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10 Must-See Shows from Middle Eastern Galleries You Can View

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Over the past year, the art world has made a conscious effort to highlight voices beyond the narrow confines of the West, amplifying unheard voices and moving away from the long-dominant white male gaze. Perhaps one of the most exciting hotspots within our increasingly global art world is the Middle East. Southwest Asia and North Africa have long histories of art and culture, from Baalbek in Lebanon to Al Ula in Saudi Arabia. And these ancient traditions of visual culture persevere today, with the region's current fame for the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Jardin Majorelle in Marrakech, and so much more. To coincide with Artsy's spotlight on the region, Middle Eastern Galleries Now, we're highlighting 10 standout shows, which are viewable online through the end of March.

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Carbon 12

Dubai's Carbon 12 presents a selection of international artists working across genres. Particularly striking are Iranian artist Sara Rahbar's mixed-media collages in which the American flag immediately stands out among images of soldiers and minority figures. The images are completely arresting as the world continues to feel the impact of George Floyd's death and the Black Lives Matter movement. These artworks reflect the artist's earlier "Flag" series (2005–15), where she explored the iconography of the American flag, the concept of the American dream, violence, power, and her own connection to her home, Iran.

Also drawing on heritage, Iranian-German artist Anahita Razmi mines her Iranian cultural heritage and brings it into a new context. Her photograph *This is not Iranian* (2015) shows the artist's arm tattooed with the same phrase in Farsi. Meanwhile, Razmi's lenticular prints also use semiotics to play with notions of representation, misunderstandings, and shifting perspectives.