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**Title and theme of the Sharjah Architecture Triennial 2023 announced as  
*The Beauty of Impermanence: An Architecture of Adaptability***

Curated by Tosin Oshinowo, this edition will explore links between scarcity, creativity and design



*Courtesy Limbo Accra*

The President of the Sharjah Architecture Triennial, Hoor Al Qasimi, and the Curator of the second edition, Tosin Oshinowo, today announced the title and theme of the Triennial as *The Beauty of Impermanence: An Architecture of Adaptability*. The title refers to how issues of scarcity in the Global South have created a culture of re-use, re-appropriation, innovation, collaboration and adaptation. Through the lens of these differing modes of practice, the Triennial – opening in November 2023 – will explore how we can reorient global conversations to create a more sustainable, resilient and equitable future.

The prevailing idea that architecture's iconic works must remain constant over time has led to an erosion of the distinctive and adaptive architectural practices of the Global South that respond directly to culture, place and climate. Whilst historically subordinated in favour of an ethos of permanence in architecture pervasive in the Global North, these methods – shaped by the rhythms of everyday life, climate and material availability – offer design solutions for the many challenges facing our populations.

Elaborating on the relevance of the theme for Sharjah, Oshinowo said: *'Sharjah is an incredible venue to explore impermanence, adaptability, and scarcity as they relate to the future of architecture - both because of the natural extreme climate conditions, and because of the overwhelming presence of impermanence in civic status. It confronts head-on the challenge of extreme climate within its traditional architecture and the inevitability of human transience that is easily ignored in many other areas of the world. A study of Sharjah provides the foundation to explore approaches to architecture that prioritize an understanding of impermanence, an embrace of the inevitability of scarcity, and a psychology of the collective that is essential for our shared future globally.'*



Bringing together a range of voices and perspectives, Oshinowo – Lagos-based Nigerian architect and founder of cmDesign Atelier – has put together a curatorial advisory board of international architects, artists and designers to enrich her curatorial vision for 2023. The board includes: **Hoor Al Qasimi**, President of Sharjah Architecture Triennial and President & Director of Sharjah Art Foundation; **Beatrice Galilee**, Co-Founder and executive director of a new platform for architecture and design discourse, *The World Around*; **Mariam Kamara**, Founder of architecture and research firm Atelier Masomi in Niger; **Rahul Mehrotra**, Founder of architecture firm RMA Architects of Mumbai + Boston and Chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design; **Yinka Shonibare CBE RA**, British-Nigerian artist; and **Paulo Tavares**, Brazilian architect and urbanist. Their expertise and insight will augment Oshinowo’s vision for the Triennial as a platform for discourse on the alternative creative strategies that are urgently required as architecture strives for a better future.

See [here](#) for Oshinowo’s full curatorial statement.

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## Notes to Editors

### Sharjah Architecture Triennial

Founded in 2018 by Khalid Al Qasimi, Sharjah Architecture Triennial (SAT) is a platform for architecture and urbanism in a region that extends from West Asia to South Asia and the African continent. Physically anchored in Sharjah and the United Arab Emirates, SAT aims to engage diverse audiences and stakeholders in a collective conversation on architecture at the neighbourhood, city, and regional levels. Institutional research and programming support on-going critical reflection through exhibitions, publications, and public programmes in tandem with its international editions. SAT is committed to pursuing a multi-disciplinary approach that fosters an understanding of the broader role of architecture, including its relation to social and environmental issues.

### Tosin Oshinowo

Tosin Oshinowo is a Lagos-based Nigerian architect and designer. The founder and principal of cmDesign Atelier (cmD+A), which she established in 2012, Oshinowo has worked on a number of civic, commercial and



residential projects throughout Nigeria. She is renowned for her insights into socially responsive approaches to architecture, design and urbanism.

Oshinowo's key designs include a project with the United Nations Development Programme to build an entirely new community in northern Nigeria for a village displaced by Boko Haram, and the Maryland Mall in Lagos. Her work spans into the conceptual sphere, demonstrating a strong interest in architectural history while embodying a contemporary perspective on the next generation of African design, innovation, and afro-minimalism. She partnered with Lexus on conceptual design explorations for Design Miami/ 2020 and co-curated the second Lagos Biennial in 2019.

Oshinowo is a registered Architect in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and a member of the Royal Institute of the British Architects. Prior to founding cmD+A, she worked in the offices of Skidmore Owings & Merrill in London and the Office of Metropolitan Architecture Rotterdam, where she was part of the team that designed the 4th Mainland Bridge proposal in 2008. Upon returning to Lagos, she practised at James Cubitt Architects and led on notable projects, including the corporate head office building for Nigeria LNG in Port Harcourt. She has a BSc in Architecture from Kingston University, London; a MA in Urban Design in Development from the Bartlett School of Architecture, London; and a Diploma in Architecture from the Architecture Association London.

### **Hoor Al Qasimi**

Hoor Al Qasimi is the President, Director and Curator of Sharjah Art Foundation which she established in 2009 as a catalyst and advocate for the arts in Sharjah, UAE, as well as regionally and internationally. With a passion for supporting experimentation and innovation in the arts, Al Qasimi has continuously expanded the scope of the Foundation over its 10-year history to include major exhibitions that have toured internationally; artist and curator residencies in visual art, film and music; commissions and production grants for emerging artists; and a wide range of educational programming in Sharjah for both children and adults. In 2003, Al Qasimi co-curated Sharjah Biennial 6 and has since continued as Biennial Director. Under Al Qasimi's leadership, the Sharjah Biennial has become an internationally recognised platform for contemporary artists, curators and cultural producers. Her leadership in the field led to her election as President of the International Biennial Association (IBA) in 2017, an appointment that transferred IBA's headquarters to Sharjah. Complementing her role at the Foundation, Al Qasimi also serves as the President of The Africa Institute and President of Sharjah Architecture Triennial, which inaugurated its first edition in November 2019. Al Qasimi served as curator of the second Lahore Biennale, which opened in January 2020 across the city of Lahore, Pakistan.

Al Qasimi serves on the Board of Directors for Kunst-Werke Berlin e. V. in Germany and Ashkal Alwan in Beirut, Lebanon. She is the Chair of the Advisory Board for the College of Fine Arts and Design at the University of Sharjah and is a member of the advisory boards for Khoj International Artists' Association, New Delhi, India and Darat al Funun, Amman, Jordan



### **Beatrice Galilee**

Beatrice Galilee is a London-born curator, writer and cultural advisor who is internationally recognized for her expertise in global contemporary architecture and design. She is the author of *Radical Architecture of the Future* and served as the first curator of contemporary architecture and design at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Galilee is co-founder and executive director of The World Around, a new platform for contemporary design and architecture that is in residence at the Guggenheim Museum.

Galilee is a visiting associate professor at Pratt Institute where she lectures on curating. She served as chief curator of the 2013 Lisbon Architecture Triennale; co-curator of 2011 Gwangju Design Biennale; and co-curator of 2009 Shenzhen Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale. She launched and co-directed The Gopher Hole, an experimental exhibition and project space in London. Galilee is a respected critic: her reviews on contemporary design have been published in several international magazines, books and newspapers.

### **Mariam Kamara**

Mariam Issoufou Kamara is an architect from Niger. She studied architecture at the University of Washington. In 2014, she founded atelier masōmī, an architecture and research practice that tackles public, cultural, residential, commercial and urban design projects. The firm is headquartered in Niamey, with a design studio in New York. Kamara believes that architects have an important role to play in creating spaces that elevate, give dignity, and provide people with a better quality of life. The firm's completed projects include the Hikma Community Complex, a library and mosque complex, which won two Global LafargeHolcim Awards for sustainable architecture. Other works include the Niamey 2000 Housing project, a response to Niger's housing crisis which was shortlisted for the 2022 Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Upcoming projects include the Yantala Office building in Niger, the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development in Liberia and Hayyan, a housing development in Sharjah, UAE. Kamara has occupied academic roles as adjunct associate professor of Urban Studies at Brown University and as the 2021 Aga Khan critic at Harvard Graduate School of Design. Kamara is a 2019 Laureate of the Prince Claus Award and the New York Times named her as one of 15 Creative Women of Our Time. The firm has been on the AD100 list since 2021.

### **Rahul Mehrotra**

Rahul Mehrotra is an architect, urbanist and educator who studied at the School of Architecture, Ahmedabad and the Graduate School of Design at Harvard (1987). He is the Founder Principal of RMA Architects and has written and lectured extensively on issues to do with architecture, conservation and urban planning and design in Mumbai and India.

Mehrotra has designed projects that range from recycling urban land and master planning in Mumbai to the design of art spaces, boutiques, weekend houses, factories, social institutes and office buildings across India. In 2015, RMA Architects completed the 'Lab of the Future' on the Novartis Campus in Basel, Switzerland, and



were finalist in an international design competition for the Museum of Modern Art in Sydney. In 2018, RMA Architects were awarded the Venice Architecture Biennale Jury's 'Special Mention' for 'three projects that address issues of intimacy and empathy, gently diffusing social boundaries and hierarchies.'

### **Yinka Shonibare CBE RA**

Yinka Shonibare is a British-Nigerian artist based in London. He studied Fine Art at Byam Shaw School of Art, London (1989) and received his MFA from Goldsmiths, University of London (1991). His interdisciplinary practice uses citations of Western art history and literature to question the validity of contemporary cultural and national identities within the context of globalisation. Through examining race, class and the construction of cultural identity, his works comment on the tangled interrelationship between Africa and Europe, and their respective economic and political histories.

In 2013, Shonibare was elected a Royal Academician and was awarded the honour of Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2019. In 2021, he was awarded the prestigious Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon Award and co-ordinated the annual Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. His works are in notable museum collections, including the Tate Collection, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

### **Paulo Tavares**

Paulo Tavares' practice dwells at the frontiers between architecture, visual cultures and advocacy. Operating across multiple fields and media, his work opens a collaborative arena aimed at environmental justice and counter-hegemony narratives. Tavares is the author of several books questioning the colonial legacies of modernity, most recently *Des-Habitat* (2019) and *Lucio Costa era Racista?* (2022). He leads the spatial agency autonoma and was co-curator of the 2019 Chicago Architecture Biennial.