

# daily

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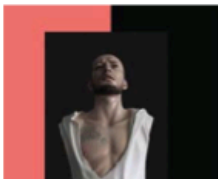


**Hamed Abdalla: L'Œil de l'esprit**  
 Edited by Karim Francis, Kirsten Abdalla, Samir Abdalla  
 Published by Bachari

This comprehensive monograph is written by Roula El-Zein and traces the life and career of Egyptian artist Hamed Abdalla (1917–1985). The book is illustrated with Abdalla's works from as early as 1937 and includes texts by Andr e Ch edid and Hamed Abdalla in English, French and Arabic. AED 165.



**Art Spaces Directory**  
 Edited by Eungie Joo and Ethan Swan  
 Published by New Museum and ArtAsiaPacific  
 Published to coincide with *The Ungovernables* exhibition at the New Museum in 2012, this directory is divided into three regions and provides a comprehensive overview of art spaces around the world. It also includes texts by Director of New Museum Lisa Phillips, curator Eungie Joo and Reem Fadda, among others. Available at Jashanmal. AED 200.



**Reza Aramesh: 12MIDNIGHT**  
 Texts by Milovan Farronato, Media Farzin and Eugenio Viola  
 Published by Damiani  
 This book is named after Iranian artist Reza Aramesh's solo exhibition *12MIDNIGHT*, held at New York's Leila Heller Gallery in 2013 that presented a series of five installations placed in different nightclubs in Manhattan and Brooklyn. This monograph is illustrated with research, installation and archival images. AED 185.



Left: Saudi artist Nasser Al-Salem. Right: *My Graduation Day*, from the *Language is Stronger Than Light* series, 2014. Silkscreen on archival paper, 70 x 50 cm. All images courtesy Athr Gallery, Jeddah.

## ONE ON ONE with Nasser Al-Salem

THE ART OF script is at the core of this young Saudi artist's practice. Nasser Al-Salem chose to focus on architecture for his undergraduate studies at Umm Al-Qura University in Mecca, believing that the field is, in many ways related to calligraphy. Indeed, his latest works embody a sense of geometry, evident in the sculptural piece, *Yatatawaloona Fil Bunya*, (*They Will Be Seen Competing In Constructing Lofty Buildings*) showing through Athr Gallery's booth (A29) at Art Dubai. Al-Salem, who has left architecture to become a full-time artist, participated in Moallaqat, one of two exhibitions that marked the inaugural 21,39 cultural initiative in Jeddah last month. He was also shortlisted for the third Jameel Prize and will be completing an intensive English Language course in the British capital this year. Canvas Daily speaks with the 30-year-old artist about architecture, works on paper and his admiration for Lebanese calligrapher Samir Sayegh.

### THERE HAS BEEN A GREATER FOCUS ON SCULPTURE IN YOUR WORKS LATELY. HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?

When I start to create a work, I first think of the text, then the font, then the medium, and that way I ensure using the correct medium that best suits the concept of the work. Some texts work well on paper, while some might work better when translated into form. I prefer to give each one of those aspects their full right. It is extremely important for me that they sync together to strengthen the concept.

### HOW DOES ARCHITECTURE INFLUENCE YOUR ART?

It has influenced me greatly as it is also a form of art. Architecture translates numbers to forms and builds relationships between space and structure. This has helped me a lot and I often think that had I not studied architecture, many of my concepts would have been executed quite differently. It also allowed me to break

free from traditional calligraphy, which I still cherish, but by combining architectural forms and calligraphy, I am able to create most of my works. I hope that this will encourage the younger generation to appreciate the age-old art of calligraphy.

### WHAT INFLUENCE HAS SAMIR SAYEGH HAD ON YOUR ARTISTIC PRACTICE?

He taught me the history of Islamic art from a philosophical perspective, which helped me better understand calligraphy. Although I only spent a month with him, I realised that there was a lot missing from my practice that I would have never achieved without his guidance.

### YOU ARE SHOWING NEW WORKS ON PAPER THROUGH ATHR GALLERY. WHAT THEME DO THEY ENCOMPASS?

*Language Is Stronger Than Light* is my way of paying tribute to the importance of language versus image. Language evokes parts of the human brain that a visual cannot, such as freedom of visual imagination. I have dealt with this series differently than my other bodies of work. Previously, I used to present and interpret a certain text or idea as a visual; now I am reversing that by giving the viewer the freedom of generating their own visual by presenting them with text.

### WHAT ABOUT YOUR MOST RECENT SCULPTURAL WORK?

The work references a Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Mohammed, PBUH), about the signs of the nearing of the Day of Judgment, in which the title of the work, *Yatatawaloona Fil Bunya*, (*They Will Be Seen Competing In Constructing Lofty Buildings*) is also mentioned. It translates to 'herdsmen will be seen competing in constructing lofty buildings'. The work explores the dark side of the construction frenzy in the Middle East. Visually, the sculpture shows the familiar anatomy of a group of buildings; however, when seen from above, the sculpture reveals the work's title. ■

## ART NEWS



Ferdinand Kuchta's *Architectural Dichotomy* series, 2013. Image courtesy YARAT, Baku.

### LOVE ME, LOVE ME NOT

BAKU – Azerbaijan's non-profit contemporary art organisation, YARAT, hosts *Love Me, Love Me Not*, a show that presents works by 16

artists from Azerbaijan and its neighbouring countries. Curated by Dina Nasser-Khadivi, the exhibition will be staged at the Zaha Hadid-designed Heydar Aliyev Center from 3 April–25 May. This is the show's second stop after debuting at the Venice Biennale in 2013.

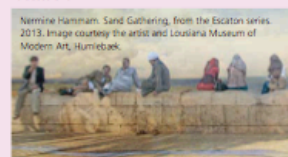
### NEIGHBOURS AT ISTANBUL MODERN

ISTANBUL – To commemorate the museum's 10th anniversary, Istanbul Modern presents *Neighbours – Contemporary Narratives From Turkey*



Hayri Karaman, *Özlem*, 2010. Image courtesy Istanbul Modern.

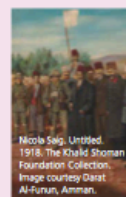
*And Beyond*, an exhibition that features works by 35 artists from 17 countries and runs until 8 May. The artists explore aspects of narratives and travel through screenings, performances, workshops and panel discussions.



Nermine Hammam, *Sand Gathering*, from the *Escaton* series, 2013. Image courtesy the artist and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humleb k.

### ARAB CONTEMPORARY IN DENMARK

HUMLEB K – This exhibition is divided into five sections and looks at the common denominator in countries in the Arab world through works spanning calligraphy to architecture. *Arab Contemporary* runs until 4 May and combines architecture, art, photography, documentary and film to examine Arab identity by focusing on the relationship between private and public spaces.



Nicola Selig, *Untitled*, 1918. The Khalid Shoman Foundation Collection. Image courtesy Darat Al-Funun, Amman.

### HIWAR: CONVERSATIONS

AMMAN – To mark its 25-year anniversary, Darat Al-Funun hosts *Hiwar* an exhibition that looks at the works of 14 artists from the Middle East, Asia and Latin America. *Hiwar*, meaning 'conversation' in Arabic, runs until 30 April and aims to bring these artists together to learn from each other's practices. The exhibition also showcases works from the collection of The Khalid Shoman Foundation. ■