

# The Arab Weekly

## Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival offers viewers a transcendental experience

The festival's 22nd edition attracted 108 artists from 31 countries.

Sunday 05/01/2020



Undiscovered realms. Sharjah ruler Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad al-Qasimi at the inauguration of Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival at the Sharjah Arts Museum. (Sharjah Department of Culture)

"Prospect," or an imaginative journey to undiscovered realms, is the theme of this year's Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival, which showcases Islamic art from the region and the world in the emirate's art and academic institutions and public squares.

Organised by the Cultural Affairs Department at the Sharjah Department of Culture, the festival's 22nd edition attracted 108 artists from 31 countries. Artworks are being displayed in 55 exhibitions around the city, including the main venue at the Sharjah Art Museum, the Calligraphy Square, Al Majaz Waterfront, Al Majaz Amphitheatre, Maraya Art Centre, Al Qasba Sharjah University and University City.



The month-long event, which ends January 21, will be celebrated across the emirate through 253 exhibitions, lectures and workshops. “The theme prompts contemplation and venturing into a journey towards visual realms that exist beyond the limits of space. It is the practice of imagination that can invoke the absent beautiful and undiscovered realms,” said Mohammed al-Qaseer, director of Cultural Affairs at the Sharjah Department of Culture.

At the Sharjah Art Museum, the artists impressed viewers through the sheer scale of the vision and choice of the medium to express their creations. At the Al Majaz Waterfront, two installations are designed to captivate the public.

“Horizon to Horizon” by Sinta Tantra, a British artist of Balinese descent, is inspired by Rumi’s poem on moonlight. The work is a celebration of light and colour, bursting with energy and life as well as featuring Islamic motifs and colours.

“I am open to developing a unique colour palette in response to Sharjah,” said Tantra, who has used classical Islamic gold paint for certain geometrical elements to make the work glow vibrantly during the day and the moonlight in the evening.