

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

January 2013 Newsletter

Events

CURRENT

GAYLE WELLS MANDLE & JULIA MANDLE

Game II

January 17 – February 16, 2013

Leila Heller Gallery

568 West 25th Street

In their exhibition *Game II*, Julia Mandle and Gayle Wells Mandle use images – not of ladders but of chairs and a teeter-totter – to depict humanity’s eternal struggle against imbalanced societies that deny their citizens equal opportunity. Inspired by current events in the Middle East and the United States – where the Occupy movement and subsequent 2012 presidential election brought issues of economic inequity to the forefront – they express their ideas through a combination of media, styles and objects that infuse their art with topical meaning and depth. Their collaborative exhibition stems from a warm partnership dedicated to making art that speaks for the “other” 99 percent – for people who aspire to greater security, opportunity and justice in the world.



[Press Release](#)

Image: Gayle Wells Mandle and Julia Mandle, *Burning Throne*, 2012, Archival inkjet print on Epson, hot press bright paper, 84 x 44 in (213.4 x 111.8 cm), Edition of 5, 2APs

MITRA TABRIZIAN

Light From The Middle East: New Photography

November 13, 2012 – April 7, 2013

Victoria & Albert Museum

Cromwell Road

London – United Kingdom



Photography is a powerful and persuasive means of expression. Its immediacy and accessibility make it an ideal choice for artists confronting the social challenges and political upheavals of the Middle East today.

Light from the Middle East: New Photography presents work by artists from across the Middle East (spanning North Africa to Central Asia), living in the region and in diaspora.

The exhibition explores the ways in which these artists investigate the language and techniques of photography. Some use the camera to record or bear witness, while others subvert that process to reveal how surprisingly unreliable a photograph can be. The works range from documentary photographs and highly staged tableaux to images manipulated beyond recognition. The variety of approaches is appropriate to the complexities of a vast and diverse region.

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Image: Mitra Tabrizian, *Tehran 2006*, C-type light jet print, 40 x 119 in (101 x 302 cm), Edition of 5

AYAD ALKADHI

Artists-In-Residence

January 18 – 30, 2013

SHANGRI LA Center for Islamic Arts and Cultures

Shangri La hosts invited artists-in-residence whose work complements the collection while also advancing the study and understanding of Islamic art and culture. Selected artists pursue their own creative work and also present public programs, such as lectures, workshops and performances.



Ayad Alkadhi's residency is in partnership with the Intersections Program at the University of Hawai'i Department of Art and Art History. As part of his residency, Alkadhi will present a public lecture on his work at the University of Hawai'i Department of Art and Art History Auditorium on January 23. He will also conduct studio visits with University of Hawai'i graduate students.

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Image: Ayad Alkadhi, *At The Beginning*, 2012, Mixed media (pencil, charcoal, pen and acrylic) on canvas, 72 x 72 in (183 x 183 cm)

UPCOMING

SHIVA AHMADI

Apocalyptic Playland

February 21 – March 22, 2013

Leila Heller Gallery

568 West 25th Street

Opening reception: February 21, 6 – 8pm

Shiva Ahmadi's works occupy an uneasy psycho-visual space: at once meticulous and loose, playful and somber, mythical yet very much dealing with the real. Much of her paintings are on paper, but also aqua board: a rigid surface best suited for her gouache, watercolor and ink applications. Her grounds are light earthy washes, upon which she builds up degrees of opacity: most opaque is inevitably the color red, generously applied to the point of caking and crackling. The last layer is the most delicate: ornate floral patterns painstakingly applied with metallic gold ink.

Ahmadi's earlier paintings were a belated manifestation of a doubly latent trauma, the second recalling the first: the invasion of Iraq by the US in 2003, reviving the pain of the invasion of Iran by Iraq in 1980.

Her recent works have taken on more current conflicts and sources of instability, namely the tense stand off between Iran and its nuclear ambitions on the one hand, and the United States with its hegemonic agenda on the other. Beyond the specificity of the conflicts referenced, the work is about the deep traumas experienced by civilian populations at the hands of their own governments. The circus depicted in the works, is that of a normalized reversal of the order of things: public servants being served by the very people that put them in power.

Image: Shiva Ahmadi, *Untitled 13 (from Throne)*, 2012, Watercolor ink and acrylic on Aquaboard, 20 x 16 in (51 x 41 cm)



RACHEL LEE HOVNANIAN and RAN HWANG

Transparencies: Contemporary Art and A History of Glass

February 22 – May 22, 2013

Des Moines Art Center, Anna K. Meredith Gallery
4700 Grand Ave, Des Moines, Iowa

Transparencies brings together a group of international contemporary artists whose work explores glass as both medium and as subject matter. Each creates contemporary art that connects with the history of glasswork, from luxury objects such as chandeliers and mirrors to household items like drinking vessels and light bulbs. Many forms of glass are represented, from delicate, hand-worked mirrors to industrial sheets of Plexiglas, as well as works that despite appearances, are not made of glass at all. The artists selected for *Transparencies* come from around the world, and vary widely in their art-making practices.



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Image: Rachel Lee Hovnanian, *NY Lights*, 2011, Steel, glass, narcissus flowers, glass vials, LED bulbs, plexiglass, 45 x 78 x 8 in (114.3 x 198.1 x 20.3 cm)

AYAD ALKADHI

The Dance of Words

February 25 – March 15, 2013

Quarter Gallery, Regis Center for Art, University of Minnesota

405 21st Avenue S Minneapolis, MN

The Regis Center for Art presents *The Dance of Words*, a group exhibition of artworks that reference the use of text and calligraphic traditions found in many languages and cultures. The exhibition serves as a forum to connect calligraphic traditions of many cultures that respect and excel in this art and are part of



larger Minnesota. The exhibition aims to create a dialogue between different alphabets' users. Within one alphabet there are myriad languages with a variety of aesthetics. This exhibition not only helps to integrate different alphabets' users within the fabric of Minnesota, but also allows these unique groups to offer rich traditions to the larger community. Juxtaposing displays of

several languages instigates a deeper reflection on what language as a form of expression means. Texts offer different meanings to natives than to those who do not speak the same language. This exhibition strives to expand our appreciation for cultural diversity.

A public lecture by Ayad Alkadhi in conjunction with the group exhibition *The Dance of Words*, will be presented on February 28 at 5pm at InFlux Space, Regis Center for Art.

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Image: Ayad Alkadhi, *The Queen*, 2010, Mixed media on Arabic newspaper on canvas, 36 x 36 in (91.4 x 91.4 cm)

News

Harper's BAZAAR ART Arabia
"In Conversation: LEILA HELLER"
by Arsalan Mohammad
Winter 2012/2013

Fiercely ambitious, cheerfully pushy and unashamedly successful, Leila Heller has built up quite a reputation during the thirty years her gallery has been, in one way or another, extant. Her audacious gamble, back in the early 1980s, to establish herself as a major international dealer specialising in Middle Eastern art, in the notoriously-cut throat Manhattan art scene has paid off.

Having attended Brown University to study museum management during the 1970s, her break came following the Iranian Revolution, when she found herself stuck in the US 'without papers' and jobless. Heller found herself a job at the Guggenheim and subsequently, as an in-house curator at an investment bank. Soon afterwards, she founded a small art salon on Madison Avenue and set out her stall, showing works by Modern Iranian artists such as Monir Farmanfarmaian and Charles Zenderoudi. Early years were tricky – Iranian art was nowhere near as stylish as it would eventually become – but Heller's perseverance, determination and glittering social circle, all coalesced into the opulent Chelsea space that sits today by luminaries such as Pace and Marlborough.



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Image: Leila Heller with an artwork by Ran Hwang, *Rest II*, 2009, Buttons beads pins on wood panel, 108 x 60 in (275 x 153 cm)

Art Basel / Miami Beach

"No Longer a Man's World. Women are bringing about the biggest changes in the growing Middle Eastern art market"

by Robin Pogrebin

December 2012

When Leila Heller started her New York gallery 30 years ago, it wasn't easy to get collectors to consider buying Middle Eastern contemporary art. "Most of the audience had zero interest," Heller recalls. "I was lucky if I sold to some oil company in Houston. The artists of the Middle East have always been great artists. Attention given to them has changed."



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Image: Hadieh Shafie, *21600 Pages*, 2012, Ink, acrylic and paper with printed & hand-written Farsi text Eshghe "Love", 48 in diameter (122 cm diameter)

T Qatar

New York Times Style Magazine

"Women on Canvas: Kezban Arca has an uncanny way of looking at things. Women and their idiosyncrasies are her current craze"

by Sindhu Nair

December 2012

The paintings are stark yet poignant; frivolous, yet with a hidden agenda – almost like the artists herself, Kezban Arca Batibeki. On the outside she appears to be just an ordinary woman, but scratch the surface, and there is more to her than her obvious talent. She currently has a solo exhibition at Anima Gallery in The Pearl in conjunction with Leila Heller Gallery, New York. T Qatar caught up with the artist and the gallery owner.



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Image: Kezban Arca Batibeki with her artwork at Anima Gallery

Harper's BAZAAR ART Arabia

"Corporate Culture"

by Simon Bowcock

Winter 2012/2013

Detached, dysfunctional, dystopian, and disturbing are some of the adjectives which spring to mind while considering the oeuvre produced by Iranian-British artist Mitra Tabrizian over the last 25 years. Tabrizian is best known for her large-scale, orchestrated photographs of people, which inevitably means parallels are drawn with Jeff Wall, one of the contemporary art world's best known photographers.



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Image: Mitra Tabrizian, *City, London*, 2008, C-type photographic print, 48 x 98.5 in (122 x 250 cm)

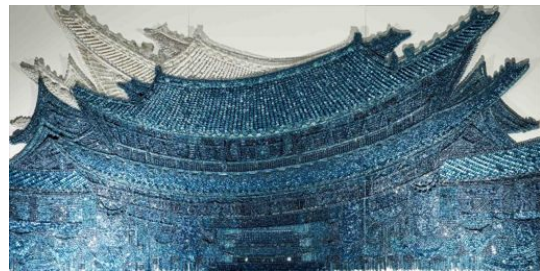
Asian Art Newspaper

"Ran Hwang"

by Olivia Sand

December 2012

A fashion enthusiast, Ran Hwang found a way to include a number of elements mostly related to the fashion industry into her art. Relying on buttons and sometimes also adding thread, she completes spectacular pieces featuring an imagery reminiscent of her native Korea. Over the years, her practice has become more and more sophisticated, adding growing detail and complexity to her work.



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Image: Ran Hwang, *East Wind*, 2012, Buttons, beads, pins on wood panel, 70 x 141 in (180 x 360 cm)

NYC Art Parasites

"Crack A Smile!"

by Irina Makarova

December 27, 2012

The opening of *The Young Collectors Exhibition* at Leila Heller Gallery was definitely an eye-catching event. On view were 114 works by over 30 artists, all displayed salon style, over the range of three rooms. The gallery definitely pulled out their best tricks to make this a memorable opening: waiters were carrying round trays of champagne, there was at least three different kinds of hors d'oeuvres, a live DJ, and rooms full of beautiful people. With all pieces sold for \$500–5,000, with 10% of the proceedings going towards [Pollock-Krasner Foundation's Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund](#), it was really fantastic to experience art sales being directed towards positive and noble causes.



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Image: Alexander Yulish, *The Runner*, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, 52 x 50 in (132 x 127 cm)

NEW YORK OBSERVER
"To Do Tuesday: Miami North"
by Daniel D'Addario
December 18, 2012

Not all art-collecting this month is going on in Miami: tonight brings the opening reception for the Young Collectors Exhibition, a diverse set of works intended for young (read: a level below Sotheby's on desired price point) patrons. The whole show, put on by Leila Heller Gallery and WASP bible *Town & Country*, raises money for the Pollock-Krasner Foundation's Hurricane Sandy relief fund, to aid those artists whose livelihoods were affected by the lower-Manhattan floodwaters...

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Image: Max Rippon, *Take Take Take*, 2012, Ink watercolor spray paint and sign painters enamel on handout paper 38 x 27.5 in (96.5 x 69.8 cm)



CANVAS
"JAMM HOSTS THIRD AUCTION"
January/February 2013

On 29 November, independent art advisory JAMM hosted its third Middle Eastern and international art auction at the Contemporary Art Platform in Kuwait City, raising \$570,000. Sponsored by TAG Heuer and conducted by Alexander Gilkes, former global marketing director and auctioneer for Philips de Pury and co-founder of Paddle8, the auction featured 63 lots by the region's emerging and established artists.

The top lot of the evening was *El Amal* by Farideh Lashai, which sold for \$72,000, followed by *Garden Party* by Reza Derakshani, which achieved \$70,000 and Hamza Bounoua's painting, *Exits*, which brought in \$23,000.

[Read more](#)



Image: Farideh Lashai, *El Amal*, 2011, Projected animated images on painting and acrylic on canvas and sound, 74.8 x 74.8 in (190 x 190 cm)

CANVAS

"Looking Ahead"

January/February 2013

Iranian artist Farideh Lashai is slated for two shows in New York this spring. Leila Heller Gallery will present Lashai's *Rabbit in Wonderland* video installations from 28 March to 27 April, while Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art will exhibit her *Persian Garden* series from 4 April to 9 May.

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Image: Farideh Lashai, *Catching the Moon*, 2012, Sound and projected animation in a water well of stainless steel, 4.30 minutes, 27.5 in Height (70 cm)



CANVAS

"Publications"

January/February 2013

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Image: Mitra Tabrizian: Another Country



World Travel Channel

Interview with Kezban Arca Batibeki

[View Interview](#)

Image: Kezban Arca Batibeki



SUR LA TERRE

"HE LOVES ME...*She Loves Me Not!*"

Doha n. 23

When Leila Heller happened upon a large piece of Kezban's at Art Turkey, the New York gallerist knew that she wanted to exhibit her work. Leila's specialty is bringing Middle Eastern art to her gallery in New York with the goal to challenge the cliché that Arab women are seen and not heard. From there, Anima Gallery became involved and together they commissioned original artwork for Kezban to bring to Qatar. Leila cites the strong female influence of the art scene in Doha, particularly thanks to the work of Sheika Mayassa, as the draw to display Kezban's artwork in the country. "People in the west have all sorts of preconceptions about women in the Arab world," she notes, "that make Kezban's artistic offerings bold and insightful."



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Image: Kezban Arca Batibeki, *Too Loud*, 2012, Acrylic based mixed media and embroidery with sequins on canvas, 35.4 x 43.3 in (90 x 110 cm)

Vogue

"Postmodern oryantalizm"

December 2012

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Image: Kezban Arca Batibeki, *Girl with Peacock*, 2012, Digital collage, 39.5 x 26 in (100.3 x 66 cm)



LE JOURNAL
"TURKISH DELIGHT"
by Nora Nathan
December 2012

Batibeki notes how things have changed for Turkish art since Istanbul launched its Biennial. "People started accepting us and coming to Turkey from all over the world to see the works of local artists. Now, we have lots of art museums and galleries. Contemporary art is very much in vogue," she says. Things have also changed for the artist herself, as she admits that beyond being well-known in her homeland, now collectors from outside Turkey are beginning to recognize her works.

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Image: Kezban Arca Batibeki, *Shadow 2*, 2012, Acrylic based mixed media on canvas and embroidery with sequins, 59 x 59 in (150 x 150 cm)

CANVAS daily
(Arabic translation)
November 8, 2012

Featuring Kezban Arca Batibeki.

[Read More](#)

Image: Kezban Arca Batibeki, *Big Red Circle*, 2012, Acrylic based mixed media and embroidery with sequins, 59 in diameter (150 cm)



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