

'Angelus Novus (Reconstructed)' Kamrooz Aram, 2011 [below] Seher Shah, 'Object Unit (Hanging Block)', Seher Shah 2011 (Courtesy Green Art Gallery)



Yasmin Atassi
GREEN ARTGALLERY
DUBAI (UAE)

What informed the selection of work in your booth for Art Dubai 2012? What factors played a role in the selection of artists and pieces?

We decided it would be a good time to essentially showcase the artists we represent, and make a statement about what the gallery's programme is all about. Especially in a setting as diverse and abundant as Art Dubai, with its local and international visitors. We will be showcasing key new pieces from five of our artists including Kamrooz Aram, Seher Shah, Jaber Al Azmei, Shadi Habib Allah and Nazif Topcuoglu.

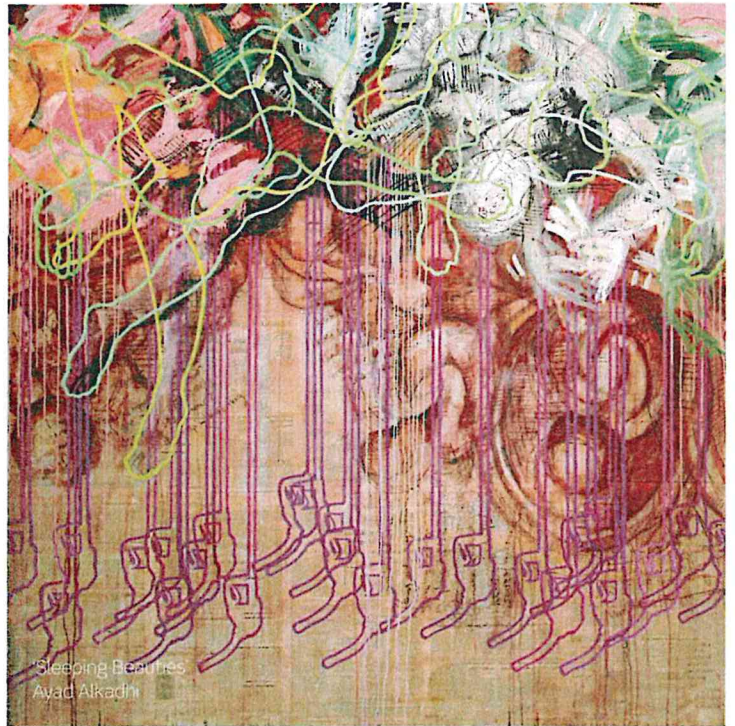
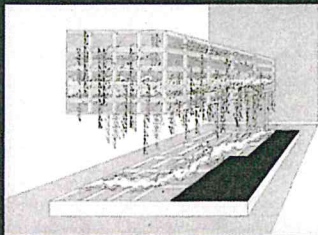
You have been at Art Dubai for the past few years now. What aspects of the fair motivate you to return? What do you appreciate most about the event? What are, in your opinion, its key strengths?

I think Art Dubai is going from strength to strength. It has been amazing to see how the fair has grown and developed. I especially

admire the approach they take towards art education, which is particularly lacking in this region. The Fair is a no-brainer for us, it's a great fair and it's homegrown which we will always support

Do you find visitors to Art Dubai are now better informed about the Middle Eastern art scene than before and are enjoying viewing, discussing and buying the work you bring?

Yes, and we've seen these changes happen year by year when Art Dubai comes round. The international crowd is much more familiar with both the art scene and Middle Eastern artists themselves.
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Leila Heller
LEILA HELLER,
NEW YORK (USA)

This year, Leila Heller Gallery returns to Dubai with Shiva Ahmadi and Ayad Alkadhi and Kezban Arca Batibeki. What informed the selection of work in your booth for Art Dubai 2012? What factors played a role in the selection of artists and pieces?

I feel very strongly about all three artists that I will be exhibiting this year! At Art Dubai we are featuring major artists from the Middle East and Turkey: Shiva Ahmadi, an Iranian artist who lives in Detroit and whose work is in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Art; Iraqi artist Ayad Alkadhi who lives in New York, and whose work is in several collection in the Middle East; and Turkish artist Kezban Arca Batibeki, who lives in Istanbul and is in the collection Istanbul Modern and the Farjam Collection in Dubai. These three artists each deal with issues that are relevant in today's world. Shiva Ahmadi's work references the politics of oil and the Middle East. Ayad Alkadhi references everything from war to issues of immigration to pop culture. And Kezban Arca Batibeki's work focuses on gender issues and femininity. We will have the largest booth at Art Dubai this year because we are, in essence, creating three solo shows. We plan

on having a major presence at the Fair!

You have been at Art Dubai for the past few years now. Aside from its geographical position, what aspects of the fair motivate you to return? What do you appreciate most about the event? Why do you think it succeeds as a platform for Middle Eastern art? Under the direction of Antonia Carver, the Fair has become so international and has formed such great outreach to the East and West! It has become one of my favourite fairs, as an important junction where Asia, Europe, and the Middle East meet. I also enjoy The Global Art Forum as it brings major speakers from the museums, artists and specialists from around the discussing in depth current topics in art politics and culture. Several of the most important museum heads participate which makes it very successful.

What aspect, artist or event are you personally most anticipating this year?

I'm looking forward to seeing and meeting the many curators and collectors from the region and around the world. And I love the hospitality and the warmth of the people in the Emirates and the Gulf region.

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