The Art Gallery at NYUAD Announces Its Fall Show, Invisible Threads: Technology and Its Discontents

Press Release

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The fall exhibition at The Art Gallery at NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) will explore the tensions that emerge in our everyday relationships with technology, looking at such issues as isolation vs. connectedness, and privacy vs. social media. With an opening reception on 22 September, and on through 31 December, Invisible Threads: Technology and its Discontentswill feature works by 15 international artists, including such renowned names as Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and American artist Addie Wagenknecht.

The information age has given us modes and means of communication unrivalled in history, ranging from smartphones and social media to electronic financial and other transactions. Yet these same tools also generate anxiety about a user’s exposure via these modes, whether to risk of hackers or from technology’s effect on our environment.

Invisible Threads will present a nuanced discussion of a global topic, framed by the region’s complex relationship to the benefits and pitfalls that accompany technological advances.
The artworks expose these institutional and aesthetic frameworks of control, pulling back the curtain on a part of our lives that we have come to take for granted. The curators hope to generate dialog and reflection around our use of these everyday tools.

Notably, *Invisible Threads* inaugurates one of NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery’s unique program strategies: inviting scholars and specialists from across the academic spectrum to guest-curate a major exhibition. *Invisible Threads* is co-curated by Professor Scott Fitzgerald, Program Head of Interactive Media at NYU Abu Dhabi, with Bana Kattan, a Curator at the NYUAD Art Gallery.


**Co-curator Bana Kattan** commented: “From the Industrial Revolution, to the dawn of space travel, and the creation of the internet, technological revolutions have had profound impacts on the arts. This universal theme is especially relevant in the UAE, a country that is home to extraordinary state-level technological innovations, as well as a remarkably tech-savvy, connected population. In keeping with the NYUAD Art Gallery’s mission to produce exhibitions that are both internationally significant and locally relevant, this exhibit showcases some of the most interesting artwork being made today around the topic of the individual’s experience with technology. I am honored to be bringing this theme to the forefront of the UAE art scene with the expertise of my co-curator, Professor Fitzgerald, without whom this project would not have been possible.”

**Co-Curator Professor Scott Fitzgerald** said: “The ways we treat and use technology are central to my practice and teaching. This show is an exciting opportunity for me to work through these ideas in a new context. The artists in the show represent a spectrum of established and emerging talents who offer a broad and critical look at the way we have enshrined these tools in practically every aspect of our lives. Collectively, they help present a past, present, and future of our evolving relationship with technologies.”

Built on the proposition that interaction with global ideas is beneficial to the society that sustains it, the NYUAD Art Gallery continues to push boundaries with curatorial premises that confront contemporary social themes. With *Invisible Threads*, as with previous shows such as the Slavs and Tatars’ *Mirrors for Princes: Both Sides of the Tongue*, the Art Gallery aims to foster curiosity and critical reflection in the growing arts audience of the UAE.

*Invisible Threads* will be complemented by a full public program of events and talks for all ages.

For more details visit [nyuad-artgallery.org](http://nyuad-artgallery.org).

announcements, arts
About NYU Abu Dhabi

NYU Abu Dhabi is the first comprehensive liberal arts and science campus in the Middle East to be operated abroad by a major American research university. NYU Abu Dhabi has integrated a highly-selective liberal arts, engineering and science curriculum with a world center for advanced research and scholarship enabling its students to succeed in an increasingly interdependent world and advance cooperation and progress on humanity’s shared challenges. NYU Abu Dhabi’s high-achieving students have come from 115 nations and speak over 115 languages. Together, NYU's campuses in New York, Abu Dhabi, and Shanghai form the backbone of a unique global university, giving faculty and students opportunities to experience varied learning environments and immersion in other cultures at one or more of the numerous study-abroad sites NYU maintains on six continents.

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