



Spanish sculptor Xavier Mascaró. Courtesy Warehouse421

Xavier Mascaró's sea-themed art show comes to Abu Dhabi for the first time

The National

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An armada of oxidised boats has invaded the spaces of Warehouse421 at Mina Zayed in Abu Dhabi.

The collection, on display in the exhibition *Departure*, opens to the public on Wednesday, May 4, bringing Spanish sculptor Xavier Mascaró's unique installations to the UAE for the first time.

Mascaró's fleet was first exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery in London in 2014, but in the immediate context of Mina Zayed's old dhow yard and Abu Dhabi's broader maritime history, the show, Mascaró insists, takes on new and subtly different associations.

"The identifiable themes in the exhibition are of passage, mobility and the sea – which are acutely relevant to the port-city of Abu Dhabi and the Mina Zayed," says the sculptor.

"Over the years, the UAE has ensured and created a strong industry in trade, fishing and pearling that have supported the community for years. The boats, and this exhibition, is a true testament to the history of the sea and this city."

In addition to the near life-sized 18-metre boat and flotilla of 26 smaller vessels, Warehouse421 also features a selection of Mascaró's preparatory

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drawings, working models and interviews with the artist that focus on his creative processes.

These are paired with extracts of traditional Emirati poetry and letters, written by sailors and fishermen, that shed light on the absences, sense of longing and ultimate reunions that once defined the lives of the UAE's maritime communities.

• **Departure at Warehouse421 runs until September 4 and is supported by a series of "Wednesdays at the Warehouse" events, beginning with a talk between Xavier Mascaró and Mahnaz Fancy on Wednesday, May 4, at 6pm. For more details, visit www.warehouse421.ae**

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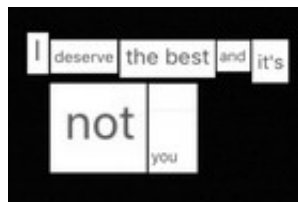


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