

Carnivals

ART AND CULTURE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARAB WORLD

A DECADE OF ART DUBAI

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IN THE UAE

12–24 MARCH SIKKA ART FAIR

Occurring annually during Dubai Art Season is the artist-led fair SIKKA at the historical neighbourhood of Al-Fahidi, also known as Bastakiya in Bur Dubai. The fair brings together new works by a number of artists based in the UAE and GCC. The sixth edition is curated by Emirati artist Mattar Bin Lahej, and offers a full-fledged cultural programme of visual art, music, live performances, video screenings, talks, guided walks, workshops and educational activities. Additionally, an open-studio exhibition from Art Dubai's Artists-in-Residence programme will be on show. This year, 20 artists have been selected to exhibit new works including Malda Smadi, Cristiana de Marchi and Marwan Karout.

Additionally, Mawaheb from Beautiful People, a Dubai-based art studio for adults with special needs, are taking part in the fair with a showcase of their work themed *Birdlife of the UAE*. The works feature multi-coloured multidisciplinary perspectives on birds native to the UAE or species that have migrated from abroad.



Image courtesy: Dubai Culture.



Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige. Still from *The Lebanese Rocket Society*, 2012. Image courtesy: Sharjah Art Foundation.

12 MARCH–12 JUNE SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION EXHIBITIONS

In parallel to the Dubai Art Season, four important exhibitions will open in Sharjah at the Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF) Art Spaces running from 12 March until 12 June.

The first exhibition *The Time is Out of Joint*, curated by Tarek Abou El Fetouh and commissioned by Asian Culture Complex - Asian Arts Theatre and Sharjah Art Foundation, picks up on the 2013 exhibition programme of *Home Works 6, Beirut*. This project explores the 12th-century Andalusian

scholar Ibn Al-Arabi's concept of time as fluid place and place as fluid time by reenacting two previous exhibitions at transitional moments in history (the first Arab Artist Biennial in Baghdad in 1974 and the *China Avant-Garde* exhibition in Beijing in 1989) and completes the line up with a look into the future through the Jogja Equator Conference in 2022. The show features a reading room, talks, performances and a two-day conference.

The second presentation is a solo exhibition of Syrian-born Simone Fattal's recent works from 2006 to 2013. Curated by SAF director Sheikha Hoor Al-Qasimi, Fattal's practice is informed by war and historical context. The show includes works consisting of text-based compositions and sculptures, including simple non-figurative formations made from Fattal's figurative *Warrior* sculptures representing those who have continuously withstood war and struggle.

The third exhibition presents work from the 1990s to the present by Lebanese artist and filmmaker duo Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige and includes newly commissioned projects which revolve around their artistic focus on Lebanon and the fabrication of imaginaries. The show is in collaboration with Jeu de Paume, Paris, Haus der Kunst, Munich and IVAM, Valencia.

Finally, a retrospective on the late Iranian artist Farideh Lashai (1944–2012) features her paintings and stop-motion animation works that take references from art, literature and film to comment on the political and social conditions in Iran.



Pietro Roccasalva. Image courtesy Mottahedan Projects, Dubai.

OPENS 18 MARCH MOTTAHEDAN PROJECTS THE AWAKENING

Mottahedan Projects is located in Dubai's Al Quoz district. Launched in 2012 by collector Mohammed Matt Mottahedan, the gallery separates itself from the other modern and contemporary art spaces by exhibiting artworks by emerging and international artists, works from Mottahedan's personal collection as well as serving as a project space. The focus of the curatorial direction of Mottahedan Projects is on works that have a socio-political and cultural agenda.

The roster of artists includes names from the 1980s onwards such as Vahid Jafarnejad, Mohammed Bozorgi and Aaron Gilbert. During Dubai's Art Week 2016, Mottahedan Projects will display a second round of US abstract artist Peter Halley's works alongside Italian artist Pietro Roccasalva's figurative works in the exhibition *The Awakening*.