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**RICHARD MILLE**

Press Release

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## **Louvre Abu Dhabi and Richard Mille Announce Nabla Yahya as Winner of the 2023 Richard Mille Art Prize**

*The winner was selected from the eight participants in the 2023 Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here exhibition, which highlights the rich artistic talent from the region*



**Pictured (left-to-right):** Dr. Souraya Noujaim, Director of the Islamic Arts department at Musée du Louvre in France; Mohammed Kazem, a renowned Emirati artist previously shortlisted for the 2021 edition of Art Here; H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, an Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Chairman of UAE Unlimited, an art collector, and a patron of the Centre Pompidou, the British Museum and Sharjah Art Foundation; Nabla Yayha, the winner of the third edition of The Richard Mille Art Prize; Dr. Guilhem André, Acting Director of Scientific, Curatorial and Collections Management at Louvre Abu Dhabi; Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi; Peter Harrison, CEO Richard Mille Europe Middle East & Africa; and Maya El Khalil, independent curator and art advisor, former Founding Director of Athr Gallery in Jeddah, and the curator of Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2023.

**Abu Dhabi, UAE, 25 January 2024:** Louvre Abu Dhabi and Richard Mille revealed Nabla Yahya as the winner of the third edition of the Richard Mille Art Prize at an exclusive ceremony that took place at Louvre Abu Dhabi on 24 January.

Yahya was one of eight artists shortlisted to showcase her work, *SoftBank*, in the *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2023* exhibition, which opened to the public in November 2023. The artist accepted her award and prize of USD \$60,000 at the ceremony.

Restricted

Abu Dhabi-born Nabla Yahya is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice spans celluloid, earth, and the ethereal, i.e. video, space, and text. She moves to interrogates histories and immediacies that have been censored, erased, or neglected by systems of power, both extinct and extant. For her submission piece, *SoftBank*, Yahya uses a three-dimensional cartographic representation of the Suez Canal to highlight the neglected details and interrogate the obscure histories around the initial construction of the canal (1859-1869).

Yahya was selected by a distinguished six-member jury, led by **H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan**, an Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Chairman of UAE Unlimited, an art collector, and a patron of the Centre Pompidou, the British Museum and Sharjah Art Foundation. Joining him are **Dr. Souraya Noujaim**, Director of the Islamic Arts department at Musée du Louvre in France, and former Director for Scientific, Curatorial and Collections Management at Louvre Abu Dhabi; **Maya El Khalil**, independent curator and art advisor, former Founding Director of Athr Gallery in Jeddah, and curator of *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2023*; **Clare Lilley**, Director of Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the selector of the annual Frieze Sculpture in London's Regent's Park 2012- 22 and a trustee of Art UK, London, the George Rickey Foundation, New York, and the Jupiter Artland Foundation, Edinburgh; **Dr. Guilhem André**, Acting Director of Scientific, Curatorial and Collections Management at Louvre Abu Dhabi, seasoned museum professional, expert archaeologist and art historian; and **Mohammed Kazem**, a renowned Emirati artist previously shortlisted for the 2021 edition of *Art Here*.

**HE Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of Louvre Abu Dhabi**, said: "Part of our driving mission is to ensure we support and empower artists in Abu Dhabi, the UAE and beyond, providing the conditions for creative innovation and artistic expression to flourish. The *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here* exhibition and accompanying Richard Mille Art Prize are an important platform for GCC-based contemporary artists to demonstrate the talent present in the region, further raising Abu Dhabi's profile as a centre for culture and creativity."

**Peter Harrison, CEO, Richard Mille EMEA, commented:** "In its third edition, Nabla Yahya proudly joins the Richard Mille Art Prize winning roster. Her figurative depiction of this year's theme 'Transparencies' demonstrated her passion for architecture and uncovered the history behind the construction of the Suez Canal. *SoftBank* is testament to Nabla's diligent work in research and development towards a concept worthy of the winning title."

**Maya El Khalil, curator of Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2023, said:** "Each artist in the exhibition provided a surprising and novel engagement with the theme. The multidimensionality of Nabla Yahya's work ultimately made the award a unanimous decision. *SoftBank* approaches the idea of 'Transparencies' indirectly – interrogating difficult histories that are treated as unseen when they should be confronted. The details of the work shed light on the invisible currents of finance, trade, and labour that structure the region. It is both a brilliant response to the theme and a significant work with the astute complexity that is a hallmark of Nabla's practice and thinking – we are all excited to see what she does in future."

**Nabla Yahya, the winner of the third edition of The Richard Mille Art Prize, said:** "I am deeply honored to receive the 2023 Richard Mille Art Prize. This recognition is a testament to the power of art to transcend boundaries and illuminate hidden histories. 'SoftBank' is not just an installation; it's a dialogue between the past and the present, a reflection on the Suez Canal's transformation. This award fuels my commitment to exploring untold stories and challenging perspectives through my work. Thank you to Louvre Abu Dhabi and Richard Mille Art Prize for championing creativity and providing a platform to contemporary artists like me."

For its third edition, *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2023* invited artists to propose artworks addressing this year's theme of 'Transparencies', exploring the dynamics of transparency as well as its material and perceptual significance. Presented for the first time under the museum's iconic dome, the exhibition delved into the interplay of shadows, liquid reflections, and flashes of permeating sunlight provided by this location. It also invites us to look beyond immediately apparent, instantaneous, or superficial readings, engaging in more complex choreographies of seeing and being seen.

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Artworks featured in the third edition of *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2023* included: *Waterdust* by siblings Sawsan and Bahar Al Bahar; *Remember to Forget* by Alaa Tarabzouni; *Flesh Memory* by Sarah Brahim; *Hiya (She)* by Farah Behbehani; *Anthropocene's Toll: A Planet Asphyxiated* by Zahra Al Ghamdi; and *Foraminifera* by Hashel Al Lamki.

*Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here* and the prestigious Richard Mille Art Prize serve as a platform to showcase contemporary artists from the region working with a diversity of mediums. Each year, the exhibition sees several artists selected through an open call for proposals, each presenting an artwork that responds to a unique theme. The theme for the highly anticipated 2024 fourth edition of the Richard Mille Art Prize and *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here* exhibition will be announced soon.

## ENDS

### **ABOUT LOUVRE ABU DHABI**

Created by an exceptional agreement between the governments of Abu Dhabi and France, Louvre Abu Dhabi was designed by Jean Nouvel and opened on Saadiyat Island in November 2017. The museum is inspired by traditional Islamic architecture and its monumental dome creates a rain of light effect and a unique social space that brings people together.

Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates the universal creativity of mankind and invites audiences to see humanity in a new light. Through its innovative curatorial approach, the museum focuses on building understanding across cultures: through stories of human creativity that transcend civilisations, geographies and times.

The museum's growing collection is unparalleled in the region and spans thousands of years of human history, including prehistoric tools, artefacts, religious texts, iconic paintings, and contemporary artworks. The permanent collection is supplemented by rotating loans from 13 French partner institutions, regional, and international museums.

Louvre Abu Dhabi is a testing ground for new ideas in a globalised world and champions new generations of cultural leaders. Its international exhibitions, programming and Children's Museum are inclusive platforms that connect communities and offer enjoyment for all.

### **ABOUT RICHARD MILLE**

From the very inception of the brand in 2001, Richard Mille's approach to watchmaking has always centered on releasing the watch from its restricted role as a mere tool for timekeeping, augmenting and extending its visual potential by placing it directly in the crosshairs of design, art and architecture. Today, the Richard Mille watch collection comprises of more than eighty models, each designed and produced with the same passion, uncompromising principles and visionary aesthetics that guided Richard Mille's first creation.

Richard Mille's watches are marvels of technology designed specifically for those with a keen appreciation and love for fine Swiss watchmaking, playing up the full possibilities of three-dimensional space, defined by both the volume of the watchcase and the movement itself. Within these highly confined areas spanning just a few centimetres that serve as a blank canvas for horological creativity.

This assimilation of watchmaking to artistic endeavours is also reflected in the company's close connections with the arts. The brand's partnerships in support of contemporary art and artists include sponsorship of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, the contemporary art biennial Desert X; collaborations with choreographer Benjamin Millepied, composer Thomas Rousel and acquisition of Éditions Cercle d'Art, a publishing house created with the support of Pablo Picasso in the 1950s.

For more about Richard Mille please visit [richardmille.com](https://richardmille.com)

**ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM – ABU DHABI**

The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) drives the sustainable growth of Abu Dhabi's culture and tourism sectors and its creative industries, fuels economic progress, and helps achieve Abu Dhabi's wider global ambitions. By working in partnership with the organisations that define the emirate's position as a leading international destination, DCT Abu Dhabi strives to unite the ecosystem around a shared vision of the emirate's potential, coordinate effort and investment, deliver innovative solutions, and use the best tools, policies, and systems to support the culture and tourism industries.

DCT Abu Dhabi's vision is defined by the emirate's people, heritage, and landscape. We work to enhance Abu Dhabi's status as a place of authenticity, innovation, and unparalleled experiences, represented by its living traditions of hospitality, pioneering initiatives, and creative thought.