjah Art Foundation, and currently develops education projects independently and in collaboration with institutions including Art Jameel, Warehouse 421 and the Beacon House National Trust University. She is the co-founder of The Alchemy of Dyeing; an alchemical dyeing educational platform; Forsa School; a critical and professional programme for artists and Daftar Asfar; a sketchbook publishing collective.

**NAMRATA NEOG** (lives and works in Parudur, Kerala) is trained in history, archaeology and anthropology from Delhi University, India and Cardiff University, UK. Her work revolves around inquisitions of human/non-human negotiations in the landscape and seeing politics. She received the Cyril Fox Award from Cardiff University, which supported her archaeological/anthropological research work in Serbia 2013-14.

**NORA RAZIAN** (lives and works in Dubai, UAE) manages the exhibitions programme at the Jameel Arts Centre, and contributes to curatorial thinking across the board. Previous roles include heading up programmes at the Sursock Museum, Beirut, and curating public programmes at Tate, London. She has an MA in Anthropology and Cultural Politics from Goldsmiths College, London, where she also designed and taught the MA course 'Critical Pedagogy in Contested Space' at the Centre for Arts and Learning.

**PEDRO NEVES MARQUES** (lives and works in New York) is a director, visual artist and writer. Recent solo shows include CA2M, Madrid), Castello di Rivoli, Turin, and the High Line, New York; group shows include the Guangzhou Image Triennial, Liverpool Biennial, Gwangju Biennale, Tate Modern, London and Serpentine Gallery, London; and film festivals such as the Toronto International Film Festival, New York Film Festival, European Film Awards and Indie Lisboa. Neves Marques was awarded the Present

Future Art Prize, 2018; the Pinchuk Future Generation Special Prize, 2021; and will be representing Portugal at the 59th Venice Biennale, 2022.

**RAHUL GUDIPUDI** (lives and works in Jeddah, KSA) is Exhibitions Curator at Art Jameel, working on exhibitions and programmes at Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai and Hayy Jameel, Jeddah. His interests include socio-technics, learning and translocal transdisciplinary community practices. He is currently a member of the curatorial advisory and editorial board for the New Alphabet School programme at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin and curatorial advisor at The Story of Foundation, a transdisciplinary learning platform in Goa, India.

**SHAHINA GHAZANFAR** (lives and works in Cambridge, UK) is a botanist who has pursued research into plant taxonomy and conservation on four continents. In Pakistan, she has contributed to the Flora of Pakistan authoring many plant families. As an associate professor at Sultan Qaboos University, Oman, she conducted extensive in-country fieldwork that led to publishing the four-volume *Flora of Oman* (2003-2018). Her work extends to practical applications, with the *Handbook of Arabian Medicinal Plants* (1994: CRC Press) and various papers on medicinal plants of the Middle East. Her work at the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji resulted in *Trees of Fiji* (co-author G. Keppel) as well as distance teaching to 5 Pacific nations. In 2001 she joined the staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew as co-editor for the *Flora of Tropical East Africa* and later as editor of *Flora of Iraq*. At Kew, she developed collaborative projects in seed banking, restoration of damaged landscapes, and use of native plants for landscaping, and building capacity in Arabia. She is an accomplished natural historian and field naturalist with a distinguished publication record. In 2021, she received the prestigious Linnean Medal for botany.

**SOLEDAD GUTIÉRREZ RODRÍGUEZ** (lives and works in Madrid, Spain) is Chief Curator at TBA21 and is Executive Producer of TBA21 on stage. She has been working in the arts for the last 20 years, occupying different positions in various institutions from the Guggenheim Bilbao, to the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), and the Whitechapel Gallery in London. Most recently, she was the Director of CentroCentro in Madrid, where she developed a programme based on contemporary artistic practice and collective learning. Her research deals with cooperative practices and the immaterial potential of art realised through performance and collective processes.

**SUNOJ D** (lives and works in Parudur, Kerala) is a contemporary visual artist. He graduated in painting from Chitra Kala Parishad, Bangalore, and a postgraduate degree in Printmaking from Bangalore University. His works reflect the politics and fluidity of meaning in materials, stemming from a critical engagement with the landscape and the myriad relations that shape it.

