



eL Seed
السيد

**EL SEED UNVEILS LATEST HIGH-IMPACT ART INSTALLATION
LIKE HER IN GIRANCHAU, NEPAL**

**EXPLORING THE TOPIC WOMEN EMPOWERMENT, *LIKE HER WILL
BE*
UNVEILED TO THE PUBLIC DURING THE EXPO 2020 WOMEN'S
PAVILION**



eL Seed - *Like Her*, 2021

GIRANCHAU, NEPAL, OCTOBER 26, 2021 — French-Tunisian artist eL Seed today unveils a visually and emotionally arresting and gigantic art installation in Giranchaur, Nepal, a small village three hours from Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. The 170-meter installation was realized with the assistance of 12 local women from the village and explores the topic of women empowerment.

A magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck Nepal on April 25, 2015, collapsing buildings in Kathmandu, the capital city, and creating landslides and avalanches in the Himalaya

Mountains, killing nearly 9,000 and leaving more than 22,000 injured. As the country began to rebuild, women took a leading role in the reconstruction of the society around them. In Giranchaur, a small village three hours away from Kathmandu, the many women of the village were trained in construction work and basic architecture, where others learnt how to produce their own earthquake resistant bricks, and working together, rebuilt the village.

eL Seed uses Arabic calligraphy and a distinctive style to spread messages of peace and unity, and to underline the commonalities of human existence. After learning of the inspiring women of Nepal and specifically the village of Giranchaur in the Sindhupalchok District during a visit to the country in March 2021, eL Seed was inspired by the resilience of the women of the village of Giranchaur to create a large-scale art installation with the intention of catching the attention of people on a global scale, to create a trigger to lead people to a larger subject: women empowerment. In the project titled ***Like Her***, eL Seed invites the viewer to explore the topic of women empowerment by bringing light on the stories of women that inspires wisdom, strength, and resilience.

Like Her is a multi-medium art installation created using acrylic paint, bamboo wood, neutral toned fabric, and rice bags, with all materials being directly sourced from the community. As is signature for eL Seed's works, this piece contains a calligraphy message depicting the words of Yogmaya Neupane, one of the first female activists of Nepal, a woman who has become a modern icon in the contemporary fight for gender equality and social justice, written in eL Seed's native language of Arabic, as is consistent with the artists' work:

"There is nothing between us, nothing at all. Your eyes have tears, just like my own."

Binita Bista, a 32-year-old farmer from the village who was appointed by the committee to participate in the project states: *"Before this project, I thought that art was only done on paper. I am very happy to learn new things. It was a strange work and project for us all at the beginning, but now everyone knows the motive behind the project – to raise up and inspire women. The artwork is appealing and so meaningful. This project is about us, our rights and our voices."*

The enormous installation spans over 170-meters in length, covering 30 of the 60 rooftops of the village. 1.5 km of fabric has been used to connect the houses together that are roughly 3 meters high. Installation and execution was complicated, eL Seed was unable to paint the fabrics prior to draping them over the rooftops, instead having to install initially to measure the accurate distance between houses then bring the fabrics down to paint them, finally reinstalling the completed and painted fabric on the rooftops. The choice of colors came naturally to eL Seed who was inspired by local dress of the women of the village. Many of the homes are spaced at a significant distance, to aid in the installation between these house, custom supports were crafted using bamboo from

the nearby forest. Over time as the artwork fades and nature carries it away, the bamboo structures will be repurposed to build ladders and scaffoldings for the village.

eL Seed was joined by a team of 12 local women to create the installation that spreads around the village, connecting each house to another, linking each women's story to the other, becoming an echo of their story and aiming to amplify their voices. eL Seed says, "I believe artists have a great social responsibility to inspire, ignite and implement change. *Like Her* intends to raise up the women in this remote community that was devastated by the 2015 earthquake, and bring to light issues facing these women, and women all over the world, while sharing their beautiful stories of wisdom, strength and resilience." The 12 women who were compensated for their participation were chosen by a committee of the village community with the betterment of the village at the core of the decision-making process.

The artwork can be seen fully from a bird's eye view but from the ground level, the fabrics in between the houses create corridors all around the village, allowing the inhabitants to experience the artwork from a different perspective, looking at it from below. The community lives now in an artwork that will slowly dissipate over time through weathering and day-to-day life.

The artwork will be unveiled prior to the official opening of the Women's Pavilion at Expo 2020, with support from Cartier.

ENDS

About eL Seed

Born in 1981 in Paris to Tunisian parents, he was disconnected from his Arabic roots, speaking only the Tunisian dialect of the language at home. In his teenage years in a kind of quest for his identity, he began to delve into his own heritage and learned to read and write standard Arabic. It was during this journey that he began to develop his artistic style of calligraphy, which would later bring him worldwide acclaim.

He found that Arabic calligraphy was a way of building a link between his equally important French and Tunisian backgrounds and as he matured, eL Seed began to use that same calligraphy as a tool to build bridges all over the world. Whenever he works within a community, he spends a long time researching to find an appropriate quote to summarise the voice of the community he is working within and to underline his key principals of love, respect and tolerance.

His work has been shown in exhibitions and in public places all over the world including most notably on the façade of L'Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris or the Louvre Abu Dhabi, in the favelas of Rio di Janeiro, on the DMZ in between North and South Korea,

in the slums of Cape Town and in the heart of Cairo's garbage collectors neighbourhood.

In 2020, eL Seed became a member of the YGL community (Young Global Leaders). In 2017, he won the UNESCO Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture. He was named a Global Thinker in 2016 by Foreign Policy for his project 'Perception' in Cairo. In 2013, he collaborated with Louis Vuitton on their famous 'Foulard d'Artiste'.

Website

For more information, visit the website at <https://elseed-art.com/>

Social Media

Join the conversation, using the handle @elseed, #LikeHer

Media Contact:

Elizabeth McNamara | FITZ & CO | emcnamara@fitzandco.com | +1 646 589 0926