

## LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Milliard, Coline. "Art Dubai Mixes Big Money, Strong Sales and Edgy Art As Conflict Engulfs Arab World." *Artnet*. (March 18, 2015).

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# Art Dubai Mixes Big Money, Strong Sales and Edgy Art As Conflict Engulfs Arab World

Coline Milliard, Wednesday, March 18, 2015



Athi-Patra Ruga ...*Manhostage*. *Uddermaker*. (2014)  
Photo: courtesy of the artist and WHATIFTHEWORLD, Cape Town

Art Dubai is a heady mix: big money meets cutting-edge contemporary art and Eastern modernism in the golden bubble of Madinat Jumeirah resort, the fair's host since its inception in 2007. With 92 galleries, thirty of which are from the region, Art Dubai is, according to its director Antonia Carver, "the largest showcase of artists from the Arab world" globally. And although the art market here has been growing at a rapid

pace—due in no small part to the fair itself—the UAE, and Dubai in particular, still has the allure of an emerging marketplace, full to the brim with opportunities for local and international galleries ready to make the effort (see the 2014 report [Art Dubai Opens With Steady Sales, Mostly Under \\$100,000](#)).

“It's fabulous, it was like finding a home again,” Leila Heller told artnet News. The New York dealer is a bit of a UAE veteran: she has been coming to Art Dubai and its Abu Dhabi counterpart since their launch, and praised Art Dubai's “curious and inquisitive” collector-base. Heller is now cementing her commitment to Dubai with a new gallery, set to open in Alserkal Avenue's new development in the fall of 2015 (see [Alserkal Avenue Previews Expansion in Dubai](#)).

Heller's strategy is clearly paying off. Her booth—curated by academic Shiva Balaghi and featuring works by Noor Ali Chagani, Hadieh Shafie, and Loris Cecchini (priced in the \$10,000-45,000 range)—had almost sold out half way through the preview day (see [d3 Design Weekend to Kick Off in Dubai](#)).