

The Jean-Paul Najar Foundation for Contemporary Art to Open March 2016
For Immediate Release | March 2016



Jean-Paul Najar Official Portrait. Photo by Magali Prod'Hom, 1990

“... through art,
sublimation is completed
in a way that
my brain, my spirit,
is totally satisfied”

–Jean-Paul Najar

The JEAN-PAUL NAJAR FOUNDATION is pleased to announce the opening of a permanent space for its Collection of European and American abstract art from the 1960s to today. By making its home in Dubai, the JEAN-PAUL NAJAR FOUNDATION, presented in partnership with Alserkal Avenue, is honoured to connect this seminal period of contemporary art history to the extraordinary energy of such a burgeoning international art destination. The new dedicated space designed by Mario Jossa of Marcel Breuer & Associates will offer a full programme of exhibitions and related public events.

A non-profit private museum, and registered ICOM member, the Foundation has three main goals: to present its permanent collection, to support its artists and to converse with a new generation of collectors. To achieve this, the Foundation is committed to educational programs, ongoing acquisitions, guided tours and *Friends of the Foundation* events, engaging the audience and opening a conversation.

After a successful pop-up event in November 2015, the inaugural exhibition *Jean-Paul Najar: Vision & Legacy*, curated by Jessamyn Fiore, will reflect on the Founder's immense care for, and understanding of the artists. "Presenting individual masterpieces from the last half century, as well as letters and ephemera from several artists throughout the decades, the show will provide an insightful look into Jean-Paul Najar's lifelong friendships with artists" Fiore says.

The Collection has evolved through time, staying true to its anchor in abstraction while gathering conceptual works that still challenge and inspire contemporary art to this day. Artists include Martin Barré, Jene Highstein, Richard Nonas, Doug Sanderson, James Bishop, Gordon Matta-Clark, Suzanne Harris, Marcia Hafif, Christian Bonnefoi, and Linda Francis, to name a few.

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Editor's Notes:

Jean-Paul Najjar

Born in Buenos-Aires, Argentina, in 1948, Jean-Paul lived most of his life in Paris, France. An economist by training with a degree in Economics from the University of Paris, Najjar was a pianist, photographer, art collector, sculptor and fashion designer. Whilst building his own personal art collection beginning in the mid-1960s, Jean-Paul also amassed an impressive collection of furniture, vinyl records, and art books from the same period. He organized many contemporary art and photography exhibitions in Paris and throughout the world. In addition, he was a prolific writer, publishing numerous articles and catalogues around contemporary art practice, theory and philosophy. Najjar was deeply involved in the planning of the Foundation, guiding its mission with his knowledge and vision. Sadly he passed in December 2014, in Barcelona, Spain before seeing its final realization. He leaves behind a great legacy that will be preserved and celebrated in his memory by the JEAN-PAUL NAJAR FOUNDATION.

Jessamyn Fiore:

Jessamyn Fiore is the curator of the JEAN-PAUL NAJAR FOUNDATION. Based in New York City, Fiore is also a writer and the co-director of the Gordon Matta-Clark Estate. She was the Director of Thisisnotashop, a not for profit gallery space in Dublin, Ireland, where she also received a Masters degree in contemporary art theory, practice, and philosophy at The National College of Art and Design. Exhibitions curated by Fiore include *112 Greene Street: The Early Years (1970-1974)* at David Zwirner in New York (2011), which led to her editing the critically acclaimed, eponymous catalogue, published by David Zwirner and Radius Books (2012). Recently, she curated *11 Machines: Clive Murphy & Trevor Tweeton* at the Knockdown Center in Queens, and solo exhibitions with Nathaniel Mary Quinn and Lilja Birgisdottir at Rawson Projects, NYC.

Mario Jossa:

Mario Jossa, born in Rome, Italy, began his career at Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM), New York, where he collaborated on projects for Armstrong Cork Laboratories, Altman Department Stores and Texas Gas Company. Jossa's projects include the Spanish Pavilion for the New York World's Fair; the development of extensive master plans for the new towns of Sadat City and Nasr City in Cairo, Egypt, the new town of Bayonne, France and regional studies for the redevelopment of the Aquitaine region in France. Projects as the European Partner with the firm of Marcel Breuer & Associates in New York and Paris include the critically acclaimed Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Hans Hartung Foundation, Antibes, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC. Jossa obtained architectural degrees from the Catholic University of America and the Polytechnic Institute of Milan, Italy. He is a member of the French Order of Architects and the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Alserkal Avenue:

Alserkal Avenue is the region's foremost arts and culture neighbourhood located in Al Quoz, Dubai. Since it was established in 2007, Alserkal Avenue has grown to become an essential platform for the development of homegrown artistic and cultural initiatives, supporting a vibrant community of contemporary art galleries and alternative art spaces, together with design, media and industrial studios. In 2015, Alserkal Avenue began introducing its own homegrown programme as an arts organisation, dedicated to encouraging new ideas, open dialogue and a more diverse and rich eco-system for art in the region. www.alserkalavenue.ae