



## The capital unveils its culture at the fifth Abu Dhabi Art

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### One-page article

A bus that takes audiences to a variety of performances scattered around the city, traditional dhows sailing along the shore and a Japanese-style souq fashioned to display the works of designers are just some of the new additions to Abu Dhabi Art this year - and that's before you even get to the art.

The fifth edition of the fair, which opens on Wednesday, has such a vastly beefed-up programme that even if you don't think you're interested in art, there's almost bound to be something of interest. Not only that, the buses that have been traversing the city for the past few days wrapped in artwork promoting the fair should mean that this year, the event will not pass anyone by.

If you want to hear the Emirati poets Mohamed Al Mazroui and Aita Ben Masaoud reading classical Nabati poems on the Corniche or see the digital art by Hamdan Al Shamsi inspired by their words, then you don't even have to go to Saadiyat Island to experience the flavour of the fair. That being said, consider the level of infiltration to the rest of the city as something of an indicator of the standard of art on the island and be prepared to have every sense exercised over the next four days.

The 50 participating galleries, 90 per cent of which are returning, are divided into five sections including Beyond, for large-scale installations and sculptures; Bidaya, an emerging gallery; Signature, which features solo exhibitions; and Artists' Waves, an artist-led exhibition of work from within the galleries showing at the fair.

The final category, Modern, Contemporary and Design, covers the bulk of the galleries whose artists will also contribute to events within the fair such as Small Is Beautiful, an exhibition of small-scale artworks from artists such as Mona Hatoum, a well-established Palestinian artist, and Samira Hodaie, an Iranian who assisted the internationally known artist Reza Derakshani for years.

All participating galleries are invited to include an additional small-scale artwork among their fair selections, which will be exhibited on the mezzanine level of the UAE Pavilion as

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- What is new at Abu Dhabi Art this year

**Topic** Artists, Curators, Photography, Art galleries, Exhibitions

### Schedule

a meditation on the concept of scale.

Small Is Beautiful is part of this year's Art, Talks & Sensations, the interactive part of the fair that is curated by Fabrice Bousteau. Featuring live performances, video screenings and musical and poetic installations (including one which involves hiding instruments in plants to make it seem that they are making music), the event will stimulate all your artistic taste buds. That's not to mention Julie Fruchon and Alexandrine Leclère's sand-dune-shaped sculpture made from tomatoes and salted caramel and Alessandro Sciarroni's juggling dance, which are all part of the varied programme.

In the mornings there are workshops and a packed schedule of community events for all ages. But with all this going on, don't forget to take a moment for the galleries.

Meem Gallery, a local stalwart, will present a two-part exhibition exploring the works of 11 modern and contemporary Middle Eastern artists. Key works by some of the most important modern artists such as Dia Azzawi, Louay Kayyali, Fateh Moudarres and Shakir Hassan Al Said will be joined by contemporary commissioned works from Khaled Hafez, Jeffar Khaldi and Mahmoud Obaidi, who were asked to interpret the John Lennon song How Do You Sleep?

Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde will present a series of works from artists including Hassan Sharif and Mohammed Kazem as well as Aisha Khalid and Fred Eerdekens.

The regional specialists Ayyam will present recent works by Tammam Azzam, Safwan Dahoul and Abdunasser Gharem, who are some of the hottest names in Middle Eastern art right now. The gallery will also launch Nadim Karam's new book *Stretching Thoughts*, which takes an introspective look at life, war, dreams and the human condition in the Middle East.

The heavyweights of the art world - Gagosian, Hauser & Wirth, Lisson, Leila Heller - will also be in town. At the emerging end of the spectrum is Lawrie Shabibi from Dubai, which will show the Korean artist Meekyoung Shin's Ghost series of Chinese vases fashioned from soap.

In the auditorium, the Louvre Abu Dhabi architect Jean Nouvel will talk about the relationship between architecture and art. The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi: Talking Art Series will return with a set of in-depth discussions with international artists whose works are part of the institution's permanent collection.

Angela Bulloch, a Turner Prize nominee, Jacques Villeglé, a seminal French sculptor, Marwan, a Syrian master and a discussion panel between the German artist Heinz Mack and the Emirati artist Hassan Sharif will take us through the four days.

Away from the island, the world of art meets performance is presented in a programme titled Durub Al Tawaya. Film screenings, dance performances and interactive art events on traditional dhows that function as mobile galleries are just some of the events planned at venues along the seafront, from the port to the marina.

Design is also taking a turn in the spotlight. Shigeru Ban has constructed a souq made from cardboard, designed as a space for the public to interact with international and Emirati designers and to see the process of their craft. Nasir Nasrallah, a multidisciplinary artist, has created a playful vending machine and a series of handicrafts will be on display.

A new annual programme that enables emerging UAE designers to develop and produce a prototype over the course of a year will also be introduced, with Mohammed Abedin and Aljoud Lootah presenting their current work in the souq.

So whether it is international household names or the freshest ideas emerging from the folds of our blossoming capital, Abu Dhabi is ready to present it all. Let the proceedings commence.

**. Abu Dhabi Art runs from Wednesday until Saturday at the UAE Pavilion and Manarat Al Saadiyat on Saadiyat Island. It is open from 3pm to 10pm Wednesday and Thursday and 2pm to 10pm Friday and Saturday. Entrance is free but tickets are required and can be collected at the entrance. For the schedule of events, visit [www.abudhabiartfair.ae](http://www.abudhabiartfair.ae)**

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**11am to 1pm (Thurs - Sat only)**

**Design workshops in the Art Zone area**

The local designer Sara Alaidarous and the French culinary artist François Clerc will be leading workshops in embroidery and baking croissants in the name of art. Dh50 per person, per workshop, register through [www.abudhabiartfair.ae](http://www.abudhabiartfair.ae), at the Abu Dhabi Art desk at Manarat Al Saadiyat or email [manaratalsadiyat@tcaabudhabi.ae](mailto:manaratalsadiyat@tcaabudhabi.ae), 02 657 5800

**1pm to 1.50pm**

**Looking for Pearls - part of Durub Al Tawaya performance programme**

A performance by Rayyane Tabet on a boat around the man-made Lulu Island off the coast of Abu Dhabi. Registration is recommended

**2pm to 3pm**

**Abu Dhabi Art interviews**

An opportunity to meet some of the artists, scholars, gallerists and others participating Abu Dhabi Art with a series of informal, 15-minute interviews

**3pm to 10pm**

**Durub Al Tawaya Buses**

The international artists Cao Fei, Zeinab Al Hashemi, Ilya and Emilia Kabakov and Wael Shawky take over four city buses inside and out using video, audio, photography and graphic design. The buses will be moving artworks that take visitors through the dedicated bus line for Durub Al Tawaya, the performance element of the fair

**3pm to 7pm (times vary)**

**Guggenheim Abu Dhabi: Talking Art Series**

In-depth discussions with international artists whose works are part of the permanent collection. \*

**5pm to 10pm (times vary)**

**Durub Al Tawaya programmes**

Including film screenings, dance performances and interactive art events on traditional dhows that function as mobile galleries. \*

**6pm to 10pm (times vary)**

**Art, Talks & Sensations: Dunes and Waves**

The interactive element of the fair features performances, music and some of the most bizarre elements combined into a multi-sensory experience. \*

\* See programme for more details