

Galerie

**DAZZLING
ART AND
INTERIORS**



**SWISS BEATZ
TAKES ON
THE ART WORLD**

**BESPOKE
GIFTS—
THE NEW
LUXURY**

**ABU DHABI
OASIS OF
CULTURE**

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**EASY
ELEGANCE**

Fast Forward

FOUR ARTISTS LOOK TO THE FUTURE WITH FRESH TAKES AND INVENTIVE TECHNIQUES

MATTHEW STONE In 2004, when British artist Matthew Stone graduated from London's Camberwell College of Arts, he decided he wasn't going to work a day job. So he just squatted with friends in an artists' collective called !WOWOW! while he deejayed, published manifestos on optimism, and applied his free-spirited ethos to photography, performance, fashion, and film.



By the time of his first solo exhibition, "Future Hindsight," at London's Union Gallery in 2007, he was showing images of friends posed like intertwined marionettes and defining the social sphere as his primary concern. Exhibitions at Tate Britain, the Royal Academy of Arts, and the Centre for Contemporary Art (both solo and group) followed. Most recently, the English newspaper *Gay Times* commissioned Stone to create ten portraits of British LGBT+ icons for the Gay Times Honours 2017, held at the National Portrait Gallery in November.

The artist has now shifted his focus from photography to making large digital tableaux in which swirling brushstrokes mix with and partially obscure images of contorted, fragmented bodies. This past summer, the Choi & Lager gallery in Seoul, South Korea, staged a solo show of Stone's potent new works, which call to mind both Caravaggio's red-blooded religious iconography and Mapplethorpe's starkly beautiful nudes. "I'm motivated to make work that is about how we interact as individuals," he says, "how we share space, and are in and out of touch with our bodies." For now, Stone has clearly found his space.

matthewstone.co.uk —ANTWAUN SARGENT

ANDRÉ HEMER What can a working artist do to stand out in an Instagrammed world? For André Hemer, it's giving digital imagery a physical presence with paint. The artist's process is complex. He forms paint blobs, scans them outdoors for unusual lighting effects, and then digitally prints those images onto canvas. After coating them with as many as eight layers →

From top: *SP IRL #2* (2017), by André Hemer. Matthew Stone in front of his 2017 *Back into the Body*.



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of translucent or opaque paints, he binds the initial blobs onto the surface, producing gorgeous, intriguing, collagelike works that gleam with luscious hues and palpable paint.

Based in Vienna, the New Zealand-born Hemer has shown widely in Europe and Asia. But he is only now having his U.S. debut, in a solo exhibition at the Luis De Jesus gallery in Los Angeles, through December 17. (The gallery is also presenting his work at Untitled Miami, December 6 to 10.)

With more solo shows to follow abroad, including at the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery in London next May, Hemer is making a big impression on today's art world. "I'm dealing with how a painting can make us think about the ways we see, and how that has changed drastically within the last decade, in the digital age," he says. "I'm trying to create images in a much more handmade way—images that seem familiar but are distinct." *andreheemer.com* —VICKY LOWRY

LALLA ESSAYDI Their stares haunt as much as they invite, piercing the viewer with exacting stillness. The enchanting subjects in Lalla Essaydi's photographs represent the multifaceted identity of Muslim women even as they evoke Orientalist-art clichés of the exotic East. "My work reaches beyond Islamic culture to include the Western fascination with it," the Moroccan-born New York artist explains.

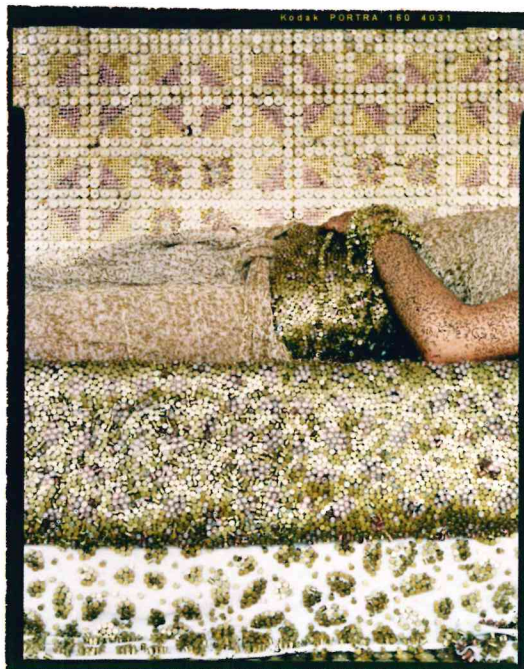
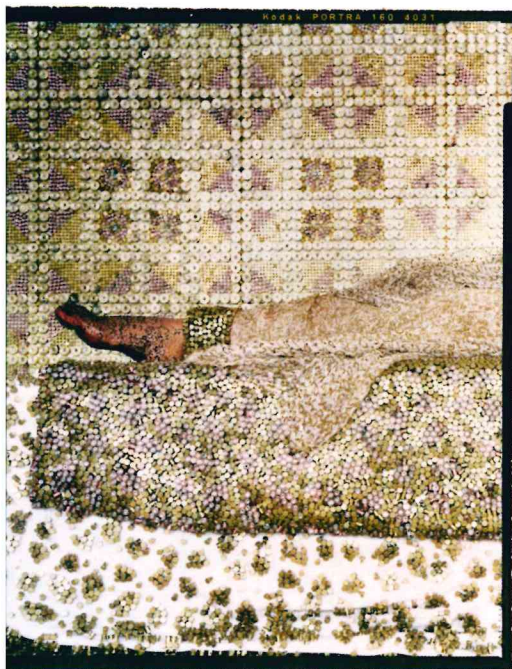
Essaydi carefully stages each photograph, posing her subjects to mimic works by French neoclassical painters such as Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and Jean-Léon Gérôme. Only she subverts those historical references by



superimposing Islamic calligraphy in henna on her subjects' bodies, metaphorically veiling the women in their language and culture. In her series "Harem," women are wrapped in robes adorned with henna and Islamic tile patterns that echo the exquisite decoration of their architectural surroundings. These solo figures project self-assuredness, reclaiming the harem as a symbol of female empowerment.

"Perhaps by invoking the Orientalist gaze of Western male painters, my work can promote in Western women a greater →

From top: Lalla Essaydi's 2009 photograph *Harem #14C*. For her 2012 *Bullets Revisited #3*, the clothing and fabrics were sewn with thousands of bullet casings.



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sense of commonality with their Arab counterparts,” says Essaydi, whose photographs are in several current and upcoming exhibitions, including “I Am,” a traveling survey of work by female artists at the Center for the Arts in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, from January 12 to February 25, 2018. Certainly, her photographs offer up timely messages about the need for greater cross-cultural understanding. lallaessaydi.com —REBECCA ANNE PROCTOR

RACHEL ROSSIN It’s a curious and rare distinction for a young artist to be written up by the tech bible *Wired* before she is by *Artforum*. But if virtual reality is an artistic medium, like marble or oil paint, Rachel Rossin is arguably its buzziest young star. Rossin, who spends a lot of time wearing an Oculus Rift headset—she got an early prototype from the company—was chosen as New Inc’s first Virtual Reality Fellow in 2015. In fact, so far she’s the only one.

The New York artist often begins by working in a more conventional mode, painting surreal canvases that meld distorted, just-recognizable fragments of landscapes and still

lives with vivid splashes and swirls. Rossin (who is self-taught in coding and game design) then photographs these works and digitally manipulates the imagery to create brief, trippy films that, when viewed with a VR headset, simulate the experience of being immersed in the paintings. Over the past couple of years, the work has gone viral. In addition to a much-talked-about show at her New York gallery, ZieherSmith, Rossin has exhibited her virtual environments and paintings at art fairs in Miami, New York, and Seattle, as well as in group exhibitions at museums in Shanghai, Helsinki, and Pittsburgh. “Rachel is as familiar with computers as she is with a paintbrush, and if you visit her in her studio she’s literally going back and forth between them,” says curator and critic Ryan Steadman, who displayed her work in “Trust Issues,” a group show at London’s Ronchini Gallery last year. “Collectors appreciate her fluency in the two very different realms.” rossin.co —ALEXANDRA PEERS

An installation view of the Rachel Rossin exhibition staged a year ago at the Kim? Contemporary Art Centre in Riga, Latvia.

