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The Art Exhibitions in the UAE Worth Leaving the House For

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With the UAE still basking in that rare sweet spot of breezy evenings, tolerable afternoons, and just enough sun to romanticize your life, the timing couldn't be better to step back into the city's galleries. And with a fragile ceasefire between the United States, Israel, and Iran tentatively holding after weeks of escalation, the region feels, at least momentarily, like it's exhaling. It's in this in-between that art tends to hit differently. Across Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and beyond, exhibitions are offering exactly what you need right now: somewhere to slow down, look closer, and maybe make sense of things, or at the very least, escape them for an hour or two. Below seven art exhibitions worth leaving the house for this month.

[...]

Get Well Soon at Carbon 12 | Until May 25; Dubai

This exhibition sees Nigerian-American artist Anthony Olubunmi Akinbola take something as culturally loaded—and often overlooked—as the durag, and rework it into something unexpectedly delicate. Drawing from the tradition of floral still life painting, Akinbola quite literally builds his “flowers” through layered fabrics, seams, and folds, sidestepping illusion in favor of construction. The result sits somewhere between painting, sculpture, and personal archive, where questions of identity, material, and memory quietly collide. Elsewhere, recurring brick motifs introduce a more grounded counterpoint, hinting at permanence, legacy, and the idea of home as something both built and inherited. But it's the exhibition's more ephemeral gestures—a bouquet of helium balloons slowly sinking over time, a custom scent diffusing then disappearing—that linger the longest.