



five metallic discs carve shaikha al mazrou's contemplative sculpture trail in UAE mountains

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SHAIKHA AL MAZROU AND FAYSAL TABBARAH UNVEIL DELIBERATE PAUSES

Five bright red metallic discs punctuate the rocky mountainscape in the UAE, their sleek, rounded forms gently carving into the terrain. As its name suggests, *Deliberate Pauses* by Shaikha Al Mazrou invites a physical and conceptual interruption in flow in motion to reorient its viewer's sense of time and place. The land art installation is conceived as a trail of monumental installations, each thoughtfully but organically placed, with some forms positioned upright and others tilted into the earth.

Deliberate Pauses is about creating moments of stillness that, Shaikha Al Mazrou explains, act as a hinge between past and future. Interwoven with narratives of cultural and ecological memory, these contemplative transitions capture and subtly shift perception of the environment before releasing the viewer back into motion. The discs, in this way, leave a deliberate imprint at each encountered pause, yet ultimately recede into their surroundings as the observer moves on. *'I wanted the discs to work with the land's own intricacies, amplifying and negotiating with the space they inhabit, rather than asserting their presence over it,'* says the Emirati artist in a conversation with the artwork's curator, Faysal Tabbarah.

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THE RED DISCS CARVE INTO THE TERRAIN WITH A QUIET REFLECTION

Deliberate Pauses was born from a collaborative dialogue between the artist and curator, exploring how artistic practices can both preserve and leave a trace on the landscapes they inhabit. Over the course of three years, the work was gradually shaped by a series of conversations, reflections, iterations, and physical explorations of Hatta's mountains. Shaikha Al Mazrou describes how she undertook numerous intuitive, contemplative walks through the terrain over these years, allowing herself to wander freely without a fixed plan, guided by the land itself. *'The experience of being immersed in the landscape, without the constraint of a defined structure, mirrors my approach to land art – letting the environment shape and inform my work,'* the artist **says**.

She further reflects on the layers of 'negotiation' between impactful intervention and restraint that underlie this process and its outcome, acknowledging that the two can coexist and shape the other in unexpected ways. *'I feel [an undeniable tension] in my work every day: the impulse to shape, to alter, to leave something of my mark on the landscape, while simultaneously resisting the urge to dominate or erase what is already there,'* **she continues**. This layered approach reveals a deeper commentary on the ethics of making, reinforced by Faysal Tabbarah's approach driven by an awareness that to create within a place is also to engage with its heritage, ecology, and temporality.

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Shaikha Al Mazrou and Faysal Tabbarah unveil Deliberate Pauses

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What began as unstructured movement through the terrain ultimately led to the deliberate placement of the discs – rendered in Shaikhah Al Mazrou’s iconic red – tracing a route that invites others to pause, reflect, and engage. In this way, the work’s title speaks to the layered tensions at the heart of the work – capturing both the intentional interruptions created by the sculptures and the journey from instinctive wandering to purposeful design that shaped it. The site itself, which Faysal Tabbarah explains can be perceived as a quiet threshold in itself, deepens the work’s meaning and its explorations of these states of reflection and transition. Surrounded by the peaks of the Hajar Mountains, Hatta, he notes, *‘is a historical gateway space that is not urban, nor fully rural, but also long inhabited.’* Although it is part of the emirate of Dubai, it is located a few hours away from the bustling city and holds its own history shaped by trade and agriculture, with traces of centuries of civilizations and their fortifications.

This rich context resonates with the installation’s exploration of pause and transition, inviting those who encounter it to reflect on the cultural history woven into the land. In developing the work, the artist and architect worked closely to ensure that Deliberate Pauses fosters a sense of connection, wonder, and attentiveness to place. *‘In these pauses, I want visitors to reflect on the land’s historical and cultural significance and consider their place within that continuum,’* Al Mazrou adds.



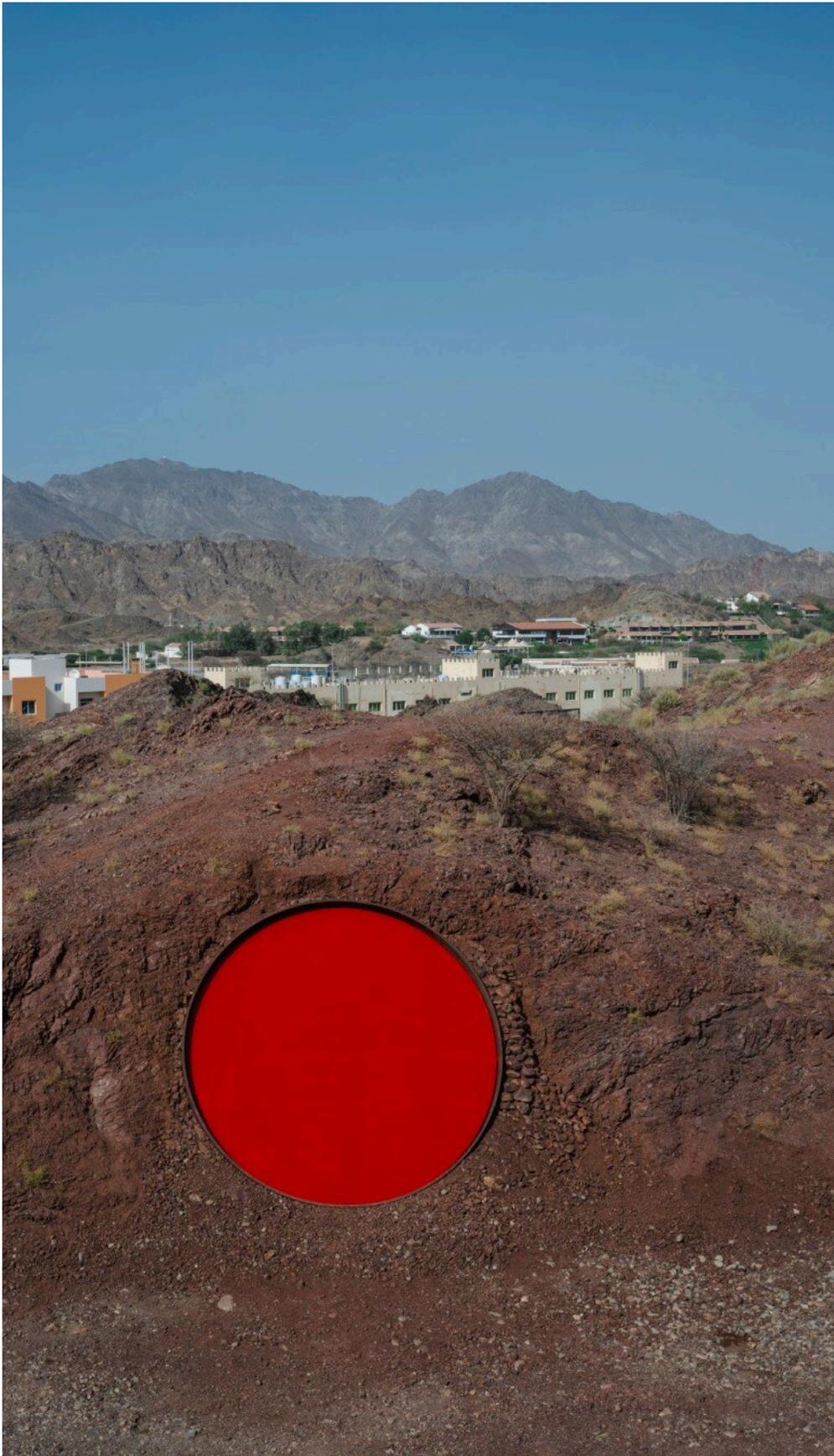
carved into the mountains of Hatta in the UAE

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five monumental discs rendered in Shaikha Al Mazrou's signature red hue

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ates an interruption in flow — of movement, of time — to create moments of stillness

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some forms are positioned upright and others are tilted into the earth

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forming the largest site-specific art intervention in Dubai

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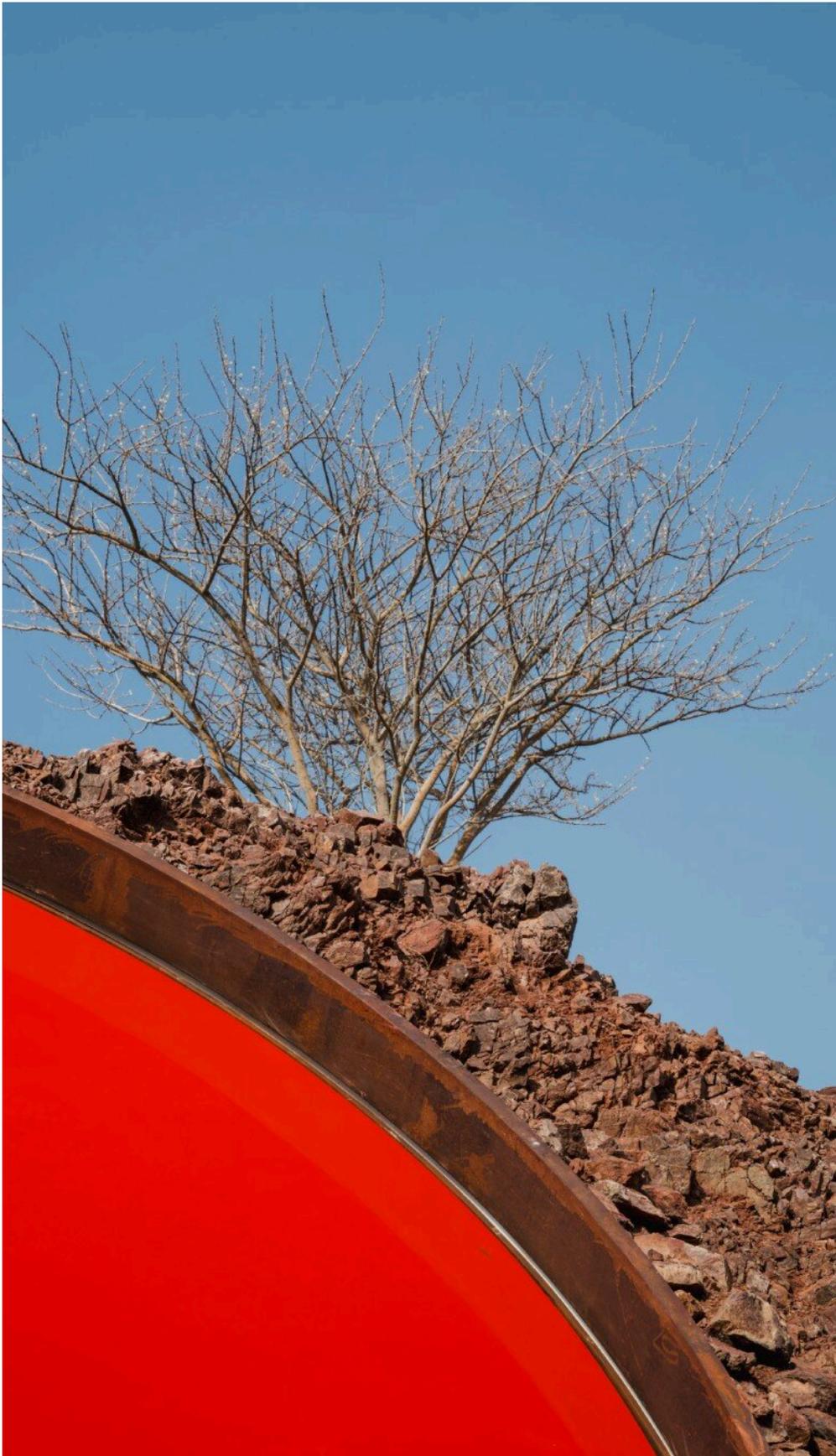


ness of the terrain with their metallic finish and organic forms

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tracing a route that invites others to pause, reflect, and engage with the landscape

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the work was developed over the course of three years

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project info:

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curator: Faysal Tabbarah

developer: Alserkal Arts Foundation, Dubai Culture & Arts Authority

ravail khan | designboom

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LAND ART (47)



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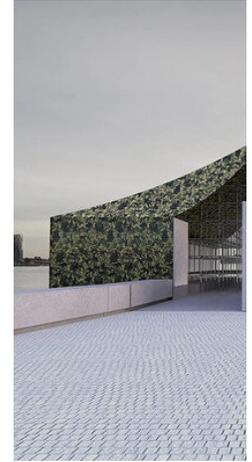
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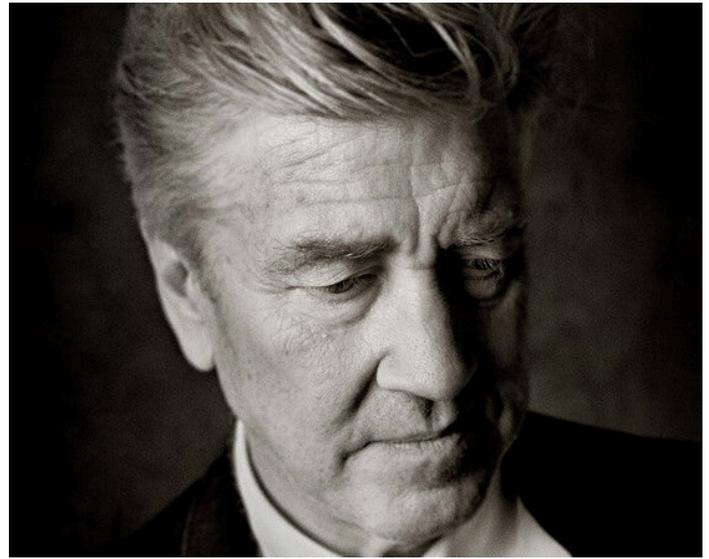
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