



## GAZA BIENNALE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ANNOUNCING GAZA BIENNALE 2024-2025

**Deir Al Balah, Gaza, November 20, 2024** – In April 2024 artists from Gaza began to gather together under a single project, to find ways to utilize art to resist this genocide. Many artists in Gaza have been working throughout this war, defying all challenges, creating works that remind us that art is essential to life and our survival as a species. A collective project has emerged into a global art event, the *Gaza Biennale*.

The significance of this project lies in its ability to place art at the forefront of a global awakening, to challenge the art field to reckon with the weight of genocide, and to present a model of resilience, and fulfill a desperate need to recognize the depth and complexity of human life. The right of a people to exist with dignity on their land is fundamental to the purpose of art itself. The work we present goes beyond breaking news, media coverage, and statistics. Despite the sorrow and pain brought by the circumstances, and amid the scent of death, artists in Gaza plant seeds of hope for humanity, not only in Gaza but across the world, through creativity and innovation.

The Gaza Biennale marks a creative step outside the traditional frameworks of exhibitions. It reflects the sensitivity and specificity of our situation, making it an urgent and exceptional event. At the heart of the artistic purpose is the struggle of a people to survive.

The Gaza Biennale is a collective event, a growing network, and perhaps a movement. While war has scattered and displaced our people, the biennale gathers over 40 artists on a single platform, uniting their voices.

Emerging from deep roots, this Biennale extends an open invitation to local and international institutions to host and produce these exhibitions and to work with us as partners. We offer a unique opportunity to art institutions to exhibit invaluable works that reflect the need for creativity in the darkest of times.

Can the art world turn its attention to the reality of Gaza today? Should Gaza's artists create art under the weight of genocide? Will the art world honor this work rather than exploit it? These are the questions this project contends with.

This biennale proposes new rules of engagement within the context of art. The stakes are too high to wait for the appraisal from some established framework. At the same time, we

are witnessing the failure of institutional frameworks to prevent the desecration of human life. So, from these cracks and disingenuous policies, we are stepping forward on our own accord, creating work that speaks with a force that cannot be denied. Each artist, each artwork, each exhibition exists despite the impossible reality from which it is born, as its material forms emerge in its defiance.

With the near total destruction of artworks, monuments, museums, mosques, churches, and cultural heritage sites, how can we reclaim what is lost? There is much to accomplish, and this biennale is only the beginning, as Gaza will continue to begin again and again, just as humanity and art is a perpetual rebirth.

We represent a future realized from the very best of what humanity has to offer: the power to transcend the worst of humanity through creativity, and our capacity to witness the worst parts of our collective behavior in order to build a better world.

This biennale is a unique event unlike any previous biennale. We invite viewers to look deep into themselves, to learn from the struggle, and to bow in humility before the fragility of life on this earth.

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We hereby announce from here, from the land of Gaza, the launch of the ***Gaza Biennale***, with the participation of over 40 artists, to affirm that Palestinian art pierces through all besieged spaces. No war can stop the dreams of dreamers, and no mechanisms of domination extinguish the light in the hearts and minds of creators. On behalf of all the participating artists, including those who, due to war and geographical division, are unable to join us physically, we affirm the following:

1. **Through art, we resist all forms of genocide and oppression.**
2. **We continue to give and create, despite all obstacles and challenges.**
3. **Through art, we transcend barriers, ensuring that the voices of Palestinian artists reach the world, reaffirming Palestinians' right to speak and be heard.**
4. **The Biennale represents the starting point for collective artistic work, uniting many parties and institutions that believe in the justice of our cause and the power of art.**
5. **The Biennale emerged despite dispersion, displacement, and suffering endured by artists, gathering to fill a need—for invention, dignity and purpose, we present a vision for a better future.**

This Biennale is a call to the world, to artists and cultural institutions, to stand in solidarity with Palestinian artists, support them, and work together to ensure that their voices and stories remain present, and that their works remain a testament to struggle and resilience, lighting a path for humanity in the most dire times.