

Harper's BAZAAR

ARABIA

ART

ISSUE 31

THAMEUR
MEJRI

the
NEW
humanity



EXHIBITIONISM

WHERE YOU CAN FEAST YOUR EYES THIS SUMMER

Words by Irene Ann Promodh



GALERIST AND GALERI NEV ANKARA
'STILL LIFE WITH A CURTAIN, CURATED BY DENIZ ARTUN'

Inspired by an ancient Greek tale of two artists, Zeuxis and Parrhasius, caught in a painting duel, this group exhibition reveals still-lives and realism that echo the deceptively realistic mural that Parrhasius had painted in the duel. This painting, currently preserved at the Hermitage Collection, serves as the basis of the exhibition's aim to question the transformative role that genres play in modern art. The exhibition honours Paul Cézanne for his role in establishing still-life art as the foundation of modernism, while also serving as a continuation of its nature-culture dichotomy. Through the careful pairing of displayed works, viewers can explore a multiplicity of reflections when they consider two works at the same time.

Galerist and Galeri Nev Ankara, Istanbul. Galerist.com.tr/en. +902122521896. Until 23 June.



**SFEIR -
SEMLER GALLERY
'FRAGMENTS'**

Exploring German diplomat and historian Max von Oppenheim's archaeological excavation in Syria, Lebanese artist Rayyane Tabet investigates artefact preservation, cultural appropriation, museological practices and migration trends in this exhibition. Inspired by a show at the 2016 Marrakech Biennale and his residency at the DAAD Artist-in-Berlin Programme, the installation is a product of Tabet's encounter with the information gathered by his great-grandfather, who served as Oppenheim's secretary during Syrian excavations. It uses drawings, sculptures, personal belongings and ready-mades, in addition to a performance and stone reliefs, to deconstruct and reconstruct often unrelated elements that result in unexpected narratives. His inquiry into historical accidents enables him to convey strong and complex emotions and ideas that transcend both time and geographical constraints.

*Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut. Sfeir-semler.com.
+9611566550. Until 4 August.*



**AGA KHAN MUSEUM
'THE WORLD OF THE FATIMIDS'**

The Toronto-based museum, North America's first museum dedicated to Islamic art, boasts its newest exhibition themed on the history of the Fatimids in Cairo. The exhibition incorporates a mix of large-scale architectural works, films, crystal carvings and literary texts to form an exquisite display. It also provides rare insight into the mystery surrounding the millennium-old Fatimid Dynasty through pieces such as a buried marble slab, painted lusterware bowl and ivory oliphant, in addition to other historic artefacts that reveal the profound influence of this civilisation on the region. Viewers can turn back the clock and experience the diversity of faiths and ethnicities across Fatimid Egypt, thereby revisiting a forgotten civilisation.

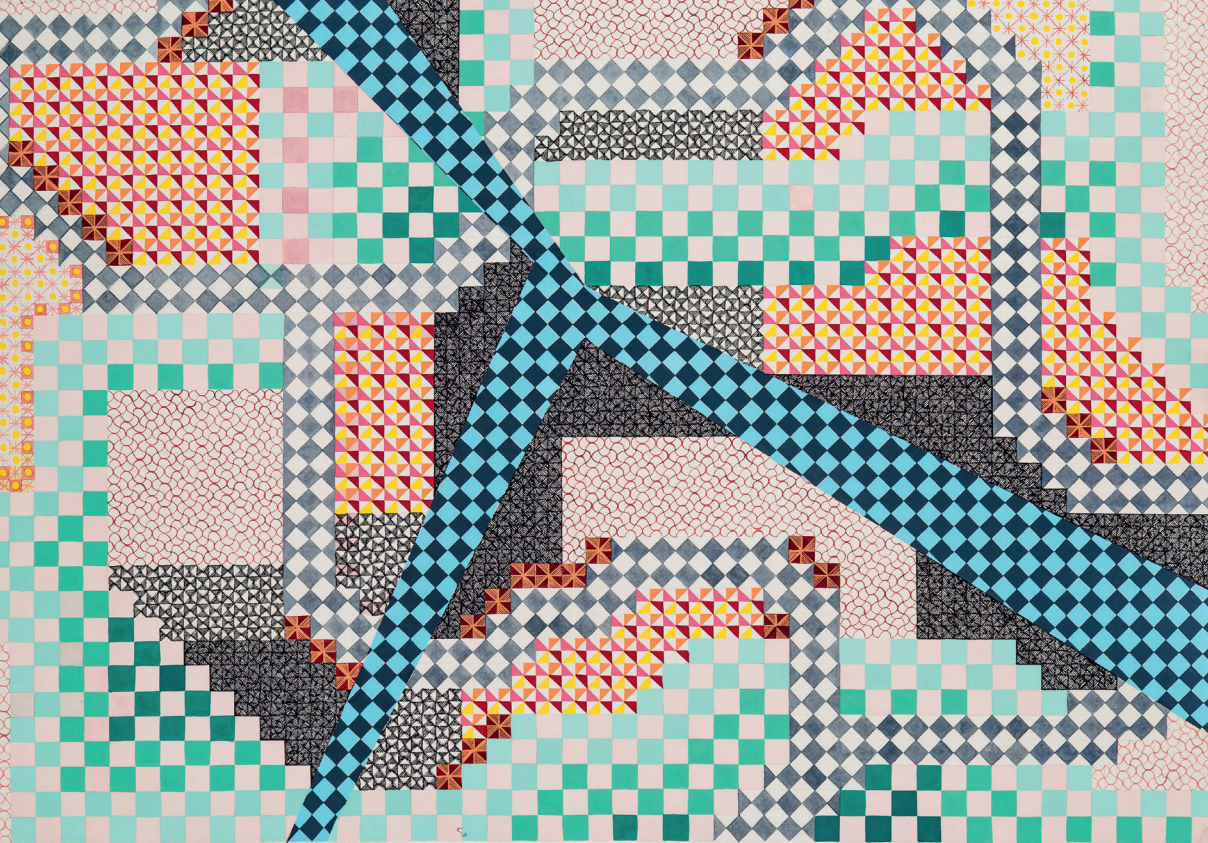
*Aga Khan Museum, Toronto. Agakhanmuseum.org.
+924166464677. Until 2 July.*



**LIANG YI MUSEUM
'THE BLUE ROAD:
MASTERCRAFTS FROM PERSIA'**

Curated by Dr Yuka Kadoi and organised in partnership with 11 major public institutions worldwide, the exhibition explores historical and aesthetic elements of the colour blue in Persia and Hong Kong. The show aims to unveil the beauty of Persian decorative art to the Asian world through its display of 94 distinct historical relics that cast light on how the cultivation of lapis lazuli and indigo to create Persian blue textiles led to the formation of the 'blue road' network, thereby increasing the global popularity of blue ceramic glazing. The show is divided into six categories based on mediums used such as glass, ceramics, textiles, painting and manuscripts, and their effects on the colour blue's influence in West Asia.

*Liang Yi Museum, Hong Kong.
Liangyimuseum.com. +85228068280. Until
24 June.*



**GALLERY ISABELLE
VAN DEN EYNDE**
‘I WILL BUILD A TALL CITY
INTERCONNECTED BY
CUL-DE-SACS’

In her fourth solo show at the gallery, Iranian artist Nargess Hashemi presents two collections of her works that display grand geometrical urban plans and small-scale interiors. The show’s various components are interconnected by diamond-shaped cul-de-sacs, suggesting interconnectivity and transparency among people. Through the use of mono-printing, macramé, graph paper and acetate, the exhibition focuses on Hashemi’s personal experiences and her internal struggle with identity and cultural entrapment. *Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde, Dubai. Ivde.net. +97143235052. Until 26 July.*

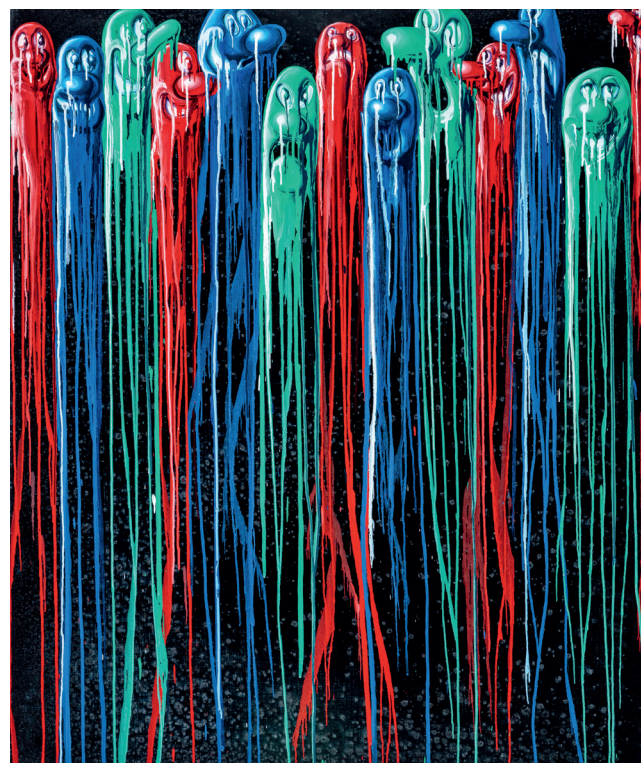


**THE MOSAIC
ROOMS**
‘WHAT DO YOU MEAN,
HERE WE ARE?’

With a focus on challenging political perceptions and addressing misconceptions regarding the Arab experience and diaspora, the art gallery presents a series of six exhibitions focused on both seminal Arab modernist artists and group shows from Egypt, Morocco and Iran to mark

its 10th anniversary this year. Currently running is an exhibition created in collaboration with Cairo’s Townhouse, surveying the Egyptian gallery’s recent emergence into the limelight with its stellar mix of regional art from its humble beginnings in the backstreets of Cairo. Co-curated by Mariam Elnozahy and Fiona Fox, this show reveals Townhouse’s resilience in the midst of regional socio-political turmoil and change.

The Mosaic Rooms, London. Mosaicrooms.org. +442073709990. Until 15 September.



LEILA HELLER GALLERY
‘INNER AND OUTER SPACE’

American muralist, painter, sculptor and installation artist Kenny Scharf’s first solo exhibition in the UAE features large-scale paintings of abstract, fantasy-like creatures in addition to discovered objects and relief sculptures. Described as ‘Pop Surrealism’, his works address dark societal issues under a playful façade inspired by his own subconscious. Scharf uses melting cartoon faces to portray humanity’s ecological turmoil and capitalist exploitation, while maintaining a fun-loving tone throughout. His childhood preoccupation with outer space is reflected in the depiction of infinity and absence of boundaries in his work. With airbrushed strokes of oil and acrylic paint, Scharf’s paintings also reveal the prevalence of street culture within modern art. *Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai. Leilahellergallery.com. +97143216942. Until 31 August.*



CARAVAN
‘I AM,’ GUEST CURATED
BY JANET RADY

With its debut in Jordan last year and ensuing show in London, *I AM* will travel to St Mark’s Cathedral to reconcile the West with the East, focusing on peacebuilding with 31 Middle Eastern women artists. Turning stereotypes and misperceptions regarding Middle Eastern culture, religion and social reality on their heads, this exhibition will honour Arab women for their efforts and sacrifices to ensure regional stability and a peaceful future. With artworks ranging from painting and collage, to digital art and sculpture, each artist will have one original two- or three-dimensional work on display.

Caravan, Seattle. Oncaravan.org. +12063230300. 10 June – 7 August.

GALLERIA
D'ARTE MODERNA
'UNA TEMPESTA DAL PARADISO
(BUT A STORM IS BLOWING
FROM PARADISE)'

Part of a collaboration between New York's Guggenheim Museum and the Milanese gallery as part of the UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, this exhibition features 13 artists who dwell on themes such as migration, displacement, architecture, geometry and history. They use a mix of mediums such as paper, photography, sculpture and video to explore these contemporary challenges in the Middle East and North African region. The show combines fiction and fantasy to challenge stereotypes and politicised views of the Middle East and its history. Curated by Sara Raza and titled after an artwork by Iranian artist Rokni Haerizadeh, the 16 works on display collectively attempt to connect the sustained influences of the past to the creation of the present, while encouraging global cross-cultural dialogue.

Galleria D'Arte Moderna, Milan. Gam-milano.com. +390288445947. Until 17 June.

