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**STEFAN RAMNICEANU | *DIALOGUES***

**The first exhibition in the Gulf by French-Romanian artist Stefan Ramniceanu**

Bin Matar House, Muharraq, Kingdom of Bahrain  
December 21, 2014 to February 22, 2015

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**Cesar**, 2014, 160\*180, copyright Stefan Ramniceanu

The Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Center for Culture and Research is delighted to be presenting "Dialogues" — the first Gulf exhibition of French-Romanian artist Stefan Ramniceanu (b. 1954). For the first time in the Gulf, more than 50 paintings, sculptures and drawings by Ramniceanu will be brought into dialogue, providing an overall view of his atypical path and ever changing styles. The exhibition will bear witness to the importance of Ramniceanu's work, in particular to his profoundly symbolic content and tireless questioning of the concepts of memory and identity, apparent in his work throughout his aesthetical researches and treatments.

The route offered is naturally structured by the artist's key cycles: *Centaurs*, *Memory of the Islands*, *Poetic of Geometry*, *Universal Man*, *Scholars*, *Pillars*, *Golden Nights*. The exhibition will illustrate the itinerary of an artist who has made a powerful contribution to the language of contemporary art. Through the richness of the artworks displayed, the show will highlight the diversity of Ramniceanu's oeuvre — between clean conceptual gesture and baroque profusion of colors and materials, between painting and sculpture — as well as the strict consistency — whatever the medium — in his exploration of human soul. Now recognized as part of his oeuvre in its own right, Ramniceanu's sculpture is gradually becoming more and more monumental in scale as illustrated by *the Builder*, a brand-new 7 m sculpture of over one ton.

This exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue published by the Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Center for Culture.

The exhibition will open on December 21, 2014, and run until February 22, 2015 at the Bin Matar House in Muharraq. The Bin Matar House is open from Saturdays to Thursdays, from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM and from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

Exhibition made in collaboration with H&H Mécénat and ATELIERAMNICEANU.

#### **About Stefan Ramniceanu**

Born in Ploiești, Romania on August 15, 1954, Stefan Ramniceanu graduated from the Institute of Fine Arts Nicolae Grigorescu in Bucharest in 1979 in the context of the famous "generation of the '80s" in Romania. After establishing himself as a fixture in Romanian contemporary painting with his landmark solo exhibition *Ferecătura (Curtea Veche)*, 1988, Ramniceanu decided to face up to the international artistic arena. Shortly after having taken part in the Romanian revolution in December 1989, Ramniceanu was invited by the French government and eventually established his studio in Paris in 1991. First a fellow of the French government, he became a resident of the *Cité Internationale des Arts* in 1992 and was awarded the French citizenship in 1999. His works have been exhibited extensively in Europe — including in Belgium, Bulgaria, Romania, France, Germany, Greece and Switzerland — and internationally and are now part of major public and private collection. In 2001, General Honorary Curator of the Louvre Museum and former Director of the Delacroix Museum Arlette Sérullaz wrote the preface to Ramniceanu's first monography under the title *Between Est and West*, an alchemist which has survived through ages. For his grand comeback in Romania in 2014, the Brancovan Palaces Cultural Center devoted Ramniceanu an exceptional wide-ranging retrospective under the title "*Marks*," with over 400 artworks being displayed in parallel at the Mogoșoaia Palace and at ATELIERAMNICEANU.

#### **About the Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Center for Culture and Research**

The Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Center for Culture and Research was founded in 2002 as a forum for open debate and cultural exchange. Through its program of weekly lectures, the center has attracted world class artists, philosophers, poets and thinkers. Since 2002, the Shaikh Ebrahim Center has expanded through the restoration of additional traditional houses in Bahrain, including the Al Zayed House for Press Heritage (2003), the Mohammed Bin Faris Music House (2005), the Ibrahim Al Arrayed House of Poetry (2006), the IQRA Children's Library (2006), the Kurar House (2007), the information center (2008) and the new auditorium of the Shaikh Ebrahim Center (2008). The Bin Matar House opened its doors in February 2009 followed by the Coffee

House, the Bu Kalaaf traditional coffee house and the Water Garden. For more information on the Shaikh Ebrahim Center and its activities, please visit [www.shaikhebrahimcenter.org](http://www.shaikhebrahimcenter.org)

**About Memory of the Place - Bin Matar House (Bahrain)**

The Bin Matar House is a restoration project undertaken by the Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Center for Culture and Research as part of its ongoing effort to protect Bahrain's traditional architectural heritage. The restoration of the Bin Matar House was sponsored by Arcapita Bank. The Bin Matar House was built in 1905 and was used as the permanent majlis of Salman Hussein Bin Matar, one of Bahrain's the most prominent pearling merchants. The building was retained as a residence by the Bin Matar family until 2002. On the 9 February, 2009, the newly restored Bin Matar House opened its doors to the public to display the traditional Bahraini architecture of the building and pay homage to the memory of Salman Matar and his family. In addition to a permanent exhibition on the history of pearling in Bahrain and the Bin Matar family, the Bin Matar House houses a small collection of contemporary Bahraini art and features an ongoing program of temporary art exhibitions in its dedicated exhibition space.