

FIELD TRIP: SHARJAH BIENNIAL 12

BY HG MASTERS

Curated by Eungie Joo, Sharjah Biennial 12, “The Past, the Present, the Possible,” featured a compact lineup of 50-plus artists and groups from 25 countries, with many newly commissioned projects and the use of several new sites around the Gulf emirate. Eschewing the grab-bag presentation and heavy polemical themes commonly deployed in biennials, Joo instead showcased artists’ practices in depth or created opportunities for ambitious, site-specific solo projects. The result was more of an exhibition than a festival, as Joo nudged the biennial format away from wide-angled superficiality that make them akin to displays at today’s art fairs. Here’s a look at a handful of the memorable projects from “The Past, the Present, the Possible,” before a full review is published in the May/June issue of *ArtAsiaPacific*.



Further afield, in a Port Khalid warehouse slated for demolition was MICHAEL JOO’s *Locale Inscribed (Walking in the desert with Eisa towards the sun looking down)* (2014–15), in which he had painted the far wall in a reflective silver and excavated a deep ravine in front of it down to the port’s waterline. Throughout the space were grooves cut in the concrete floor that echoed falaj water channels. Photo by HG Masters for *ArtAsiaPacific*.

Sharjah Biennial 12: “The Past, the Present, the Possible” can be seen from now until June 5, 2015, at various venues in Sharjah.

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URL: <http://artasiapacific.com/Blog/FieldTripSharjahBiennial12>