

Dr Omar Kholeif Bio



Dr Omar Kholeif, FRSA is a writer, curator, cultural historian, strategist and university professor who has curated more than 100 exhibitions of visual art, architecture and digital culture globally. He has authored or published more than two dozen books, which along with his writings in journals, magazines and newspapers have been translated into 12 languages, selling more than 100,000 copies to date. He is currently a senior official at Sharjah Art Foundation, Government of Sharjah UAE, after having held senior positions in some of the world's leading cultural institutions, such as the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Cornerhouse, Manchester; Foundation for Art and Creative Technology, Liverpool and the Arab British Centre, London. These were held alongside numerous consultancies in the media industry.

He has staged landmark exhibitions at some of the world's leading cultural forums including, the Venice Biennale, the Liverpool Biennial and the Sharjah Biennial. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Chicago; Hunter College, City University of New York and the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, among other appointments. He is a Trustee of SPACE, London, where he chairs the Access, Inclusion and Equity Group and is proud to be an Ambassador of Mental Health Research UK.

Born in Cairo and raised in Glasgow; Los Angeles; Jeddah and Dammam before returning back to the UK as an undergraduate, Dr Kholeif holds degrees in Politics, Film, Curating, Art and Art History and Cultural Studies. A longstanding advocate for a variety of humanitarian causes including mental health research, Dr Kholeif believes that mental illness is a global crisis that has been paid enough lip service to. He would like to bear witness to serious change in the field through concerted funding efforts that enable research, as well as generative policies that prevent stigmatisation in society, in particular, in schools and the workplace. He is currently at work on a number of books, one of which is part of a three-part trilogy on mental health.