

Harper's BAZAAR

ARABIA

ART

ISSUE 6



AED 30 QAR 30
OMR 3 KWD 2.5
BHD 3



ART DUBAI | SHARJAH BIENNIAL | BEIRUT: ART SPECIAL

ART DUBAI 2013

Dubai's flagship annual art event returns with a world-beating line-up, bursting at the seams with art, galleries, happenings, more art, talks, panels and workshops, parties, openings, distinguished guests, hordes of curious visitors, tired feet and of course - a bit more art for everyone. We preview the highlights of this year's events and over the next few pages, meet Director Antonia Carver in conversation with Armory's Noah Horowitz, hear from participating galleries worldwide, meet resident and guest artists and hear from the organisers of the infamous Global Art Forum.

*By Arsalan Mohammad
(All images courtesy Clint McLean/Art Dubai)*

ART DUBAI

Back for its seventh edition between March 20 - 23rd and Dubai's art fair is set to eclipse all previous iterations this year in terms of scope and ambition. The Middle East's most expansive art event can comfortably claim to be moving into an era of maturity. So, what's in store? Back at its Madinat Jumeirah HQ, there's a line-up of over 500 participating artists and 75 galleries from 29 countries, including Athr Gallery (Jeddah), Galerie Chantal Crousel (Paris), D Galerie (Jakarta), Experimenter (Kolkata), Alexander Gray Associates (New York), Grey Noise (Dubai), Galerie Rodolphe Janssen (Brussels), Galerie Krinzinger (Vienna), Platform China (Beijing/Hong Kong), and The Third Line (Dubai) all returning to the fair, whilst newcomers include GAGProjects (Adelaide/Berlin), Yvon Lambert (Paris), Victoria Miro (London), Almine Rech Gallery (Paris/Brussels), Schleicher/Lange (Berlin/Paris) and Tanja Wagner (Berlin).

But as well as serving as its traditional role as a platform for galleries to explore the unique collector demographic that makes up the fair's annual guestlist, Art Dubai 2013 has worked especially hard over the past few years in developing a series of non-profit initiatives which take a wider perspective on the whole business of producing art, with an eye to fostering long-term artistic development and sustainability in the region. With institutions so common in



Art Dubai 2012

Western art hubs, from educational facilities to studio spaces, public art spaces and museums still yet to appear - or in their very earliest stages - in the UAE, Art Dubai's sprawling programmes assumes an additional, crucial role in the city, in fomenting and supporting an industry's development, outside of the hothouse of the regional art market.

THE GLOBAL ART FORUM



Alongside the Sharjah Biennial's 'March Meetings' Art Dubai's Global Art Forum is a reliably stellar affair, providing a week's work of cerebral fun and frolic. Presented in collaboration with Mathaf: Museum of Modern Art in Doha and Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, this year, the Forum's theme defies those looking for ponderous pontifications and instead promises to serve up a titillating platter entitled 'What It Is: Definitionism' in which speakers will be, in their own ways, tackling Shumon Basar and HG Masters' investigations into the sinews, tissues and fibres of a global art lexicon. New participants to the Forum include Dubai-based political scientist Dr. Abdulkhaleq Abdulla; poet and author Mourid Barghouti ('I Saw Ramallah', among other books); artist and former REM lead singer Michael Stipe; and writer-editors Charles Arsene-Henry, Brian Kuan Wood (Editor, e-flux journal). Returning speakers include old stalwarts such as writer and artist Douglas Coupland; curator Lara Khalidi (Director, Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre, Ramallah); and geostrategist and Director of Hybrid Reality Institute Parag Khanna. (Yes, calm down everyone, Hans-Ulrich Obrist will be there too).



MARKER

For 2013's strand Marker, supported by the organization Internationale de la Francophonie is focusing on West Africa and is curated by Lagos-based Bisi Silva. Her curatorial concept focuses on the rapidly evolving nature of cities in West Africa and the way in which these changes impact society. She has selected five spaces to work collaboratively with their artists to produce exhibitions for Art Dubai: Centre for Contemporary Art (Lagos, Nigeria); Espace doual'art (Douala, Cameroon); Maison Carpe Diem (Segou, Mali); Nubuke Foundation (Accra, Ghana); and Raw Material Company (Dakar, Senegal). Working together with the curator and the fair, each artspace is presenting works by artists such as Soly Cisse (Senegal), Ablade Glover (Ghana), Abdoulaye Konate (Mali), Boris Nzebo (Cameron), and Taiye Idahor (Nigeria).

COMMISSIONED PROJECTS

There's much much more to Art Dubai than just galleries. Once you've toured the halls of the Madinat Jumeriah, head outside for a wander around the 11 sites-specific works, tune into the live radio station, 'Six Pillars to Persia', the radio show produced and presented by Art Dubai Projects 2013 artist Fari Bradley focusing on Middle Eastern arts/culture with a spotlight on contemporary Iran, and Eavesdropper/Falگوosh Radio, the radio station she is especially creating for Art Dubai 2013. You can also witness the launch of the Sheikhha Manal Little Artists projects for children and pick up some designs at the third edition of dXb Store. Oh and don't forget The Hatch, a compact video installation curated by artist Maha Maamoun, in a Madinat Jumeirah staircase, which proves yet again, how the Fair takes advantage of every possible nook and cranny's artistic potential.



Deniz Uster's installation at SIKKA, Art Dubai 2012

ABRAAJ GROUP ART PRIZE



Huma Mujli, Savita Apte, Murtaza Vali and Iman Issa launch the 2013 Abraaj Group Prize

Back, rebranded and curated by Murtaza Vali, the winners of the 2013 prize are Vartan Avakian (Lebanon), Iman Issa (Egypt), Huma Mulji (Pakistan), Hrair Sarkissian (Syria) and Rayyane Tabet (Lebanon). The artists will be unveiling their much-anticipated new works during Art Dubai - stay tuned for an in-depth assessment in our next issue!

PERFORMANCE NIGHT

Performance Night will be hosted at Art Dubai, featuring local and international artists in a dynamic programme of performance, music, film and installation. The 2013 programme is co-presented by Traffic, and curated by Ali MacGillp (A.i.R Dubai curator-in-residence in 2012), with key support from art lightening rod, Rami Farook.



Performance Night, Art Dubai 2012

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

A huge success upon its launch last year, Art Dubai's Artists in Residence (AiR) is back, in conjunction with the Delfina Foundation, Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, and Tashkeel. As last year, the idea is simple - since January 7th, six artists from across the Middle East and Asia - Ebtisam Abdulaziz, Ammar Al Attar, Dina Danish, Reem Falaknaz, Joe Namy and Yudi Noor, have been working alongside acclaimed curator Bérénice Saliou at the Bastikia district. They are creating new works to be shown during an Open Studios exhibition, held parallel to SIKKA (March 14-24). Additionally, the international artists are commissioned to create site-specific works for Art Dubai Projects. A.i.R Dubai 2013 features six artists.



Berenice Saliou



Patrons' Preview opening night at Art Dubai 2012

SCULPTURE ON THE BEACH

Building on this perspective this year, comes one particularly intriguing new development, a new sculpture park, situated on the beach near the complex. To be overseen by Mexican curator Chus Martínez, it will complement the 11 site-specific works to be found dotted around the fair.

MOBILE ART GALLERY

One of Art Dubai's key missions is to integrate its projects and initiatives within the city as large, as far as possible. Here we have a great idea - the Mobile Art Gallery which will trundle around Dubai neighbourhoods over Art Week, in a truck, which will feature a pop-up gallery curated by Isabella Ellahé Hughes and Angelle Siyang-Le. The travelling gallery showcases contemporary works by UAE-based artists, including Azim Al Ghussein, Shamsa Al Omaira, Rami Farook, Rania Jishi, Karim Mortada, Sharmeen Syed and Sara Al Haddad.

ANTONIA CARVER MEETS NOAH HOROWITZ



They both run international art fairs - on different sides of the world. As Art Dubai 2013 and The Armory in New York thrash out their final preparations ahead of March, Arsalan Mohammad invites the two directors to come together, to discuss their very distinct - but frequently similar - perspectives on how an art fair should work in 2013...



'Dome' Khosrow Hassanzadeh
(2010) Installation view Art Dubai
2012 (Courtesy: Clive Museum of
Art, Dubai)

ANTONIA CARVER AND NOAH HOROWITZ are both directors of prominent art fairs; Carver, as many of you know, is the one-woman dynamo credited with transforming Art Dubai into the multi-faceted dynamic all-singing, all-dancing happening it is today. Noah Horowitz, formerly of the VIP Fair, author of 'Art of the Deal: Contemporary Art in a Global Financial Market' and now in his second year as Director of New York City's Armory Show, set out his stall last year by dramatically slashing the number of booths at the Manhattan venue and recalibrating the historical event's focus, to engage on a global level whilst serving the needs of New York's art world. Why have we brought them together this January afternoon to chat, gossip and speculate? Being the boss of an international art fair, whether in Dubai or New York is a fascinating, all-encompassing role that bears responsibility to increasingly pressurised galleries, the demands of artists, the vagaries and mercurial trends of respective art markets and the need to respond to the seismic paradigm shifts taking place in the art world. New York, representing a century's worth of artistic evolution and Dubai clocking in at a mere seven years, both pose questions about their role - as catalysts for artistic activity in their host cities, as platforms for local and international art and as exemplars of a wider cultural marketplace, in very different contexts. And, as our two protagonists debate, their goals and objectives in Art Dubai and Armory 2013 claim an interesting congruence, despite their very different settings and audiences... ➔



Yeah, apparently, he tried to do the entire VIP Art Week programme single-handedly...! Art Dubai 2012 (Courtesy Art Dubai)

Arsalan Mohammad: Hello, Noah and Antonia! How are you both?

Noah Horowitz: I'm not sleeping much these days. It's one thing after the other, after the other, after the other...

Antonia Carver: Yeah. I'm going to be where you are in two weeks' time. Then you get to finish two weeks before me and put your feet up!

AM: So, you're both pretty much in the throes of last minute preparations! Antonia, could you give me an idea of what the big headlines are for Art Dubai 2013?

AC: Well, every year the fair grows organically, we try to build on what's gone before rather than reinvent ourselves in any way. There are a number of programmes each year and one of those was Marker, which is a section I began in 2011. We invited galleries from different areas, trying to epitomise this idea of Dubai being a fair of discovery. And this year, we have five art spaces from different West African countries, co-invited by the fair and the curator's Bisi Silva, the director of CPA in Lagos, Nigeria. Also, accompanying that are a number of specially-commissioned works and a lot of speakers, who are generally encouraging an influx of different art scenes from across Africa. I think that's going to be super-exciting, we started researching this a couple of years ago and it has been a huge learning curve. We're also launching a new section called Sculpture on the Beach, which pretty much says what it is! It's going to be on the beach near the Burj al-Arab and will have larger-scale works, installations and interventions. That's curated by Chus Martinez.

D GALLERIE (Jakarta)

Esti Nurjadin is the director of D Gallerie, a Jakarta-based art space that came to Art Dubai in 2012 as part of the MARKER programme, curated by Alia Swastika. Impressed with what he found, Nurjadin returns as a fully-fledged participant in this year's event with work by Kinez Riza, an artist whose works of pastoral scenes in her native Indonesia will present a fresh and novel dimension to the fair...

Why did the prospect of working at MARKER in 2012 appeal to you, beyond obviously the potential of a new market?

I think Middle East is a very interesting region. I felt very honored that D Gallerie was chosen as one of the five Indonesian galleries to participate in Art Dubai Marker 2012. For us, networking with other galleries is very important. What I think is also important beyond sales, is the potential to expose Indonesian art to collectors, art centres and museum directors in the Middle East.

How did you find the experience, working with Alia Swastika, being in the Fair and being in Dubai?

I was very happy last year. I have worked with Alia Swastika before for a number of shows in Jakarta, so it was very easy to prepare a curated project for Marker last year. It was my first experience in the region. I think Art Dubai is unique, because of the size and its location, it feels like a boutique art fair. The audience was from Europe, Middle East, India and Pakistan. The artworks that I showed last year were photography and video artworks from Jogjakarta artists Jim Allen Abel and Akiq AW. They were very well received and I sold all the works to collectors in the region.

Who will you be bringing to your booth and how did you arrive at this decision?

I will bring Kinez Riza's works. She is a Jakarta-based multi-talented artist. She studied in the UK. Her upcoming works demonstrate the animism beliefs that are still seen in some families inside the rainforests of Kalimantan island, Indonesia. She did these works inside the rainforest while she camped and hunted deers for two weeks!

What else are you particularly looking forward to seeing and doing at Art Dubai 2013?

I'm looking forward to make new networks. However, I want to see familiar faces from last year's Art Dubai. I'm hoping I can do as well as last year in

'Etherworld 2' Kinez Riza 2012 (Courtesy D Gallerie)



terms of sales. Most important, the collectors, art centres and museum directors who have seen D Gallerie last year will be able to connect with us again this year. In the art business, trust is very important. I'm building trust by joining Art Dubai 2013.

Did you get to see any art from the Middle East when you were last here - I would be interested to hear which artists especially made an impression on you and what you liked about their work?

Yes of course I got exposed to art from Middle Eastern region. I already follow Leila Pazooki's works. We became friends when she visited Indonesia last year. Also I like the works of Iranian artist, Shadi Ghadirian. As a gift to my mother, I bought photography by Shadia Alem, a Saudi Arabian artist, from Art Dubai 2012. I really like her series of work about the development and changes in modern-day Mecca.

LAWRIE SHABIBI (Dubai)

Young, but daily growing, Dubai's Lawrie Shabibi hit the ground running at launch and have already racked up an impressive global track record of fair appearances. Co-director Asmaa Al Shabibi previews what we'll be seeing at their debut Art Dubai appearance...

You've qualified for Art Dubai 2013 this year. Do you think it makes sense to have this stipulation that galleries are at least two years old before joining?

Asmaa Al Shabibi: You know I think that in some way it does make sense because I think that there needs to be some track record for the gallery in terms of consistency and also continuity. My experience is that displaying and selling art from a booth is a totally different ball game to doing so from the gallery and requires some experience that you gain only through time. I think that having done three satellite fairs we're now ready to take on the main fairs.

How has Art Dubai benefited the local art landscape in your opinion?

It has succeeded in bringing some excellent groups of collectors and art professionals to the region and has also raised the profile of Middle Eastern art as well as introduced art to the general public. It has also been a great platform for encouraging non-collectors to dip in and buy artworks as part of a once-a-year event. My only concern is that it has become such a key event in the calendar that everybody is timing their shows and events around this one week and there is just so much to see and do! I wish that things would be more spread out throughout the year and have enough pulling power to create a similar buzz. This is also the perception of some artists, who only want to have their exhibition 'during Art Dubai'. I believe that there is still not much trust in the market or the audience for great exhibitions to take place throughout the year, which is a shame.

Who are you bringing to Art Dubai and why have you chosen these artists?

We will present a curated booth entitled 'Process and Performance', with a selection of works that explore the contradictory themes of beauty and violence by artists who employ sculpture within their artistic practice. We are going to show four artist two of whom - Wafaa Bilal (Iraq) and Yasam Sasmazer (Turkey) will debut at the fair. They will show alongside Nadia Kaabi-Linke and Hamra Abbas who are two names who are known in the region, partly because they are both previous winners of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize and also because they have been shown at the fair previously with their respective galleries and also, in the case of Nadia Kaabi-Linke, had a solo at the gallery during Art Dubai last year. So we chose two artists who will be new to the scene and two who collectors will be familiar with. Additionally in March, Wafaa Bilal will inaugurate the Maraya Art

Park with his new sculptural work 'The Hierarchy of Being' curated by Sara Raza. It will open on March 20th and has been commissioned by Maraya Art Centre. We thought it would be important to show another series of his at our booth as it is an opportunity for the audience to see the breadth of his work. Interestingly our exhibition at the gallery - a solo entitled 'Symphony' by Adel Abidin - is also sculptural and so I guess that's what our overall theme for Art Dubai is this year!

Can you tell me something about the works?

The booth is designed to revolve around a life-size wooden statue by Turkish sculptor Yassam Sasmazer, commissioned especially for Art Dubai. Sasmazer's sculptures explore the polarised opposites of good and evil, sacred and profane, and darkness and light, played out through her figures of children and young people. Corresponding with Sasmazer's works, Tunisian artist Nadia Kaabi-Linke brings together a ceramic installation using the imprints of the insides of a cow's stomach. In contrast Pakistani artist Hamra Abbas and Iraqi new media artist Wafaa Bilal combine the practice of sculpture and photography to create images ranging from the everyday to brutal conflict. Hamra Abbas' photographic works are based on the snapshots of people living and going about their daily business in Boston and Istanbul. From these images, she moulds miniature plasticine 'heads' before being photographed on a much larger scale. Bilal will show for the first time a selection from his new series 'Ashes'. In this series Bilal uses photojournalistic archives to reconstruct three-dimensional models of bombed architectural sites in Iraq, which are then photographed to recreate, extending the life of an ephemeral moment and demonstrating the destructive effects of war on private spaces. The booth will take the viewer through a range of visual possibilities of contemporary sculpture.

Do you think in coming years art fairs will be increasingly important for galleries such as yourself?

I believe that for galleries in Dubai participating in art fairs globally is key to our survival. We have seen no growth in the market in the last year and hence it's important that we market the gallery and our artists abroad. Increasingly our clients are from overseas. In addition given that Dubai does not have many institutions or art professionals - such as museum directors, writers or curators - the only way we can meet other professionals is by meeting them at fairs.

How do you survive three days in a booth - any tips?

Flat shoes, iPad to hand, chocolate, charm and dancing the nights away!

WWW.LAWRIESHABIBI.COM

'Crowds at the opening of Art Dubai 2012' (Courtesy Clint McLean/Art Dubai)



*NOAH HOROWITZ
'Speaking more globally
we have made an
effort to bring a more
international set of
galleries that can work
with the Armory. I think
people will react very
positively here - New
Yorkers are very curious'*

In a way, it's expanding the fair out of the main halls and taking in a little bit more of the environment of Jumeirah. And then we're expanding the Artists Projects section, with 14 artists this year. A number of projects are roving through Dubai as well as being at the Fair. And then we are also expanding the focus we have on education and doing projects and programmes through the year in the UAE, like Campus Art Dubai - a Saturday school with curators and artists and that's been a general theme of the fair the last couple of years, how we can impact on the local art scene beyond that time in March. And I think all these things are very relevant to a very particular context of the fair.

AM: Noah, I was going to ask the same question - what are the headlines for Armory this year. But in light of what Antonia's just said, I'm really interested in getting your impressions on what Art Dubai are doing.

NH: Well, I'm looking at MARKER right now on the website and I am completely jealous. West Africa seems completely fascinating to me and totally exotic. Our fair was founded in the

PACE GALLERY (London)

It's been over fifty years since Arne Glimcher founded Pace and this hardy stalwart of the international art scene rolls serenely on, spreading out from its five New York bases to outposts in London and Beijing. From established blue chip art aristocracy to rising stars, Pace wears its luminous heritage elegantly. Returning following their acclaimed 2012 appearance, Pace brings a group booth including Maya Lin, Hiroshi Sugimoto and Tara Donovan. London Director Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst and Associate Director Sharifa Sudairi talk up their plans for March.

Could you give me an idea of the art scene in Jakarta? What will you be bringing to Art Dubai this time around?

Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst: We will be bringing striking photographs by Hiroshi Sugimoto, several paper works and a sculpture by Tara Donovan among other works. In conjunction with the exhibition we will stage in London at 6-10 Lexington Street from 21 March, we will bring an elegant wood sculpture by the American artist Maya Lin from 2006. It will be another highlight of our stand.

What keeps Pace coming back to Art Dubai?

MD-B: Pace London has engaged with the MENASA through its presence at Art Dubai in 2012. Last year, Pace London also presented 'The Substance of Light', an exhibition of works by Light and Space artists including James Turrell and Robert Irwin (an exhibition of Irwin's works will be staged at Pace London's flagship gallery at 6 Burlington Gardens in June 2013) in partnership with the Dubai-based gallery Cuadro Fine Art.

Last year how did you rate your experience - in terms of sales and interest? Who was buying from you? What works attracted most interest? Do you feel there is serious buying at Art Dubai in comparison to fairs in the Middle/far East?

SS: Last year was Pace's first time coming out to Art Dubai and it was a great experience. People were very receptive to the works we brought over. Keith Tyson's 'Nature Paintings' as well as Tara Donovan's 'Pin Drawing' were amongst people's favourites. Collectors were from all over the world with a strong focus on the Middle East.

What are your tips for visitors (apart from visiting Pace of course)?

SS: Make sure you keep up to date with the schedule of talks and panels at the Global Arts Forum as this year boasts another exciting line-up of speakers.

WWW.PACEGALLERY.COM



mid 1990's as the Gramercy International by a few art dealers and in 1999 it moved to the downtown Armory which was the original site of the 1930 Armory Show, which is when we took our present name. This year we're celebrating the centennial of the original Armory Show for our fair, basically a fictitious show, but nevertheless it's an opportunity for us to reflect on 100 years of the avant-garde in the US. In a similar way that MARKER is looking to a region, we decided to shift our attention this year in a focus section that we inaugurated several years ago by looking at Berlin, subsequently followed by Latin America and Scandinavia. This year we shifted back to America, in an attempt to - well, celebrate is maybe not the right word - but to take a look at what is going on in the US today.

In response to what Antonia was mentioning, I took over the fair last year and last year's edition was very successful for us. We had a big look at what it means to be an art fair and it's a very different environment now from the environment in which the original Armory was founded in the 1990s. It's so much more international now. And while we did a lot of thinking about what it means to be an art fair in the broader sense, we also considered what it means to be in New York City. I suspect that Antonia probably agrees with this, but I think we'll see more and more fairs going inward in a way, focusing really more on where they are and what that means and being more regionalised.

At the same time, speaking more globally, we have made an effort to bring on a more international set of galleries that can still work with the Armory. It's a very American and Western European fair in terms of the gallery exhibition but this year we have Isabelle van den Eynde showing up for the first time. I believe it is the first time a gallery in Dubai is actually showing at the Armory. It's a very small step but it's taking the Armory in that direction, with a number of new Asian galleries as well. I think people will react very positively here - New Yorkers are very curious. So what we are seeing is something that will be very special for our audiences in March.

AM: So you are striking a balance between the international and the very local. Could you very briefly tell me a little bit about what initiatives you have planned for New York City around the time of the Armory?

NH: We inaugurated Armory Arts Week a couple of years ago, a city-wide collaboration with 25 cross-cultural partners in different parts of the city, such as MoMa. We coordinate a lot of events throughout that week and part of our programme is sort of on the VIP side of things, opening up private collections and institutions to an international audience, 15 or 20 coordinated private collection

'Nets' (2012) Sami al Turki (Courtesy the artist/Athr Gallery)

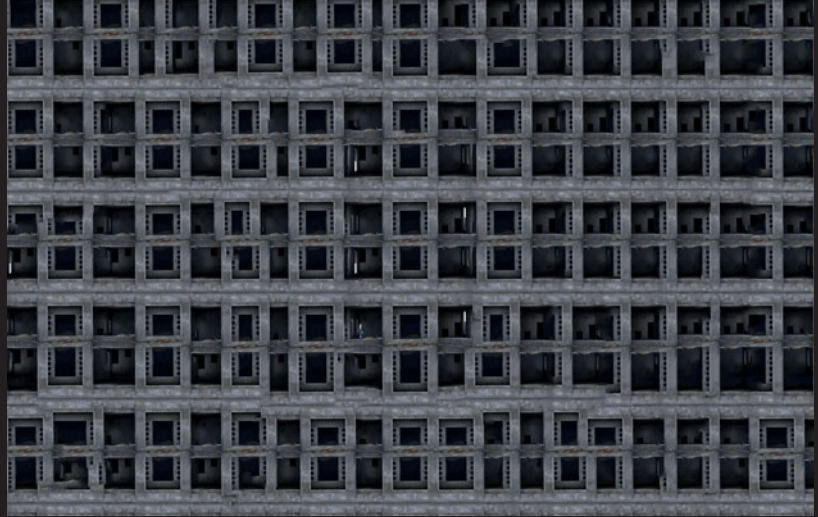
ATHR GALLERY (Jeddah)

Since launching in 2010, Jeddah's Athr Gallery has quickly expanded to become a multi-functional resource and platform for artists and collectors in Saudi Arabia. Holding the accolade of being pretty much the first international contemporary art gallery in the Kingdom, Athr's multi-faceted programme of activity is tireless in its ambition to promote its artists worldwide. Having undertaken a hectic schedule of global fairs and exhibitions in 2012, their programme for 2013 moves up a few gears to present a richly-textured and dynamic booth of work by familiar and new names from the Saudi art world. Note the inclusion of Ahmed Mater, who recently left the Edge of Arabia organisation to join Athr's roster in his own right. Gallery director Maya al Khalil talks us through what's coming to Dubai in March.

What will you be bringing to Art Dubai this time around? What motivated this choice? Can you tell me something of the artworks you will be bringing?

MAYA AL KHALIL: We will be showing new works by Ayman Yossri, Maha Malluh, Nasser Al Salem, Saddeq Wasil and Ibrahim Abumsmar. The criteria of selection were not to fit a curatorial concept, but rather to reflect the progression of each artist and the acquired maturity in the rendering of their art to express personal realities and perceived truths. Moreover, both Ahmed Mater and Hazem Harb will be showing with us for the first time in Art Dubai. Ahmed will be exhibiting new work from his recent series 'Desert of Pharan', reflecting on the rapid growth and transformation of the holy city of Makkah. Hazem will be showing works from the series 'Beyond Memory' which addresses the impact of the geographical and social transformations that occurred in Palestine on the collective memory of generations to come.

How does attending Art Dubai benefit the gallery? What



are its especial strengths in your experience?

Art Dubai has secured its position as the leading art fair in the Middle East and continues to grow stronger year after year. This is undoubtedly due to the outstanding leadership of its directors and the professional expertise of its committee members. This is a fair that thrives to continuously reach new heights and we are privileged to be sharing in the experience. We're looking forward to this year's Global Art Forum, the unveiling of the Abraaj Capital Prize and the addition of the sculptural park.

Last year how did you rate your experience - in terms of sales and interest? Who was buying from you? What works attracted most interest?

Last year was a great success on all fronts: Interest, sales and media coverage. What was rewarding is that a large number of the pieces went to collectors from the wider Middle East rather than only Saudi collectors. For the first time, a work by Shadia Alem entered a collection in South East Asia. There is a growing international appreciation of contemporary art from Saudi Arabia and this is a great vote of confidence.

How do you survive three days in a booth?

By being passionate about the work you're showing. It is a very busy fair. Interacting with the visitors is very rewarding: it is often an exchange of knowledge, ideas and impressions rather than a one-way transfer of information. It also helps to have a supply of chocolate always at hand.

www.athrart.com

ANTONIA CARVER 'Art Week was a way of really promoting the Gulf as a whole and also ultimately really thinking of the consumer'



Antonia Carver
(Courtesy Art
Dubai)

visits, for example. Which are really unique opportunities.

One thing that is quite different in New York than in Europe is that the culture is more open in a sense, collectors are much more open to opening their homes to the public, which I think is very American, in a way. So there's a number of initiatives like that with cultural partners and what's very special with all of that this year is that there are a number of museums like the New York Historical Society or Arts Museum, just outside of New York, in New Jersey doing exhibitions focusing on the Armory show in 1913 so we're doing a lot of programming with these institutions as well, different talks and panels and so on.

AM: A very broad and diverse programme and engagement with institutions and patrons around the city. Antonia, this sounds something like Art Dubai's Art Week... Do you feel this is something that has succeeded in unifying the art scenes across the Gulf region during March?

AC: Yeah, definitely. It's obviously not a new idea, Art Week. It was a way of really promoting the Gulf as a whole and also ultimately really thinking of the consumer. If you're flying in from LA or somewhere across the States, say, you want to be able to see everything going on in the UAE and take in places like Doha's thriving museum culture, see what's happening in one of the most ambitious museum-building programmes in the world right now. We collaborate with the Qatar Museums Authority and begin our Global Art Forum programme with two days in Doha before coming into Dubai for four days, and alongside that, the VIP programme also begins in Doha and then continues throughout the UAE, we take everybody to the Sharjah Biennale as well as to Abu Dhabi to see what's happening there with the beginning of those museums there. In a way, Art Week has become a public programme and then the VIP and the Collector's Circle has become a more sort of private layer on top of that, which include visits to collectors' homes. I think in Arab and Asian cultures, I think, they very much take that kind of idea, like when Noah is talking about philanthropy which in contrast to when I was working in the UK. Here, in this part of the world, people throw open their doors



Noah Horowitz:
'Antonia, I want to
work for Art Dubai
now. You've sold
me!'

and put on feasts at eleven o'clock in the morning! And that hospitality and openness is something that people hold very dear. Of course, as a fair director that's something I really, really appreciate - a whole group of people locally and actually throughout the world, taking in the Arab and South Asian diaspora that supports us.

AM: What does Art Week actually encompass?

So the whole tour begins with the Sharjah Biennale and then the next day is, Sikka, which is the fair run by Dubai Culture, which allows for new commissions by artists from UAE and then on to Design Days Dubai, which we launched last year as the first design fair in Asia. This edition has more galleries as well as lots of returning galleries - it's a very exciting programme. Then the Global Art Forum begins in Doha - after which we all move back to Dubai for Gallery Night the night before the opening of Art Dubai. That's a huge night, taking everybody from DIFC and across Al Quoz and the next day - people are hopefully not too exhausted by this point! - there is actually Art Dubai itself which is the focus of that week.

So Art Week is something that's really snowballed. The fair has been in that unusual position of reflecting that development, but also being a real catalyst in it.

AM: Noah was talking about the balance between American and international, whereas Art Dubai has this balance between international and regional Middle Eastern galleries, the latter not really having had any other platform in the past...

AC: Well, I think, we have 75 galleries. If we were to compare with the world's main art fairs, that's fairly small, but then we have galleries from 29 different countries. So in a way it's probably the most globalized fair in the world for its size. And of the 500 artists or so that show at the fair, half of them are from the Middle East. So it is the biggest showcase in the world of artists from this region.

But on the other hand the fair is very reflective of how Dubai is known as an incredibly-globalized city. There are 200 different nationalities here, so it looks out towards Africa, towards the Arab world and towards Asia. I think that is a very strong point of the fair, for all the museum groups that we work very hard to get here and international collectors coming in, you really need to present something that is very unique. They can see some of the world's most prestigious galleries such as Pace, Victoria Miro or Chantal Crousel and these kind of galleries. But then also see a show of Indonesian art, West African focus or - Pakistan has a particular presence in the fair as well - so, I think it's that diversity that is very much the heart of the fair.

AM: Noah, this is a very interesting point, it's like...

NH: Antonia, I want to be working for Art Dubai now. You just sold me.

AC: You've got to come and visit!

NH: For us, 1913 in New York was really when New York was made, just before the First World War. Not only the Armory Show, but the Grand Central Terminal,

SELMA FERIANI GALLERY (London)

The seven-year old Mayfair gallery, specialising in the Middle Eastern and North African contemporary art promises an engaging dynamic in their 2013 booth. Featuring artists from the region dealing in the main with seismic political and social upheavals, in addition, a new young French-Danish artist, Eva Nielsen, will be on hand with a thrilling evocation of urban landscapes.

Can you tell me something of the artworks you will be bringing?

Selma Feriani: We'll be bringing our roster of artists mainly from the region with an introduction of a talented young French/Danish artist, Eva Nielsen, with a stunning urban landscape of oil, acrylic and silkscreen on canvas.

Every artist will be presenting a new body of work in line with their practice and in most works, describing and researching the social and political situation

of their country in particular and the region in general.

Pascal Hachem is showing his latest mechanised sculpture under the title 'My Martyr...No My Martyr', seeking to reveal the instrumentalisation of martyrs to serve political goals. Rula Halawani will unveil her new project, prior to her solo show at the gallery in April. Her new project 'Traces' is a continuation of her previous 'Presence and Impressions' photographic project of a depopulated village in Palestine that we exhibited at Art Dubai two years ago. It's crucial to keep our collectors updated with the progress of an artist's practice.



'Grizzli' Eva
Nielsen (2013)
(Courtesy Selma
Feriani Gallery)

As the focus is on Africa this year at Art Dubai, I also selected three of our artists from North Africa: Mustapha Akrim from Morocco and Nicene Kossentini and Amel Bennys from Tunisia. They are coming to Dubai with new works, using different mediums from concrete sculptures to a text script on glass titled 'Tachkeel', as well as mixed media on wooden panels.

What keeps you coming back to Art Dubai?

We keep returning every year to Art Dubai because we like what we see. There is an amazing energy happening and a growing market from one year to another. I very much appreciate and respect the Art Dubai team for their hard work and commitment.

Last year how did you rate your experience?

I must say that last year was one of our best years at Art Dubai in terms of interest and sales. Pascal Hachem's sculptures, Ziad Antar's 'Expired' photographs, Sama Alshaibi's videos and Elena Damiani's collages were very popular. Collectors were from Middle East, North Africa, Turkey and Europe.

www.selmaferiani.com

Waldorf Building - all these major things were all being constructed in New York at that time, so it's in a way, the first time that sort of culture arrived on that scale, decades before a lot of the major museums and stuff started opening.

In a funny roundabout way, I think what's happening in the Middle East now and Dubai has become the focal point of that is the kind of 21st century version of what was happening here. And it's a pretty fascinating moment, I'm sure for you, being a major catalyst in that. Even ten years ago, there was not a huge amount culturally there, in that broader global sense. Art Dubai has done a brilliant job balancing between the commercial and the non-commercial, creating a broader eco-system for sustainability that will really thrive moving forward.

AM: New York has been, like Noah was saying, a melting pot, a place which was new 100 or 120 years ago when people really started coming there, huge emigration from Europe.

NH: Yes, the 1913 Armory show was maybe not dissimilar to some of the things Antonia was saying, and the cultural institutions, the broader Middle East have dealt with. Armory 1913 was famous, for being the place where Duchamp displayed the 'Nude Descending A Staircase', causing amazing political scandals. But 80% of the show was basically very conservative, regional, you know, portraiture and that kind of thing, with artists you never heard of again. That basically was the cultural environment of the contemporary arts scene in New York or America at that time. It was ultra-conservative and staid, in a way an interesting parallel between that and some of the regional and more decorative, crafty type, art that one sees in the Middle East broadly, and I think what's happening with the new waves of galleries, institutions and artists and curators is that they really begin to push the envelope on that and much more, which is quite fascinating.

AM: Noah, you visited Art Dubai in the past - do you recall anything in particular striking you about the organisation of the fair, the events programme and so on?

NH: I think Antonia touched on it - I tend to like smaller fairs better, and being in Dubai, it's a very hospitable atmosphere. Every night we were at some other interesting collector's home for dinner. Everybody was there and I think that's one of the unique things you're able to create in Dubai because the art fair becomes the cultural epicentre of the city for the week. As grand and large as the Armory Show is, New York City is too big in a way and we don't have that same relationship with the city. Obviously we are instigators and catalysts in a lot of things, but there are three times as many galleries at the Armory show, give or take, and the city just absorbs things. So I think one of the most enjoyable parts of being in Dubai, is just really feeling like you're part of something, meeting with fascinating people from all over the place.

I visited the fair two years ago, so I was able to get to Sharjah as well and see the biennale which ended up with all the controversy not long after that. It was fascinating and I saw great galleries and met great people. That more than any particular artistic statement *per se*, was the most interesting part for me. But there were a lot of interesting galleries there, it was very well organised.

AM: Noah, when you came joined Armory last year, you made a major decision to dramatically reduce the amount of galleries at the fair. Antonia, you've also limited the amount of galleries - the Madinat is only so big. Is this downsizing a temporary strategy or are we indeed now looking at an era where the mega-fair might be falling out of favour, and the smaller more navigable fair becomes the standard?

AC: I really firmly believe in this model, but I also think it's necessary to really think of the fair in relation to the immediate space in which you occupy. It's very hard to

NOAH HOROWITZ *I think one of the most enjoyable parts of being in Dubai, is just really feeling like you're part of something*

GREEN ART GALLERY (Dubai)

Directed by human dynamo Yasmin Atassi, this Dubai space is one of the emirate's oldest art spaces yet retains a youthful, questioning approach that staves off complacency and predictability. Atassi's booth this year is an excellent overview of the gallery's roster, incorporating photography, video and paint.

What will you be bringing to Art Dubai this time around?

YASMIN ATASSI: At Art Dubai this year, we'll be focusing on five artists from our programme. There are two new works by Iranian, New York-based painter Kamrooz Aram, which continue to explore the complicated relationship between traditional Eastern art forms and Western Modernism, specifically relating to the notion of the decorative. Both of the paintings are very important works, new and never previously exhibited. We'll also be showing a new work by Turkish photographer Nazif Topcuoglu, an artist with whom we've been working with for about three years now and whom we showed at Art Dubai in 2010.

We'll also be showing a sculpture by Hale Tenger, titled 'We Are So Lightly Here'. This is the first time we're showing a work by Hale at Art Dubai and we're excited to anticipate the response to the work. Hale is a very established artist and one of the most important contemporary artists on the Turkish art scene, a very institutional artist, but we feel it's important to show her at the fair, both for private collectors and also to the museum groups who are coming to town.

Also, we will be showing two artists whom we have



expand. It's also something we find really works for Dubai, the intimacy of the approach, Noah touched on it too. And it's true, we are very lucky we have fantastic visitors who come from all over the world. Last year more than 70 museum groups came. You really do meet collectors here and institutional collectors you wouldn't meet anywhere else, coming in from across Asia and Africa and the Arab world. Last year really it really struck me, when someone from one of the American galleries actually said, 'I can spend all year in New York trying to pin down Glen Lowry for a meeting and then I find I'm sitting with him on the beach for an hour in Dubai!'

I thought a lot about what I do at big fairs. I'll arrive, take a look down the aisle and think, OK, I've got to see those four on the left, then that one on the right. Then I kind of power-walk down, looking at the floor. I've got limited time and I must go and see the people I know. So this is a very deliberate policy of ours to think, how do you get people to stop and look at something they don't know already and really absorb it and have a chance to have a conversation of quality with that artist, or with that curator? I think that's a very different approach, not that one is right or better than the other, it's just that there are different kind of way of approaching the fair and we need this. You were saying, should fairs get bigger, or do you think they'll grow? I think they can grow in many different ways and they can also grow in terms of, oh - this is going to sound like *marketing-speak* - but people's 'experience' of being at the Fair. We can tweak it and constantly be trying to improve that experience and make it more interesting. I think that's the way we want to go rather than increasing in size. And the more fairs can mark out their own territory, the more interesting they can be and more different they can be for each other, the more interesting that experience is.

Otherwise, for those of us that spend our lives traipsing around fairs, exhibitions and Biennales, it could very much become a kind of trail that feels very much like the same thing. It's much more interesting going to something you haven't been to before. At New Year I went to the Kochi biennale and it was utterly refreshing - and I found myself really looking at works in a different way

AM: And that's something that must be at the forefront when putting together an edition of the Fair?

AC: Yes, I think as Fair director that's what you think about a lot - what can I do in my fair to encourage people to stop and look and have a conversation? Rather than

rush on to the next thing, because the pressure is obviously there, given all our programmes. We're just working on the VIP programme at the moment and I'm actually beginning to feel quite sorry for someone who tries to do it all - its incredibly packed! I'm thinking, should we really offer this much!? There's too many choices, there's much to do! But of course that's what makes it what it is. I think we need to have that and also then factor in ways to encourage people to slow down and look at work and sit for an hour on the beach and have really great conversations.

AM: Noah, does that reflect the decision you made to reduce the amount of galleries at the Armory was to allow a bit more breathing space? To have that ability to navigate it much more in a more calmer and contemporary pace?

NH: Yeah, 100%. Bear in mind, in 2010, the Armory showed just under 290 galleries which that year was more than Art Basel Miami. I was there as a visitor that year and it was totally packed. When you're at a fair, with gallery after gallery, it can get dizzying. So we made a huge effort when I took the position last year. It was my conviction that it was absolutely mandatory to have that reduced. We looked at the circulation of the Armory show and just made it simpler. Last year we had just under 230 galleries and in this year we'll be coming in at about 210-215, so again, it's back another 10% or so. From last year to this year, we saw a lot of galleries come back and take a bigger foot print which is also something we've worked actively with, to encourage to open up the space.

We have a lot of galleries and we've worked with our selection committee to encourage very specific curated proposals. We made a very active and conscious effort to clean up and raise the bar with the experience of being at the Armory show. And then there is the economic side of that, which is quite simply that reducing the number of galleries, leaves the galleries that *do* do the fair in a much better position to do well commercially. So we made a



signed recently in 2012 at the Gallery and who are reflective of how our programme is expanding to introduce international artists. Venezuelan artist Alessandro Balteo Yazbeck's work is part of his 'Chronoscope Series' which he produced with Media Farzin (it was shown at last year's Istanbul Biennale, among other venues). It includes a video which we showed at The Moving Image Contemporary Video Art Fair in London last October and which won the Moving Image Award and was subsequently acquired by the Tate for their permanent collection.

For Dubai we will be showing the 'Chronoscope, 1951, 11pm [Stelae]', (2009-2011) which is an installation of diasec stills from the video. 'Chronoscope, 1951, 11pm' is a 24-minute video that uses original footage from 'Longines Chronoscope', an American television programme that aired between 1951 and 1955 in the US, and invited "experts in the field" to offer opinions on current affairs. The subject of the video is the nationalization of oil in Iran and its reverberations in the Western world. While the video appears to be a straightforward TV programme, its source material has been heavily edited to emphasize the eerie resonances between the 1950's and the present.

So we feel that this work will be very interesting for the audience, as it something very relevant to the region as well.

The second new artist we will be showing is Hungarian painter Zsolt Bodoni, whose first solo show with us was in January 2013. Zsolt is another brilliant painter who we signed up this year. Bodoni's practice is characterized by large complex canvases, usually depicting industrialist and viscerally atmospheric backgrounds in which his characters innocently exist. A recurring motif in his work is bringing to the forefront established systems of power, which are often symbolised through figures of animals depicted as machines and tools of war, used by humans in their unbending quest for power. He is very well known as one of the most interesting emerging painters abroad and I am really excited to be introducing his work to the region.

Zsolt Bodoni 'Play'
(2012) (Courtesy
Green Art Gallery)

What keeps you coming back to Art Dubai?

Art Dubai is our home fair and we will always support it. None of us can do without it and vice versa. While it's a 'local' fair, it's also become very global. I think the strength of Art Dubai is not only in its commercial success, but also all the non-commercial aspects of it. It really is a no-brainer for someone who really wants to understand what is happening in the contemporary art scene from the Middle East, Turkey and South Asia. There is no other fair like it, in terms of quality and programmes.

Last year how did you rate your experience?

Last year was fantastic for us both in terms of sales and interest. Many or most of the buyers were new and based in Dubai and had just started collecting. That was very exciting. I would say the most interest last year was in Kamrooz Aram, Seher Shah and Jaber Al Azmeh.

How do you survive three days in a booth?

Well, during that week you just get a natural high for some reason! I live in my car basically, as the team and I juggle between collectors, the fair and the gallery!

What are your tips for visitors (apart from visiting Green Art Gallery of course)

Well apart from visiting the gallery of course (where we will have a solo for Shadi Habib Allah) I really encourage visitors to check out the galleries in the city. The fair is great as it gives you a great intro, but one must really go and see what the galleries in the city have to offer. All of us put on our big shows this time of year!

GALLERY ISABELLE VAN DEN EYNDE (Dubai)

Consistently engaging and long-time Art Dubai participants, Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde's 2013 booth presents a neat precis of the Dubai institution's current activity. Long-term IVDE collaborator, Jeffar Khaldi presents a typically coruscating new canvas and look out for Mohammed Kazem, who's international profile is set to skyrocket from this June when he represents the UAE at the Venice Biennial.

Can you tell me something of the artworks you will be What will you be bringing to Art Dubai this time around?

Isabelle van den Eynde: At Art Dubai this year, we will be showing works by two of the gallery's new collaborators, Aisha Khalid and Mohammed Kazem, both of whom will be having exhibitions with us in Spring. Khalid's eight-foot high diptych spells the Urdu word for 'Heart' in hundreds of protruding pins. It's very emblematic of her work, as are Kazem's LED works, 'Directions' and 'Tongue' performance photographs. Alongside these artists, we will be showcasing Jeffar Khaldi's latest painting 'Nina and Samia' and new sculptures by Shirin Fakhim and Bita Fayyazi.

What keeps you coming back to Art Dubai?

We're able to reach an ever-expanding international audience with our artists, and to contribute to the development of Dubai and the region's growing art scene. The presence of local galleries like ours amongst the international establishments and global network of visitors at Art Dubai is extremely important.

How did you rate your experience at the fair last year?

As at this year's booth, last year we presented a number of different artists with no particular curated artistic principle or aesthetic, and found we received a great deal of interest from the visitors. While some people were drawn in by Wim Delvoye's 'Dump Truck', others studied Rokni Haerizadeh's ripped magazine works and Lara Baladi's three metre-long photograph 'Flea-ing Me, a Life in Progress'.

WWW.IVDE.NET



conscious effort to kind of reduce the number of galleries and hone in on some of those other aspects which will put us in a position to really have a strong future and to be sustainable moving forward and as a result I think that that trend is something that will certainly be intent on continuing - and we'll see the number of visitors going up next year.

AM: Are there other long term goals that you're looking at, that you wish to develop this year and into the future, which will change the nature of the fair?

NH: Yeah, I find it slightly abstract to work all year long for just one week in March. The broader level, we're thinking at this stage how to expand the presence of the Armory to engage with New York more - I think that's an interesting project. And I think that further enhancing the educational and non-commercial aspect of the fair is often really interesting, we've a great talk programme this year which really focuses on a lot of the aspects of the legacy of the avant garde in America and questions on how things have changed. So we'll have further emphasis on things like that and we do have an artists' commission each year, this year we have Liz Magic Laser, a young performance artist from New York and that's a project that represents an interesting aspect of what we do.

AM: And do you think that in the years to come, we'll see more of the galleries from the Middle Eastern region appear at the Armory?

NH: Yeah, I've had these conversations with galleries in Dubai. With the closeness of Art Dubai to Armory, there are logistical difficulties doing a fair in New York two weeks before, but at the same time I think that it's something that we can certainly see more of and we're trying to create a sort of meaningful way or meaningful platform for galleries to have a presence here. I don't think it's competitive in the same way at all. One thing that is a broad concern - I'm sure, Antonia deals with this as well - is that there is a lack of supply. Artists can only make so much work for galleries. Artists have a lot of pressure these days to be everywhere at once and I'm quite certain that galleries are going to be more and more selective in what they do and what they bring their artists' work to.

AM: You mean seeing increasingly innovative approaches from galleries in engaging with the art fair format?

We've gone beyond this chapter in the art fair, where galleries would take whatever slot they had and put works on the wall. But the challenge of that of course is that most galleries are small business enterprises, most are three, eight, or ten people and work with anywhere from eight, to twelve, to fourteen artists. If you're considering two fairs in New York and Dubai in two-week period, that's only two weeks of the calendar and you've got to have an exhibition programme at the gallery, eight to nine exhibitions per year and do maybe half a dozen other art fairs. That's all of a sudden a large outlay in an otherwise small business. But those are things that I think will work themselves out. Fair directors have a duty to think creatively about how to support that structure

AC: I totally agree - it's great to have this conversation. It's something we talk about internally as well. I think we're seeing with galleries, specifically those in Europe and America, there's obviously a huge quest to be part of the globalised art world but the same time there is also an economic pressure in many galleries in countries where they are maybe in trouble, stagnant for some time, to reach out to new markets and particularly those across Asia, including the Middle East in that as well. It's a pressure that galleries are finding tough, especially the small to mid size galleries. I agree with Noah, we kind of have to exclude the giant galleries here that have spaces all over the world and think of those small to medium galleries who tentatively try to be part of this globalised art world, the pressure in that, they have very tough choices. I also think that particular hubs will emerge for sure and places where people can really do lots of business at once, to put it frankly. If you can go to a particular city and really engage with the key people that you need to, you really are here for the long term. Obviously that's a difficult terrain to navigate, there are all sorts of pressures on the fair as well. We have some galleries that Art Dubai might be the only fair they do and others that do 11, 12 or 13 a year, and that makes you really think about their experience as well, when they come to the fair. As a gallery, what is offered to you, how are you cared for, so you can re-energize and get out there and sell your art and present it in a really fresh way.

AM: I'm sensing it's a very difficult time for a lot of galleries who are facing the pressure you are talking about, there are artists who are clamouring to be shown

ANTONIA CARVER *'If you can go to a particular city and engage with the key people, you really are here for the long term'*

internationally, they only have a limited budget, they really do have to make the decision where to maximize the value of being at an art fair.

NH: I think it's also important for fairs to have a really clear identity. And that allows galleries that are spending all their time and money and resources to be there and have a sense of what they're doing and what they want to get out of it. I think a lot of younger galleries do fairs and they don't quite know why they do them and the result of that is limited. The fashion show mentality can only last for so long. It's really important that galleries have a mature outlook, like, 'I'm doing the Armory show and this is what I want to get out of it'. Then you can look at afterwards and evaluate whether that was successful or not and the same can apply to a gallery in Dubai, Sao Paolo or Hong Kong or whatever. If you're just doing it because everybody else is doing it, or you've been invited by some curator, you feel an obligation to do it, that can only last for so long. I think it's the goal of the Armory is to drive that home, to have that conversation about what they're looking for and work with them to achieve that.

AC: I totally agree with Noah, I think a few years ago, when Art Dubai was starting it was a kind of boom time and people were definitely trying to scramble towards emerging markets in a way - 'I've never been to Dubai and I want to give it a try.' I think that kind of spirit now, given the kind of economic climate, means there are very few galleries that can go to a fair on a whim. Certainly with the galleries that have joined Art Dubai over the last couple of years, they really do their homework before taking that decision. They're really coming into it with eyes wide open and an end game in sight.

AM: Those are the ones that are really going to get the most out of it and develop a long term relationship with the region?

NH: Yeah and it's not just a Dubai thing but also the case in New York, London or Paris, it's the worst scenario when a gallery has wrong expectations and will never come back. Because once that happens, you're never really come back from that and it's not good for you really and not good for them either. There has to be a commitment that there's going to be an intelligent understanding of why they're choosing to do that fair in the first instance.

AC: Noah, could I ask you a question? Were you affected by Sandy at all? How did that affect the planning of Armory?

NH: Actually, in the end, we didn't have a single gallery drop out of the fair. Obviously, a lot of work was ruined, we did have a few galleries have to switch up their proposals, as work that they intended to display at the Armory was destroyed. I think that made getting through Miami last December a bit hairy. Collectors were a bit more subdued I think, it impacted some major spaces, who didn't re-open for a week or two I guess. The community really came together, which is a really nice thing, people by and large took it on the chin and got on with it.

AC: In a difficult time when it's needed more than ever, the galleries that sort of stay home and try to stick it out, sometimes it's better to get out there and just try to sell work on a platform like a fair and that can be a sustainable approach.

NH: It makes the Armory all of a sudden that much more relevant, people need that. The fair in no uncertain terms, a major boost for many galleries, in New York especially. It is really important. That's where we are right now. We are very excited about March, we have seen a large international group of museums and major collectors registering to come and they are very excited.

AM: As you have said, people seem to have rallied around and back in quite a spirited manner. It's good to hear that things are back on track pretty much now.

NH: Yeah, I mean, I think so. **AC:** Good luck, Noah.

NH: Yeah, same to you! I will try to come. When is the actual opening?

AC: It's on March 18th. So you have a bit of time. If you can, it'd be great to have you. Art Dubai was on the cover of your book ['Art of the Deal: Contemporary Art in a Global Financial Market']. So there is a special relationship there already! **HBA**

WWW.ARTDUBAI.AE WWW.THEARMORYSHOW.COM

GALLERY VICTORIA MIRO GALLERY (London)

Since establishing her gallery in London's West End in 1985, Victoria Miro has become something of a legend in the UK contemporary art scene, Gallery co-director Glenn Scott Wright previews his inaugural booth at Art Dubai.

What are your expectations of the Fair - is there anything in particular you are especially curious about, anticipating, here in Dubai?

GLENN SCOTT WRIGHT: As it will be the first time for us in Dubai we have little idea what to expect but we are coming with an open attitude and a keen desire to engage with the Middle East and we very much hope that this will be reciprocated by our hosts.

What decided you to present a solo booth by Yayoi Kusama in Dubai?

Yayoi Kusama is one of the few artists in the world whose vocabulary seems to be able to traverse cultural boundaries and whose work has a truly universal appeal. After her enormously successful retrospective in 2011 and 2012 organised by Tate Modern, which also travelled to the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Reina Sofia in Madrid and the Whitney Museum in New York, her work received an even broader audience through her collaboration with Louis Vuitton and Marc Jacobs when last year she filled windows and stores worldwide with her polka-dotted vision. Kusama's work is rare in its capacity to possess a highly personal character, whilst at the same time resonating with large audiences. We felt that this unique ability to transcend different worlds might resonate well in Dubai.

Do you feel that the art market is definitely moving away from 'traditional' power bases such as New York, London and decentralising, to an extent, into new territories such as the Middle East?

I absolutely agree that this is the case. Art is no longer the preserve of white Anglo-Saxon men in the so-called West and that can only be a good thing. Every country has its own valid relationship with culture and as brokers of culture we have a responsibility to explore this and to open up new avenues and dialogues between those different channels. I think it's exciting as a British gallery for us to bring a Japanese artist to the Middle East and display her work in Dubai.

Do you feel the proliferation of art fairs across the world is shaping a new paradigm for the art industry that will possibly see the traditional gallery space move aside for a peripatetic, non-physical presence in the future?

Artists prefer to show in galleries rather than art fairs so I think there will always be a space for galleries in the traditional sense of the word. However there is no question that the modus operandi of the art world has shifted and that the art market is much more event-driven with much of the buying taking place at gatherings of the world's most cultured and monied at international art fairs dotted across the globe from London to Basel to Dubai, Hong Kong and New York. It's this gathering of the tribes which creates a social impetus for today's art market in contrast to the art world of 20 years ago when art was often acquired in solitude after quiet contemplation in art galleries in just a few important centres.

WWW.VICTORIA-MIRO.COM

IT MEANS WHAT?!?!

WITH SHUMON BASAR AND HG MASTERS

Revamped and re-invented in 2012, the Global Art Forum is the region's leading platform for public conversations about contemporary culture. The seventh edition of the Global Art Forum, this year commissioned by Shumon Basar and directed by HG Masters, is titled 'It Means This' and the week-long series looks at the phenomenon of 'definitionism: (re)defining words, phrases and ideas you think you know—in the art-world and beyond—and those you need to know to navigate the 21st century.' The Forum begins in Doha at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (March 17–18) and continues at Art Dubai, Madinat Jumeriah, Dubai (March 20–23). With preparations well underway, the two answered questions about some of the terms that are ready to be defined and redefined.



Shumon Basar and HG Masters, the masterminds of the sixth Global Art Forum

What is Arablish?

It's when Arab and English collide head-on and spawn second generation offspring. One of the hallmarks of such offspring is belonging to both and neither parent. Sophia Al Maria's 'Gulf Colloquy Compendium', from last year's Global Art Forum, is a wonderful collection of these genetic splicings that often replace letters with numbers.

Will translation become a dying art as the hybridization of cultures and languages increases everywhere?

Very select parts of languages get to be hybridised. There will always be vast amounts that remain localised in their home culture. On the contrary, the numbers of translators needed to translate DVD movies into a dozen languages means translators are never going to be out of a job (regardless of how much Google Translate improves).

Are there are analogies to be found in architecture? It seems as if the vernaculars of urbanism can be understood very much like forms of speech.

The commonality is that there is such a thing as an alphabet from which words are made, then sentences, paragraphs, pages, and finally books. The same is true with buildings - and it's present even as early on as Vitruvius, in the 1st century BC, who wanted to promote architecture as a king of language consisting of style and decorum. Cities are ultimately built up of lots of smaller things. They're the books. We - and the rooms we live in - are the letters.

What's so interesting about Biography in 2013?

On A&E's television series, 'Bi-og-raphy' (the announcer repeats the 'g' twice for dramatic effect), seemed to exist entirely of getting the subject's friends together to say that he/she was 'an amazing actor' and 'such a beautiful person.' There are no limits on the format for Biography today, or really the subject.

Do you trust Wikipedia biographies? Do you use them?

We walk on Istanbul's cracked, pockmarked sidewalks but it doesn't mean that we trust them. Sometimes occasionally the sidewalk comes to an abrupt end and disappears completely, other times you plunge into a deep hole.

What do you think is the equivalent of an 'Autobiography' in art?

You could say that a self-portrait is the analogous form in visual art, but if you look at a lot of painted self-portraits, you see how many have that same expression of deep concentration that seems to express exactly what the artist was doing at that moment - looking really hard in the mirror and trying not to smile or blink. That intensity is not very revealing. There does seem to be a renewed interest in the self and personal from artists who were born in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They've come up with different modes of autobiographical story-telling, often beginning from objects that have personal significance.

Have there been any Neologisms you have heard of recently that caught your ear?

A recent article had a headline that included the word 'glamping.' At first it seemed like a typo, and maybe it was, but you could imagine that this is the contraction of 'glamorous' and 'camping.' But it could also be 'glam camping,' which would be something very different and perhaps worth reading about.

If all meaning is, as Derrida said, transient and historically situated, what does Kanye West mean when he shouts out, 'Kray!'

This one we investigated: apparently it's a reference to the Kray twins who were crime bosses and famous nightclub owners in London in the 1950s and 1960s. According to the Wiki bio they claimed to have 'ruled London'; Kanye is making a historical analogy between them and his partnership with Jay-Z. He also once posed as Jesus on the cover of Rolling Stone, so he knows a thing or two about these kinds of comparisons. Now, whether or not Kanye believes meaning is transient . . . We'd have perform some close reading of his lyrics to unpack that. That would not be Kray, that would just be crazy.



Kanye West 'Kray!' (Courtesy Getty images)

Is Academese harder to speak than Esperanto?



Global Art Forum (Shumon Basar makes a stand
(Courtesy Clint McLean/ Art Dubai)

There are two kind of global English: the basic, utilitarian varieties with their many local inflections, and the highly rhetorical language of self-described 'discourses' with Germanic syntax, love of Latinate cognates, adornment with les mots Français and a full lexicon of English-derived qualifiers. Whether driven by necessity or neurosis, university-educated people everywhere can at least parody this Academese, if not speak it fluently. Perhaps then that makes the yawn and the eye roll are central gestures in the true universal language.

What are your favorite ('trending' can we say?) neologisms of the moment?

Other than 'Middle East Nervous Anxiety'? Maybe it's not current anymore—but, we used it as the title of one of our Global Art Forum books last year: 'TL;DR' (too long; didn't read). In general, some of the best/most inventive neologisms derive from the slackfest that is text messaging (or Whatsapping/iMessaging/BBM-ing, depending on your OS platform). We'll go to any length to not write things out in their full length. This has created the nonsensical screed that makes up most of Twitter - which, to anyone not au fait with it, really does look like textual dandruff.

Conversely, what expressions are grating to your ears these days or which ones should we retire?

They're mainly examples of 'Academese': 'The Archive.' 'Unpacking [some buzzy term]. 'The Commons.' 'Neoliberalism.' 'Fifty Shades of Grey.'

Why have drones have become such a talking point recently?

In 2011 President Obama made a speech. It spelled out how the US military was going to reduce its number of soldiers in the coming decade and spend more on all kinds of remote technology warfare. Drones exemplify this next stage of 'asymmetrical war.' Obama's regime has

also dramatically increased the use of drones in North Waziristan and Afghanistan and we have begun to hear more and more about the 'collateral damage' of these operations. The press and human rights' groups have focused on the decidedly murky ethics of drone warfare, which, it seems, signals the way forwards not only for the US but other military forces too. It's post-human firepower unleashed on human bodies.

If you could be a drone, and you could fly anywhere in the world for 24 hours, where would you go?

The Arctic and Antarctic, to scan those white expanses of nothingness, looking for that deranged, loner penguin Werner Herzog once managed to film. After that, North Korea — because it's one of the last, most guarded countries in terms of, well, everything. If Kim Jong Il were alive, he'd see the cinematic potential of drones. They are, after all, tracking cameras with very powerful zoom capabilities. Like Dziga Vertov meets Phileas Fogg.

A 'deranged, loner penguin' yesterday (Courtesy Getty images)



If a drone could speak what do you think it would say?

'Was my grandfather a flying carpet?'

When it's snowing in Istanbul but raining in Ramallah, do you still feel like Turkey is part of the Middle East? Is Saudi Arabia the Middle Middle East? And then does that make Oman like the Lower East Side? What's it like to walk on the edge of Arabia? Have you ever felt the magic of Persia? (actually, don't answer that).

You might be suffering from a condition that many people are blighted by - but for which, since the death of Edward Said - there is no cure: MENA (Middle East Nervous Condition). Symptoms include a passive/aggressive anxiety over the usage of the term 'Middle East', not knowing if Turkey is or isn't part of the Middle East, and confusion over the ethics of the hijab. Notable manifestations include exhibitions with the word 'Veil' or 'Unveiled' (or both!) in their title; as well as those that gather a bunch of artists with vaguely Arabic-sounding names, who grew up and studied in Geneva or San Francisco or New York or London.

If one place is designated as a 'freezone' does that make the area around it an 'un-freezone'?

By implication, yes. Freezones highlight the unfreedom of the status quo against which they are said to be free. We sound like a drone, don't we?

Could you compare and contrast notions of 'Heaven' and the 'Freezone'?

According to Talking Heads, 'Heaven is a place, a place where nothing, nothing ever happens.' Many people have rejected the serene, clean, Swiss paradigm of heaven in favour for hell - if hell is more like Sin City. Freezones may have a visible visual quality - like allowing people to sunbathe the scantily clad on a beach - but often their offerings are much more invisible. Tax benefits, investment boosts, subsidies. Dubai excelled in taking this mercantile notion of the Freezone and applying it to lifestyle. The result is Western paradigms in Middle Eastern (doh!), Shariah settings. In this way, you could say that social freezones are like little islands of "heaven" in otherwise alien surroundings.

What happens when two freezones collide?

China always wins. **HBA**

China - 'win' Courtesy
Getty images)

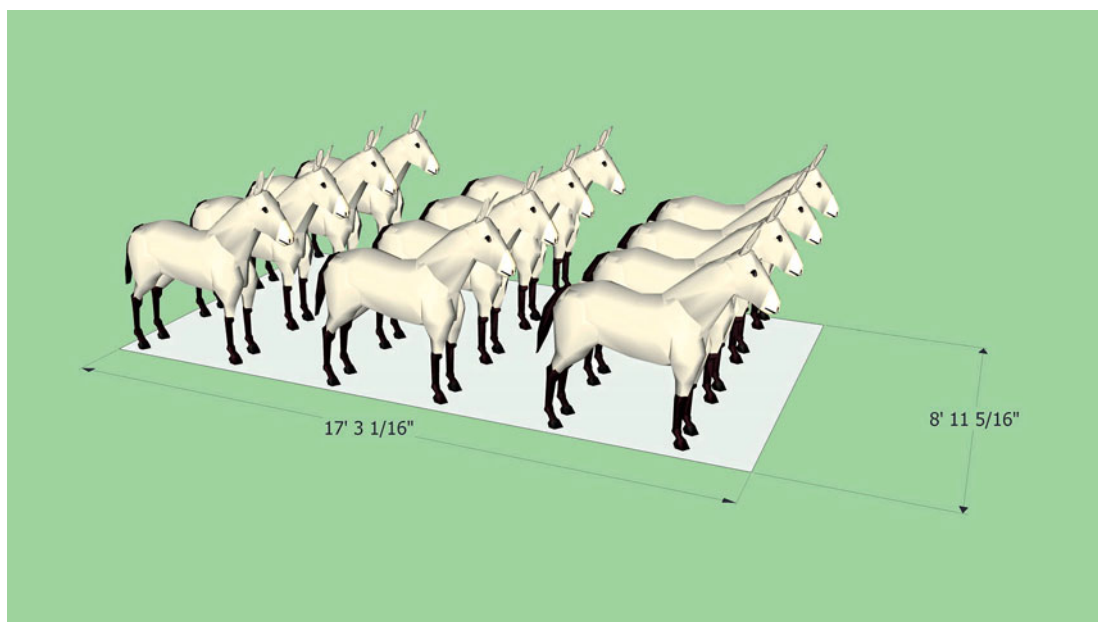


ARTDUBAI.AE/GLOBAL-ART-FORUM

COMMISSIONED PROJECTS

Not only will there be a munificence of art within the Madinat Jumeirah site but throughout the grounds too - in the guise of specially-commissioned projects designed to engage and pleasingly perplex audiences...

PARALLEL TO ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE, ART DUBAI PROJECTS HAVE commissioned a number of local and international artists to come up with site-specific works which will be dotted about fair venue for the duration of Art Week. Included in the line-up are Dina Danish, Joe Namy and Yudi Noor (from AiR) and a further nine artists – Ahmet Ögüt, Shi Jinsong, Basim Magdy, Ehsan Ul Haq, Mohammed Kazem, Hind Bin Demaitan, Farideh Lashai, Mary Evans and Fatima Al Qadiri. Each participant will be presenting work which deals in some way with the specific reality of the fair's environment and format and paramount, engages with audiences. Two participants talk Arsalan Mohammad through their planned ideas for 2013...



EHSAN UL HAQ

is Lahore-based artist whose proposed project for Art Dubai 2013 pointedly questions blind adherence to destructive dogmas and those who follow them.

'The project I am working on for Art Dubai is titled 'History Lessons'. It comprises an army of donkeys, 12 life-size donkeys, made out of a cheap material, like plaster of Paris, displayed as an assembly line.

This work was inspired by the Terracotta Warriors from the Qin Dynasty. The work is a comment on the ideas of force, the gain of control and the sentimental collective approach that leads to destruction, on the basis of patriotism and nationhood. It refers to the mindless activity of the group who follows orders in a zealous and uncritical way.

As Dubai and especially Art Dubai is a venue that attracts people from all over the world, I thought this

work would suit the fair as it has a universal context and it deals with concerns that are similar these days around the globe. Also, the project itself develops its own meaning when seen in reference to the art fair. First is the idea of the project itself, giving a satirical comment over mindlessness and its association with power and second is the monumental quality of the work, that I feel makes an interesting connection when seen in context to the ever-growing Dubai.

Yes, this project did meet quite a few challenges. For example, its construction and shipment and so on. The donkey first of all is going to be modelled in clay in Pakistan and then after passing through various processes a master mould will be made. This mould will be shipped to Dubai and then plaster casts will be taken out from it. This way, construction of the donkey is done in Pakistan and casting and production in Dubai.'

(Below) Ehsan Ul Haq's 'History Lesson' being built in Pakistan, featuring inquisitive donkey and (left) a model for his Art Dubai installation. (Right) 'Window 2011 - 2012' (2011 - 2012, ongoing) Mohammed Kazem (Courtesy the artist)





MOHAMMED KAZEM

Emirati artist Mohammed Kazem's commissioned project features over one hundred drawings, created over the past few years and up to Art Dubai itself. Each drawing zooms in and focuses on a seemingly insignificant detail in the daily kaleidoscope of life in Dubai.

'The work "Window 2011" is the continuation of an art project I developed between 2003 and 2005 and consists of a series of drawings transferred from the photographs I documented since 2003. These images are about scenes from daily life, mostly pictures of the lives of workers and the expatriates from various nationalities and they capture the lives of these emigrants while doing their job or during the practice of life; they are taken in various places in the city. I print these images and rework them by drawing with pencil and tracing paper to obtain the accuracy of the details and the result of degrees of the neutral colour is the colour closer to the grey.

In the past, I used photographs and films in order to represent environment. I exhibited them directly. In this project, I used photographs only as documentation or as sketches or draft papers for the work and transferred them into very quiet, very calm outline drawings, executed with pencil on paper in order to stand as minimalised and reduced landscapes of busy city life.

Day and night, the city is covered by colourfully-lit billboards, with aggressive moving images, by noisy sounds coming from moving up and down materials like iron, cement, concrete, aluminium and so on, building large towers, commercial areas and streets that thousands of cars will run through.

Environment is the main idea for this work. These drawings of the outlines of people, buildings, and all the details related to the materials surrounding and creating the environment must be taken into consideration.

While doing this work, I also look at the words derived from advertising, whether written on large billboards or on panels hanging from buildings under construction, which rob the existence of the other, making false offers (such as 'your life our mission', in addition to names which refer to some functions and social services such as health centres, municipality government and private institutions and property of the rich elite). I link these elements to the gesture, the physical movement of people and the general atmosphere and vision of the city and accurately meditate on a consistent narrative, so that each viewer can read the work in a different way. This reaction to the work takes place despite the existence of an elemental image, word, movement and sound harmony. The coherence in this work, is deliberately meant although not conventional, because of the multiplicity of the details and elements involved. The viewers can see a variety of ways through their memory before seeing a point; they can see the work relating to the improvised, in the sense of direct integration of mental vision during the work.'

artdubai.ae/projects



ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

Launched last year, AiR was one of the most successful and constructive new initiatives from the Art Dubai team. Arsalan Mohammad looks ahead to this year's second iteration, with participant, Emirati performance artist Ebtisam Abdulaziz.

Unveiled last year as part of a raft of new programmes and initiatives aimed at boosting Dubai's wider potential as a crucible for creativity, the inaugural Artists In Residence (AiR) programme, co-managed by London based Delfina Foundation, Dubai's Tashkeel and Dubai Culture & Arts Authority saw six artists - three local, three international and one guest curator - undertake a three-month residency amidst the winding alleyways and traditional architecture of the Bastikia district. This culminates in the Open Studios exhibition, which opens up the artists' workplaces to the public during the SIKKA art fair (from March 14 - 24).

Last year, curator Ali MacGilp and international participants Fayçal Baghriche, Magdi Mostafa and Deniz Üster worked alongside UAE-based counterparts Hadeyah Badri, Zeinab Al Hashimi and Nasir Nasrallah. The resulting exhibition was a strong, textured group presentation, pleasingly esoteric - the shared energies of artists and curator creating work that fairly pulsed with cross-cultural vibrancy, yet avoided silly clichés or pat superficialities.

This year, participating artists Ebtisam Abdulaziz, Ammar Al Attar, Dina Danish, Reem Falaknaz, Joe Namy and Yudi Noor will be working with curator Bérénice Saliou in realising site-specific projects of their choosing. Given the almost universal win-win nature of the AiR programme, it's hardly surprising that it's an enthusiastic and inspired Ebtisam Abdulaziz, a well-known and acclaimed Emirati performance artist, we encounter, speaking a few weeks after she embarked on AiR 2013...

How did you first engage with the AiR programme? What were your thoughts on it last year?

I met with Aaron Cezar from the Delfina Foundation two years ago, when I was busy curating the MIND show at DUCTAC. He told me about the residency programme, and I found it so interesting. He wanted me to participate, so with some encouragement from The Third Line team, I decided to apply and be part of it.

Last year the AiR programme was good. I met [AiR curator] Ali MacGilp and some of the artists. I know Nasir Naserallah, one of the Emirati artists,

who told me so many positive things and especially, how he'd noticed a big improvement in his art work after the residency programme. I think it encourages artists to experiment with different elements, to be able to get out of their comfort zone. I think all the artists did a very good job last year. I also met with them and had some long conversations. And I loved the art exhibition from last year, especially Deniz's and Zeinab Al Hashimi's work.

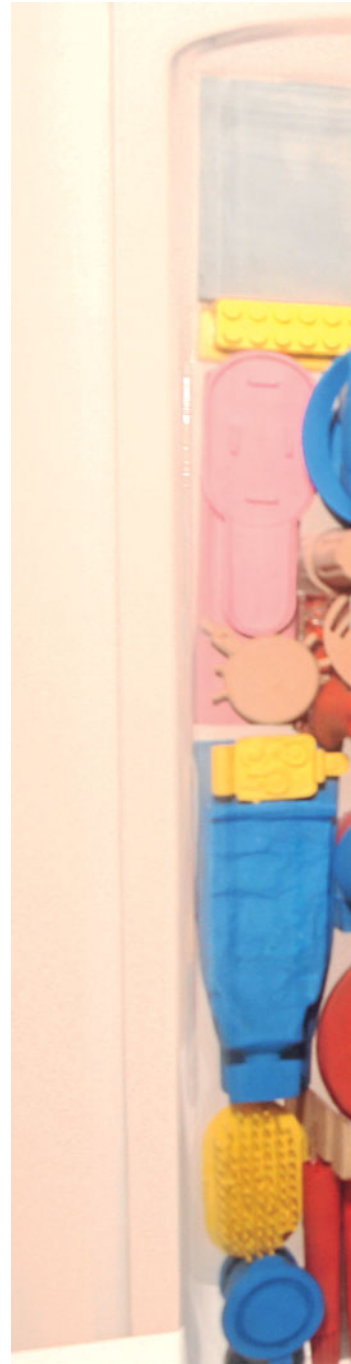
Did you feel any part of the programme last year was especially welcome in Dubai? And did you feel there was anything in 2012 you would have changed?

I don't think I would change anything for this year. Maybe for the emerging artists who didn't get the chance to exhibit at Art Dubai, it would be good for local artists to be involved for the Dubai art fair as well, since the other artists are commissioned for Dubai art.

When you began planning for AiR 2013 what ideas first came to you? Did you have any particular line of thought you felt would work best in the context of the residency?

To be honest, I had so many ideas that I wanted to do for AiR! Then I thought, I'll give myself some time to be inspired by the space and to get inspired by the whole atmosphere of exchange. For example, one of my first ideas was to do a performance, since it's an open area. Then I decided to walk and discover Al Bastakia and find out more about it. So I got inspired by some heritage spots, and now I have two different proposals that I need to submit and discuss with the curator. For me, the whole programme is not only about making art or producing a new body of art. It's about exchanging culture and ideas with the other artists and learning from them, and for them also to learn from my experience. And this happened when we all get together and presented our work and will hopefully carry on. Not to mention, that the curator, Berenice also played an important role, by providing me with a very important reference text to read.

So going back to your question, my two proposals are not yet confirmed, but they are related to Al Bastakia area, and they both concentrate on involving my engagement with the space and the people surrounding it. I





Ebtisam Abdulaziz, 2013: 'For me, the whole programme is not only about making art... it's about exchanging culture and ideas with the other artists and learning from them, and for them to also learn from my experience'

don't really have a clear idea yet on how the project will look. But I'm open to experimenting with different art elements and materials. I can say that both projects have long research processes and a lot of procedures to fulfil until I develop the final output.

The projects will involve diary records, my input in the area, performance either live if possible, or documentation with photographs. To give you one little hint - I got inspired by an old spot that's played an important role through the history of Dubai, and I wanted to give this location that strength by making those art projects'

How do you feel you are benefiting from working with this group of people and have you consciously adapted your work practise or approach as a result of interacting with the AiR curators and fellow artists?

So far, the group seems to be very interesting, with different artists from different regions, which is really good for someone like me who doesn't travel a lot. I see it as a great opportunity. More important to me is that each artist has his or her own way of thinking. Last year, we all become friends, so it's nice to have this ongoing conversation with all of them, talking about the

art and culture in their countries, and exchange experiences.

As I said Berenice the curator, knows exactly what she is doing. She sat with all of us together and then had individual meetings, so she could understand what we are doing. Then she suggested some links and references, that helped improve the proposals, which was so helpful at this stage.

How do you feel that AiR contributes to the local art scene?

I think it helps both sides the local artist, and the other. Both groups are going to learn some different experiences, that will help to contribute the scene. And also it will build a good connection, a good relationship with other artists from different parts of the world, and hopefully open up the doors for more art collaborations. Plus, the experience that the young local artists will take out of this programme will help to build up their artistic practices. That of course, will contribute the local art scene in Dubai. **HBA**

FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE PROGRAMME SEE WWW.ARTDUBAI.AE/PROJECTS/RESIDENCIES