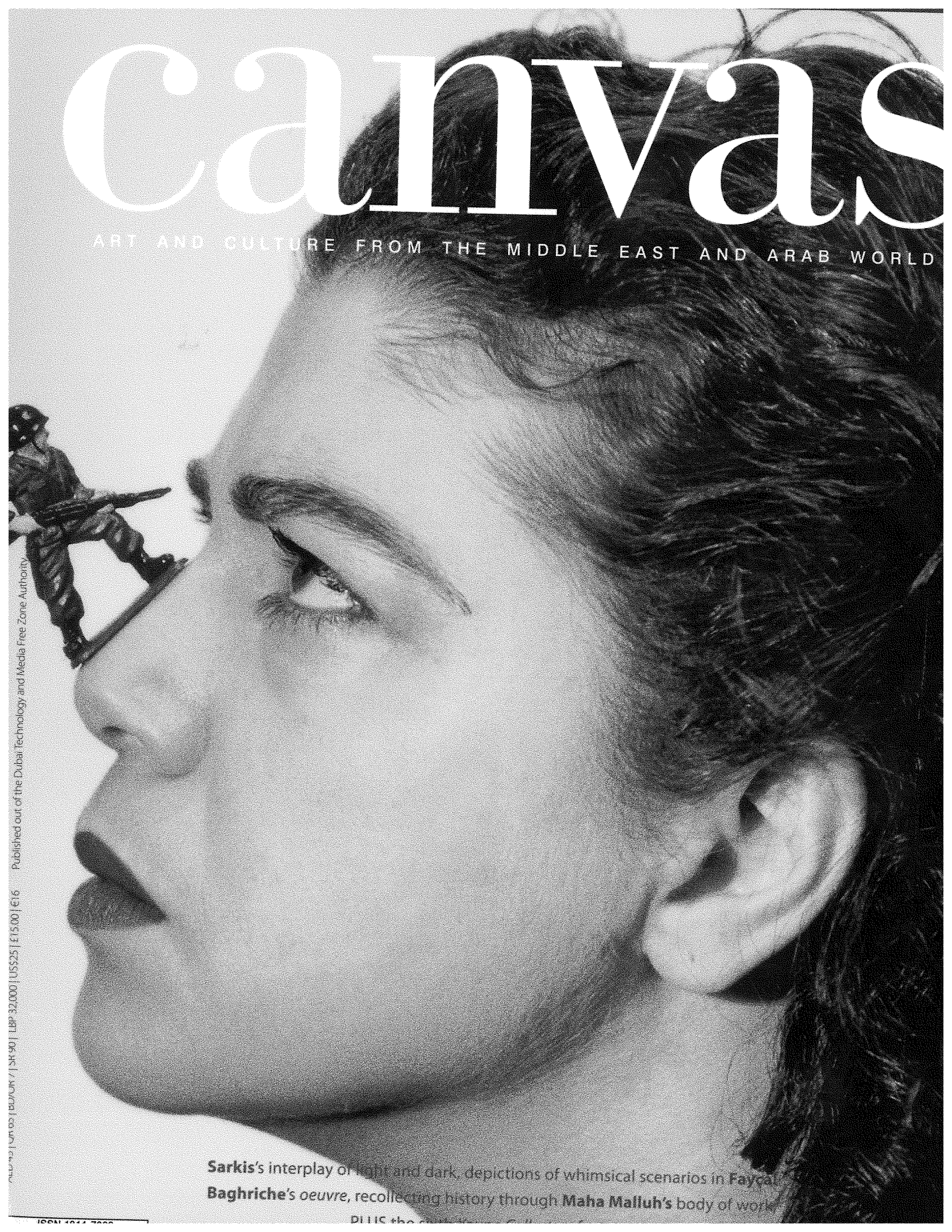


Canvas

ART AND CULTURE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARAB WORLD



Sarkis's interplay of light and dark, depictions of whimsical scenarios in Fayçal Baghriche's oeuvre, recollecting history through Maha Malluh's body of work

PLUS the artist's influence on the Arab world

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Lindsey and Michael Fournie

This page:
Lindsey and Michael
Fournie with, on the wall:
Golnaz Fathi. Untitled.
2007. Acrylic on canvas.
120 x 120 cm.

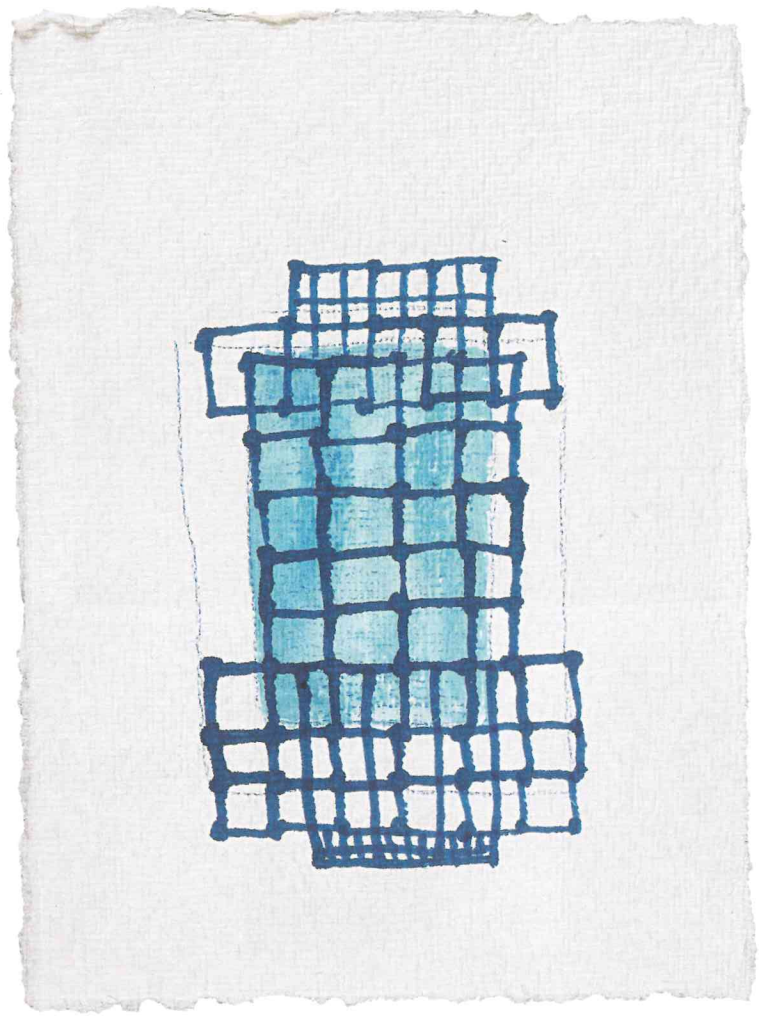
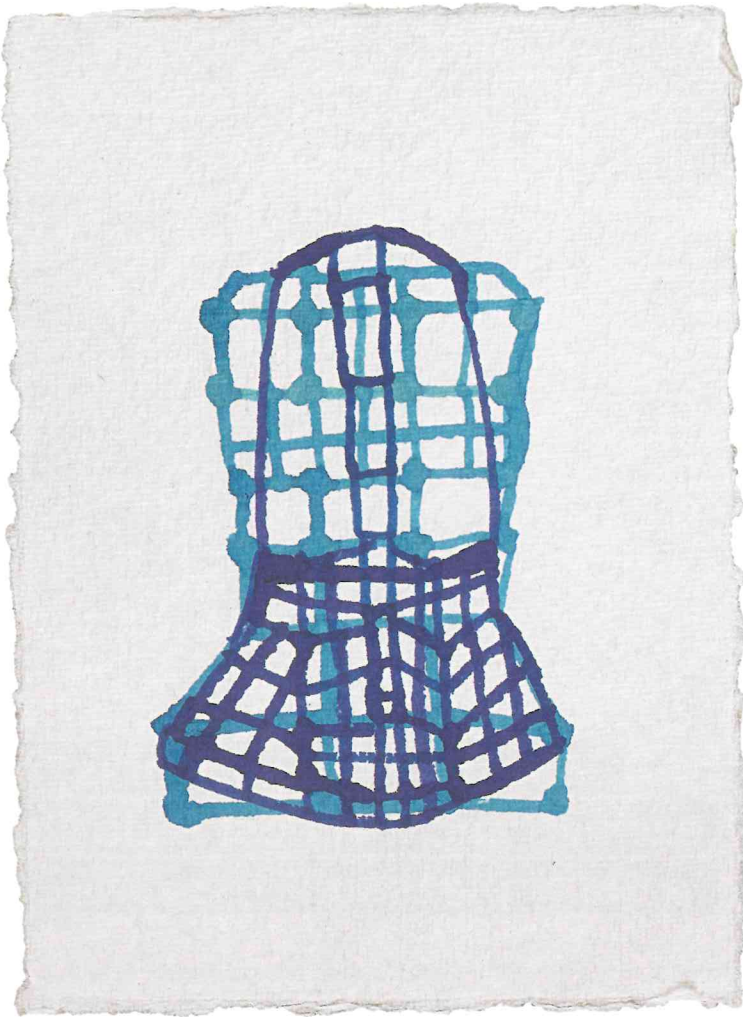
Facing page:
Susan Hefuna. From the
Cityscape Istanbul series.
2011. Ink on paper.
18.5 x 13.5 cm each.

He was born in St Louis, Missouri and pursued a Master's degree in Arab Studies at Georgetown. She studied Spanish and forayed into the Middle East through international development work in the region. They met in Cairo. What also brought Michael and Lindsey Fournie together is a passion for Middle Eastern art. Before moving to Dubai in 2008, the couple spent two years in Egypt where they had already amassed an eclectic collection of antique rugs due to their aesthetic interest in them. "Very early on, I figured out the type of nomadic tribal rugs I was fascinated

with", says Michael, who now works in private banking. The couple's first joint acquisition was a painting of Sufi dervishes, however, the carpets still take up much of the wall and floor space in their Dubai home. Over time, their art collection has evolved and now includes works by Contemporary artists such as Youssef Nabil, Golnaz Fathi, Chant Avedissian, Hussein Madi, Hayv Kahraman, Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim and most recently, Mona Hatoum and Hassan Sharif, among others.

WHY DID YOU START COLLECTING?

M: On the one hand, there was some



“I feel we have to develop [collecting Emirati art] quickly before it is too late.”

Michael Fournie

aesthetic interest in things that we love and wanted to live with; and on the other, there is interest in buying artworks that we think will be valuable over a period of time.

HOW DO YOU DO YOUR RESEARCH?

M: Books! But a lot of research is also done online. I visit many gallery websites then go through the artist’s work, read their resumé, understand who they are and what work they have done. That helps me establish which artists are of aesthetic and intellectual interest and to create a sort of mental register.

DOES YOUR COLLECTION HAVE A FOCUS?

L: It was Larissa Kolesnikova of Perception Fine Arts who helped us start our collection and continues to advise us by constantly giving us ideas and exposing us to new works. Initially, I picked a piece because I liked its aesthetic elements in terms of its colours and geometric form. I think we tend to be drawn to geometric works because of our inclination towards rugs.

M: I think we would like to develop a Middle Eastern and Iranian collection that we are really proud of over the next few decades,

This page:
 Above: Shiva Ahmadi. *Untitled 3*, from the *Throne* series, 2012. Mixed media on aquaboard, 30.5 x 30.5 cm. Image courtesy Leila Heller Gallery, New York.
 Below: Michael Fournie with Al Braithwaite's *He Visited Me, HE Saddam Hussein Abd Al-Majid Al-Tikriti Of Iraq*, 2009. Mixed media on mirror, 39.5 x 29 cm.

Facing page:
 Left: Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim. (Detail) *Untitled 7*, 2009. India ink on paper, 115 x 125 cm.
 Right: Lindsey Fournie with Mona Hatoun's *T42 (Gold)*, 1999. Gold trimmed line stoneware in two parts, 5.5 x 24.5 x 14 cm. Edition 30 of 35.

Photography by Svetlana Casetski. All images courtesy Capital D Studio, Dubai, unless otherwise specified.



“Buying them [artworks] is exciting and it almost feels like a guilty pleasure.” Lindsey Fournie

rather than have random things that do not necessarily fit within a collection. There will be important sub-themes. One of those is certainly Emirati art, which I feel we have to develop quickly before it is too late. Another one, for both of us, is Egypt.

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU WANT AN ARTWORK?

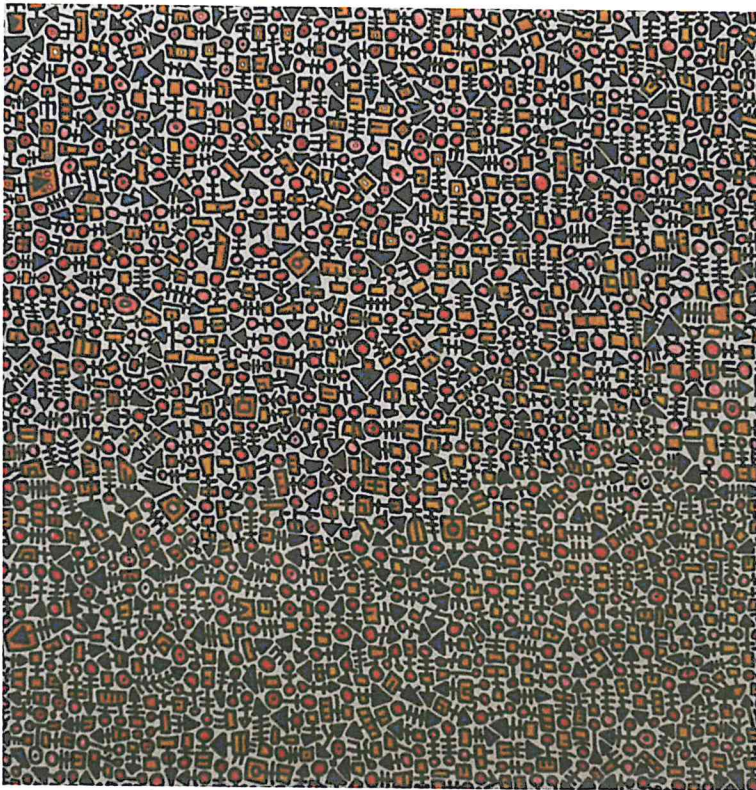
M: If I walk around a fair, see something and 45 minutes later I am still thinking about it, then I definitely want it.

L: I think Mike is more strategic, he is better at remembering all the artists' names while I am simply drawn to a piece. I will decide whether I support buying it or not based on whether I really enjoy looking at it. We have been very lucky. I think generally we have the same taste; there have not been too many times where we have been debating a piece and one of us really loves it and the other one does not.

ARE YOU OPEN TO THE MEDIUM OF THE ARTWORK?

M: Really open. I like the eclectic nature of the media within our collection and I would like to have more of that. I have a feeling that our collection lacks large works. On the other hand, I am not opposed to things that are less easily collectable like video but I have to say that I have not really gotten my head around that. I don't know what you do once you have bought a video!

L: I like everything! But I am usually drawn to works on paper more



OUR TOP ART SHOWS:

Art Dubai and Abu Dhabi Art; hoping to attend fairs like Art Basel, Frieze London and the Venice Biennale.

THE MIDDLE EASTERN ART SCENE IS: Growing at an exciting pace, gaining global attention and at an important moment right now as Contemporary artists digest, interpret and give voice to the dynamic cultural and political change around them.

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THE ARTIST'S NAME WE CAN NEVER PRONOUNCE: Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian.

than anything else because those works clearly took a lot of time and effort. I like pieces that, when you really look at them, allow you to appreciate them more for the skill, time or effort that it took to create them.

IS IT FUN BEING A COLLECTOR?

M: It has been fun so far and we are at a stage where we feel that we have a good collection that we can be proud of; it's also fun to talk to other people that are collecting and are at a similar stage.

L: I enjoy it! I really do appreciate each piece. I like to walk up and down the stairs to see works hung on the wall and sometimes stop and appreciate a piece. That is part of what I like about having them – that they are accessible and on display. Buying them is exciting and it almost feels like a guilty pleasure.

WHAT DOES YOUR COLLECTION SAY ABOUT YOU?

L: Strategic and interesting. 