



The Top Emerging Artists of 2016

GCC ⊕ Follow

FOUNDED IN 2013. NANU AL-HAMAD (B. 1987, KUWAIT CITY; LIVES IN NEW YORK), KHALID AL GHARABALLI (B. 1981, KUWAIT CITY; LIVES IN KUWAIT CITY), ABDULLAH AL-MUTAIRI (B. 1990, KUWAIT CITY; LIVES IN KUWAIT CITY), FATIMA AL QADIRI (B. 1981, DAKAR; LIVES IN BERLIN), MONIRA AL QADIRI (B. 1983, DAKAR; LIVES IN AMSTERDAM), AZIZ AL QATAMI (B. 1979, KUWAIT CITY; LIVES IN KUWAIT CITY), BARRAK ALZAIID (B. 1985, KUWAIT CITY; LIVES IN KUWAIT CITY), AMAL KHALAF (B. 1982, SINGAPORE; LIVES IN LONDON)



Portrait of GCC by Jason Nocito. Courtesy of Project Native Informant

A collective formalized in Art Dubai's VIP lounge in 2013, GCC is comprised of eight so-called "delegates": Nanu Al-Hamad, Khalid Al Gharaballi, Abdullah Al-

Mutairi, Fatima Al Qadiri, Monira Al Qadiri, Aziz Al Qatami, Barrak Alzaid, and Amal Khalaf. Named after the Gulf Cooperation Council, a regional economic and cultural union, GCC is an internationally dispersed bunch, spread from New York to Berlin, London to Kuwait City. They communicate mainly via WhatsApp to create their work, which focuses on the rapid development of the Gulf—and the proliferation of its citizens around the globe.

Over the past 12 months, they've brought a circuitous running track, *Positive Pathways (+)* (2016), to the European School of Management and Technology (a location for fellow collective DIS's Berlin Biennale) and to New York's Mitchell-Innes and Nash (which newly represents GCC) in a commentary on the growing pervasiveness of wellness culture among Gulf elites; they've digitally renovated an oil sheik's Paris manse, now complete with a hidden elevator for his perfunctory Lamborghini, in a video work at London's Project Native Informant, which looks critically on the racially- and culturally-charged attacks on oil-rich Gulf expats who have bought up some of the West's best addresses over recent decades; and they've

launched a branding agency for an undisclosed nation from the region, the services of which it has then licensed to citizens via an app for a solo booth last year at Art Basel in Miami Beach.

The work's über-slick visual identity—and the very global and mostly digitally connected nature of GCC's delegates—has placed GCC among the post-internet art movement's greatest stars. “GCC keeps knocking it out of the park,” says the Whitney's Christopher Lew of the collective, who he's tapped for a new commission for the 2017 Whitney Biennial he's curating along with Mia Locks. Referencing *Positive Pathways (+)*, he adds, “As mindfulness and new age belief has been adopted by both individuals and corporations, GCC brings to light how the Gulf nations have brought these ideas into government. Their look at the theater and substance of nationhood is pressing now more than ever.”