

## Hassan Sharif: I Am The Single Work Artist Exhibit Travels from Sharjah, UAE to Malmö, Sweden



**Ruba Hattar**

Published October 13th, 2020 - 09:10 GMT



Hassan Sharif, *Dictionary*, 1981. Photographs and pencil on mounting board and glue, dictionary pages and cotton rope. Installation view: Hassan Sharif: *I Am The Single Work Artist*, Malmö Konsthall, 2020. Sharjah Art Foundation Collection. Photo: Helene Toresdotter

Hassan Sharif: *I Am The Single Work Artist* traces nearly five decades of the artist's multimedia practice

**The Sharjah Art Foundation exhibition *Hassan Sharif: I Am The Single Work Artist* is currently on view at Malmö Konsthall from 19 September 2020 to 10 January 2021. Originally curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, Director of Sharjah Art Foundation, the exhibition was first staged in 2017–2018 at the Foundation and was the most extensive presentation of the late artist's prominent career. Following its 2020 presentation at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, the exhibition is currently on view at its second European venue, Malmö Konsthall, curated by Mats Stjernstedt, Director of Malmö Konsthall and Hoor Al Qasimi.**

Hassan Sharif: *I Am The Single Work Artist* traces nearly five decades of the artist's multimedia practice, through over 150 works from the artist's diverse oeuvre, which range from early satirical cartoons and

documentation of performances in the Hatta desert to sculptural works that were produced in the last year of his life, and emphasizes the artist's sculptural works and objects.

*“Hassan Sharif was a strong advocate for the contemporary art community in the Emirates and the impact of his highly experimental, prescient body of work continues to reverberate today,” said Hoor Al Qasimi. “We are humbled to have worked with him since his presentation at the first Sharjah Biennial in 1993 and to have witnessed his incredible impact through the years, and we are delighted to partner with a distinguished institution like Malmö Konsthall to showcase his work to new audiences around the world.”*

The Konsthall will be providing visitors the opportunity to experience the major retrospective through audio tours designed for adults and children in Swedish, English and Arabic. Throughout the exhibition, Malmö Konsthall will also be offering educational programmes that are suitable for visitors of all ages, including guided tours and creative workshops in Arabic. Educational activities around Hassan Sharif: I am The Single Work Artist also include a book club that focuses on works related to the exhibition and the programme, ‘Change the Arts’, introducing youth ages 15 to 19 to the basics of artistic critique, publication-making and how to design a guided exhibition tour.

This exhibition is organised by Sharjah Art Foundation (UAE), KW Institute for Contemporary Art (Germany) and Malmö Konsthall (Sweden). The presentation at KW Institute for Contemporary Art is curated by Hoor Al Qasimi and Krist Gruijthuisen, and at Malmö Konsthall by Hoor Al Qasimi and Mats Stjernstedt.



*Hassan Sharif: I Am The Single Work Artist Exhibit Poster from the Malmö Konsthall webpage.*

Sharif was born in 1951 in Dubai, where he lived and worked until his death in 2016. He graduated from the Byam Shaw School of Art, London (1984), and returned to the UAE, where he began staging interventions and exhibitions of contemporary art in Sharjah.

A pioneer of conceptual art and experimental practice in the Middle East, Hassan Sharif explored form, time, social action and mathematical systems throughout his career. His work is marked by the use of common materials in accumulative installations as well as complex social and philosophical reflection.

Since 1993, Sharif's work has also been exhibited in eight Sharjah Biennials, most recently in Sharjah Biennial 12 (2015) and over 90 of his works are currently part of the Foundation's collection, from small works on paper to large installations. The Foundation is also custodian of Sharif's studio and personal archives. Sharif's work has also been shown in 1980–Today: Exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates, UAE Pavilion, 56th Venice Biennale (2015); and ADACH Platform for Visual Arts, 53rd Venice Biennale (2009). Sharif graduated from the Byam Shaw School of Art, London (1984), and returned to the UAE, where he began staging interventions and exhibitions of contemporary art in Sharjah.

Moving between roles as artist, educator, critic and writer, Sharif worked to encourage the engagement of local audiences with contemporary art through his Arabic translations of historical art texts and manifestos. He was a founder of The Flying House, Dubai (2007); Art Atelier, Youth Theatre and Arts, Dubai (1987); Al Mureijah Art Atelier, Sharjah (1984) and Emirates Fine Arts Society, Sharjah (1980). All these organisations support interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary art in the Emirates through mentorship and exhibition.

His work is part of the collections at M+, Hong Kong; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi; Sharjah Art Museum; and Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah.