

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

LEILA HELLER GALLERY TO EXHIBIT AT ABU DHABI ART

NOVEMBER 18—21, 2015, Booth A7



Ahmed AlSoudani, *Untitled*, 2011, Charcoal and acrylic on canvas, 62 x 110 in / 157.5 x 279.4 cm

**Leila Heller Gallery** is pleased to announce its participation in the seventh edition of Abu Dhabi Art, **November 18 – 21, 2015**, at the Saadiyat Cultural District, **booth A7**. Highlighting formal experimentations in modern and contemporary art, the booth features a trans-regional group of artists who push the boundaries of aesthetics and material possibilities.

In his *Endless Prayers* series, **Y.Z. Kami** explores spirituality through the use of light and large-scale collage. By interweaving mixed-media collages on paper, he uses Persian poetry and religious scriptures arranged in circles to recall the ritual of prayer and the mosaics of sacred architecture. His *Golden Dome* paintings additionally convey a sense of universal spirituality in the form of a central bright light that spills over countless rows of tiny golden rectangles hand-painted or stamped onto the canvas.

**Ahmed AlSoudani** is known for his vividly colored and surreal acrylic and charcoal canvases, in which distorted, grotesque faces and body parts portray the horrors of war. This motif draws on the artist's own experiences of recent wars in Iraq, the imagery of devastation and violence evoking a universal experience of conflict and human suffering. Despite the gravity of his themes, his stylistic lightheartedness, often bordering on graphic or cartoonish, adds a dream-like element of the whimsical, depicting the surreal quality of life in a warzone.

Renown for her embroidered paintings, **Ghada Amer** also produces illustrations, installations, metal pieces and most recently ceramics, as she expands her expressions of femininity through different forms. The sculpture on view expresses femininity in the context of love through the act of an abstracted embrace. In the form of an egg shape, figural representation is revealed only through the elaborate and openly mended gold plated bronze designs.

**Wim Delvoye** is a neo-conceptual artist whose diverse oeuvre breaks boundaries and explores the tension between opposites. In the work on view, *Daphnis and Chloe*, Delvoye explores a spiraled variation on Mathurin Moreau's *Daphnis and Chloé*, made out of polished bronze, in which the figures

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of the lovers become almost indistinguishable in turns and twists of shiny refined metal. This reinterpretation of the classic style is in line with the artist's body of work which is often described as a combination of high and low, sublime and profane, exceptional and universal.

American artist **Ross Bleckner** incorporates symbolic imagery rather than direct representation to create visually elusive forms that constantly change in focus. In *Parallel Dome*, Bleckner creates a hypnotic and dizzying effect through pure abstraction of stripes and color to generate visual patterns and illusions of space and light. In *Untitled*, glowing dots float to form the interior of a vast curved vault — the glow imparted by Bleckner's careful dispersion of pigments on canvas: using an airbrush not to apply color, but to move it around as it floats in its liquid medium.

In her new series of *Grid/Cuts* works, **Hadih Shafie** incorporates added layers of work on cotton matte-board. While visually the familiar word *eshgh* (Love) is used to create systematic rhythm in the center of the works, she activates the surface as the edges are repeatedly cut, alluding to the text being stretched, marked and clawed away. Although these pieces are considered drawings, the surface is textured and resembles sculptural work.

Leila Heller Gallery is particularly proud to present a focused section of the booth dedicated to Modernist masters **Charles Hossein Zenderoudi** and **Paul Guiragossian**. One of the pioneers of Iranian Modernism, Zenderoudi's practice pushes beyond the boundaries of Iranian Calligraphy and art. By emphasizing form over meaning, and by stripping the written word down to its aesthetics, and structures, Zenderoudi subverts traditional values of calligraphy. Guiragossian's oeuvres represent a lifetime of formal inquiry spent seeking to narrow the gap between realistic form and abstract gesture. On his canvases, women, children and men become faceless imprints delineated by vibrant brushstrokes; their psychological loneliness and corporeal isolation portrayed through patches of color that are adjacent but never overlapping.

Cutting across local artistic paradigms, the artists showcased in Leila Heller Gallery's booth make brilliant use of non-conventional materials to redefine conventional painting and sculpture.

## About Leila Heller Gallery

Located in the heart of Chelsea's gallery district, Leila Heller Gallery promotes a cutting edge program of international contemporary emerging and mid-career artists. Founded in 1982, the gallery has gained worldwide recognition for being a pioneer in promoting contemporary artists from the Middle East, Central Asia, Southeast Asia and Turkey.

In addition to its roster of contemporary artists, the gallery is also active in the American, European and Middle Eastern secondary art markets. The gallery presents a dynamic exhibition schedule, actively engaging world-renowned curators, hosting educational panels, and publishing books with scholarly essays.

Leila Heller Gallery regularly participates in major international art fairs and stages off-site projects as an extension of its curatorial program. The gallery's artists are included in major museum holdings—such as Tate Modern, the British Museum, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, LACMA, and the Centre Pompidou, amongst others. In November 2015, Leila Heller will open a new space in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue Complex.

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