

Canvas Daily

19 MARCH 2015 | ISSUE 3 | ART DUBAI EDITION



Review of the Sikka Art Fair in the Al-Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood.

PAGE 04



Kaveh Golestan's solo presentation at Art Dubai's Modern section, curated by Vali Mahlouji

PAGE 10



Canvas Daily suggests you don't miss these gallery shows while you are in the UAE.

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ARTISTS ON SITE

The fourth Artist in Residence programme run by the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, Tashkeel, Delfina Foundation and Art Dubai.



Land Shift And Fresh And Salt, 2015. Land art intervention and sculpture. Variable dimensions.

CURATED BY LARA Khaldi, six artists over three months develop projects: Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim, Hind Mezaina, Sharmeen Syed, Jessica Mein, Mehraneh Atashi and Rheim Alkadhi took part in studios, outreach programmes, talks, readings, screenings, publications... the complete immersive creative experience. It gives artists the chance to pursue their fascinations, providing both the platform and the support to realise their artistic goals.

MOHAMMED AHMED IBRAHIM (UAE) has exhibited extensively throughout local and international biennials. Ibrahim's AIR work is consistent with his practice of using organic found materials manipulated into gentle ambiguity. However, the wire-bundled stone sculpture maintains its integrity, offering a glimpse into the importance of stones and their "primordial role in different cultures, especially Arab culture" and the naturally occurring environment that create Ibrahim's physical and artistic environment.

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Marwan Kassab Bachi. Untitled. 1977. Image courtesy Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah.

Day two sales: slow but sure?

It's a mixed picture: some are happier than others.

SALES PROVED ELUSIVE for some galleries on day two, with comment around the stands on how greater footfall might help ease an otherwise cautious mood. One European gallerist was prompted to muse, "I thought this year would be busier compared to last, because of the Sharjah Biennial, but it seems people

went to The Armory Show and to Art Basel Hong Kong and then home."

Even so, whilst some galleries were still struggling to make their first sales, others were pulling off sales to institutions. Beirut's Agial Gallery

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Kamboj Aram. Untitled (Palimpsest #35), 2015. Oil and oil crayon on canvas. 213 x 183 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Green Art Gallery, Dubai.

VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

SHARJAH – The Barjeel Art Foundation, in collaboration with the Google Cultural Institute, presents *Art Project And Archive*, an exhibition featuring over 430 works from the collection by artists such as Marwan Kassab-Bachi, Dia Al-Azzawi and Yto Barrada, among others. Visit www.google.com/culturalinstitute

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Day two sales: slow but sure?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

(M10) sold a Shafic Abboud work to Mashreq Private Bank for between \$70,000–90,000, while Latitude 28 (J19) sold two pieces by Dilip Chobisa, one to an institution in North America and the other to a Riyadh-based collector. Meanwhile, Carbon 12 (A23) sold a Sara Rahbar work, *Holding Onto Nothing But You* , to the Davis Museum in the USA for between \$20,000–50,000, and Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde (J18) sold *Keys* (1995) by Mohammed Kazem for \$10,000 to an institution in the UAE.

Elsewhere, a regional collector relieved Pi Artworks (A43) of a large Gulay Semercioglu work for between \$50,000–60,000. Green Art Gallery (A26) sold a Kamrooz Aram work for \$40,000, and Rodolphe Janssen (A20) had two notable sales: a Walead Beshy transparency for \$25,000–30,000 and an untitled Gert & Ume Tobias work for \$32,000–37,000.

Pechersky Gallery (A10) were delighted to sell an untitled work by Rachel Lee Hovnavian to a member of the UAE royal family for \$35,000, while Kasha Hildebrand (A32) built on its opening day success with the sale of *The Funeral* by Marwan Sahmarani for \$28,000 to a local collector new to the gallery. Albareh Art Gallery (J26) sold a piece by Zuhair Al-Saeed to a regional collector for \$15,000, while Leila Heller Gallery (J23) sold a Noor Ali Chagani work for \$10,000 to a British collector, with MA2 Gallery (A7) selling Ken Matsubara's *The Sleeping Water Storm In A Glass* for \$10,900.

Galleria Franco Noero (A12) reported holding two works on reserve.

Selma Feriani (A18) had several sales, including three Pascal Hachem works for \$4500–7000 and Yazid Oulab's *Clou* for \$15,000. Canvas Gallery (J9) sold Ayaz Jokhi's *Marilyn Monroe* for \$8500, while Nathalie Obadia (J21) sold a work by Ricardo Brey to a Dubai-based collector for \$6500. Grosvenor Gallery (A27) sold a work by Faiza Butt for \$6000, with Agial Gallery (A42) selling several drawings by Heba Kalache for \$3000 each to Lebanese, Egyptian and Emirati collectors. Victoria Miro (A33) sold three works by Idris Khan for undisclosed prices. Among the Moderns, Lisbon's Perve Galeria (M4) sold several works in the \$8000–10,000 range, including by Ernesto Shikhani and Manuel Figueira, with Loft Art Gallery (M15) selling three Mohammed Melehi pieces. [>](#)

ERRATUM

In Issue 1, *Canvas Daily* mistakenly reported that Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde (J18) sold a work by Rokni Haerizadeh for \$130,000. The work is a collaboration between Rokni, Ramin Haerizadeh and Hesam Rahmani. Also, in *One On One* with Abdelmonem Alserkal on page 8, the date of Ayyam's opening in Alserkal Avenue is 2008.



Shafic Abboud. *Composition* . 1958. Oil on panel. 92 x 64 cm. Image courtesy Agial Gallery, Beirut.



Gulay Semercioglu. *Untitled* . 2014. Wire, screw and wood. 210 x 215 cm. Image courtesy Pi Artworks, London/Istanbul.



Sara Rahbar. *Holding On To Nothing But You* . 2014. Bronze with black wax. 140 x 15 x 13 cm. Image courtesy Carbon 12, Dubai.

THE ROAR/MEOW PARADOX

Shauna Richardson's 'crochetdermy' is at Design Days Dubai.

She is the small woman hovering near the life-sized taxidermy lion perching on a plinth. Its energy implies ferocity with realistic bared teeth, but on closer inspection, it becomes apparent that this lion is a knit skin-sack made of mohair. No cuddly toy – Shauna Richardson intentionally avoids twee characteristics in what intrinsically should be so by avoiding pattern, focusing on linear patterning and attempting realism as far as her crochet-needle and wire frame work will take her. Popular in its unorthodoxy, Richardson explains that one work takes several months as she produces it by hand, usually for commission. The individuality of her work is mirrored by the collectors; she has never had to create the same animal twice.

While a shocking discovery in Design Days Dubai, a space filled with all that glitters (but not necessarily gold), Richardson's design at the Crafts Council booth is a palette cleanser: kitsch but realistic and unapologetically out of place. "When you look at accessible things like animals, it makes people uncomfortable to accept it as contemporary, but that is why I use subjects like that, to be accessible," she says. However, a work that is willing to embrace itself on the merits of its own values? About as contemporary as it gets. But unlike the unfathomable non-boundaries of contemporary creations, Richardson's 'crochetdermy' has limits – "I've said no to a hare with a veil on it."



Shauna Richardson. *Crochetdermy Lionness* . 2009. Mohair wool and black walnut plinth. 102 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Design Days Dubai.

Today's Schedule

GLOBAL ART FORUM 9: DOWNLOAD UPDATE?

Values, Virtues And The Virtual
By Georgina Adams, Sebastian Cwilich, Thomas Galbraith and Anders Petterson
15:15–16:15

GLOBAL ART FORUM 9: DOWNLOAD UPDATE?

We Live In The Exoskeleton Of The Internet
By James Bride and Omar Kholeif
16:15–16:45

BOOK LAUNCH: *Shafic Abboud* by Pascale Le Thorel
Agial Gallery (M10), Art Dubai Modern, Mina A'Salam
16:00

BOOK LAUNCH: *Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh and Hessam Rahmani*
Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde (J18), Gallery Hall 2, Madinat Jumeirah
17:00

FILM SCREENING
Beatrice Bulgari's *The Lack*
A4 Art Spaces, Alserkal Avenue
18:30

TOUR
 *Modern**
18:30–19:00

TOUR
 *Marker**
19:00–19:30

Book a place on the tour at any of the information desks. All Global Art Forum 9 session are held in Mina A'Salam, next to Art Dubai Modern.

For more information, visit www.artdubai.ae

canvas
MARCH/APRIL ISSUE
Light is shining – indeed, it is shining over our region, because where there is light there are also the brightest spots. Canvas is one of them, since it is a platform for the affirmation of life through art. Light is shining in the exhibition of design and we are excited. We're going further: with every piece, every the only, every from the Museum, with every every going further. Because we are here and shall through our work design, whatever things that it is the best, it is the best of every design.

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IN THE CANVAS MARCH/APRIL ISSUE

Lebanese artist, poet and writer Etel Adnan's witty text about light and enlightenment graces the cover of *Canvas* 's March/April issue



Mehmet Ali Uysal
Uysal breaks away from the confines of the four walls of the gallery to comment on the process of Contemporary art.



Abbas Akhavan
The Iranian artist explores narratives of domestic space to comment on notions of hospitality and hostility.



Common Ground
Artists reflect on narratives pertaining to violence, gender, transport and consumerism to create works using cars.

CHRISTIE'S DUBAI AUCTION

The top four lots from the Christie's *Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art*, which was held last night.



Bestselling lot on the night was Tahia Halim Farhat Al-Nuba's *The Happiness of Nubia*, which went under the hammer for \$749,000 against its high estimate of \$180,000, representing a new world record for the artist at auction.



Ayman Baalbaki's *Babel* also sold for a world record price for the artist at auction, going for \$485,000 against its high estimate of \$200,000.



Third highest selling lot was Abdunlasser Gharem's *Hemisphere*, which also sold well above its high estimate, at \$400,000 against \$180,000.



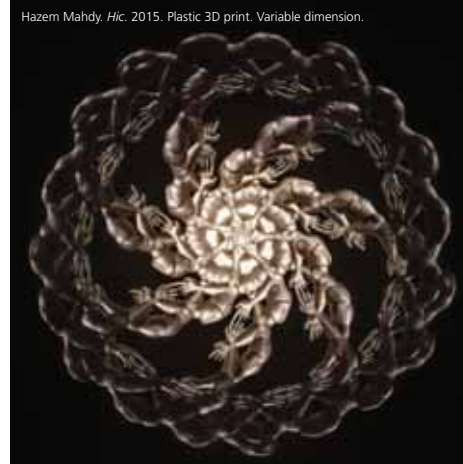
Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian's *Zahra's Image* achieved a hammer price of \$395,000 against its low estimate of \$350,000. New York's Guggenheim opened a show for the celebrated Iranian artist on 13 March, curated by Suzanne Cotter, who presented a show for Farmanfarmaian at the Serralves Museum in Porto last October.

1. *Farhat Al-Nuba (The Happiness Of Nubia)*. 1965. Oil and gold leaf on paper laid down on canvas. 130 x 251.5 cm. 2. *Babel*. 2005. Acrylic on canvas. 260 x 200 cm. 3. *Hemisphere*. Digital print and industrial lacquer paint on rubber stamps on aluminium in three parts. 240 x 360 cm each. 4. *Zahra's Image*. 2009. Mirror mosaic, reverse-glass painting and plaster on wood in aluminium. 185 x 135 x 19 cm.

All images courtesy Christie's.

SIKKA at 5

SIKKA 2015 marks the fifth edition of the artist-led satellite fair for emerging UAE-born or based talent, occurring in tandem with Dubai Art Week.



Hazem Mahdy. *Hic*. 2015. Plastic 3D print. Variable dimension.



Sawsan and Bahar Al-Bahar. *LUZ*. 2015. Light installation. Variable dimension. Images courtesy Sikka.

In the Al-Fahidi historical neighbourhood of Dubai, mixed media artist Jalal Luqman curates, with the support of the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, a platform of commissioned works from 48 artists with multidisciplinary approaches.

One artist, Hazem Mahdy, has taken the opportunity of the environment SIKKA provides to expand upon his usually photographic practice, saying, "My piece is called *Hic*, a Turkish word for void or nothingness. It is a plastic 3D print of interconnected arms in an upwards spiralling motion in a room covered in black trash bags to absorb the light so the piece fills the space with its shadows. It invites the viewer to become part of this mystical experience of whirling in nothingness as the Sufis of Turkey do." SIKKA is an environment that pushes artistic and curatorial independence and some experimentation. For example, Wael Hattar presents *A Heaven For Sale*, a black-walled enclosure with peep-holes and 'for sale' signs both at the location and online. "It's a tongue-in-cheek look at making the public private," says Hattar, of the work that indicates that the repercussions of presentation can turn the for-granted into the conceptual. Further indicative of the SIKKA expansion, Mobius Design Studio overtakes and commissions a work for dedicated space – this year's thematic being 'Re-ornament' and interpreted by Sawsan and Bahar Al-Bahar's *LUZ* light sculpture in spatial deconstruction of muqarnas geometry.

Other works include Michael Conduit's drawings which he, as a teaser, describes as, "de-orientalising 'the other'"; architect Noor Jarrah's collaborative work with graphic designer Sara Al-Aqroobi, *Ayn*, a hallway installation that deals with jealousy and protection from it via manipulated planes of view; and Sumaya Al-Rais's still-life watercolour.

GLOBAL ART FORUM 9

18 MARCH



Shumon Basar opened the first day of the Global Art Forum: *Download Update?* at Art Dubai with, "We are promiscuous in our interests. Art, either contemporary or otherwise, is not given VIP treatment in the Global Art Forum. Curiosity, unlike fossil fuels or polar bears, is, we believe inexhaustible."



Strangers, Welcome: New Invisible Publics saw Gala Berger, Gabriel Perez-Barriero and Jack Persekian discuss the presence and importance of the Internet in their respective institutions. "In this era, everyone is trying to digitise whatever they have for fear that these things might get lost. In the context of Palestine, maybe destroyed. A lot of these institutions are doing that, or trying to, or looking for solutions. What is so ridiculous is that each and every one is trying to do it on their own, an island on their own. Trying to create the wheel," said Persekian.



Architecture Effects: Moving On After Progress saw Troy Conrad musing on new frontiers, the digital age and pop culture, lamenting before his talk was cut short due to time constraints, how "Off the record, it may be a Greenbergian view, but art should be experienced."



Too Long, Didn't Read involved Christopher Bevans in conversation with Turi Munthe – who, following the fashion-based discussion, noted, "You just re-spelled 'textiles' as tech-styles!"

All images courtesy Art Dubai.



Safwan Dahoul. *Dream 93*. 2015. Acrylic on canvas. 180 x 200cm. Image courtesy Ayyam Gallery.

The Syrian-born artist explores the corporeal and psychological effects of solitude and longing, a notion continued in his *Dream* series. This painting (price undisclosed) incorporates Cubist elements in its monochromatic variance. Alluding to "death and hope simultaneously", Dahoul merges the back- and foregrounds into indefinable planes both on and off canvas, as well as figurative confrontation and isolation from the contradictory yet void body language of the fragile subject.

WET SAND

In muted tones, five artists explore the particular solitude that remains at the beach when the sun sets and only damp sand remains.



Gil Heitor Cortesao. *Between Tides*. 2014. Oil on Plexiglas. 168 x 218 cm. Image courtesy Carbon 12, Dubai.

The Portuguese painter takes the concretely banal and gives it a nostalgic effervescence by using oil on transparent Plexiglas. Using textural brushstrokes that contradict the flatness of the painted planes, Cortesao ventures into new visual separations with this quadriptych (priced between \$26,000–\$32,000). While tonally uplifting, the dulled quality of the vibrant hues and turned-backs of the figures remain characteristic of Cortesao's ability to offer melancholic stillness.



Ziad Antar. *Intensive Beirut (XVI)*. 2014. C-print. 120 x 180 cm. Edition of four. Image courtesy Selma Feriani Gallery, London/Tunis.

"Beirut," says Antar, "is a city where monuments cannot thrive. [...] What it leaves you with is a thought; an idea of a city, its vibrancy, its intricacies." He photographs his native Lebanon from ashore, part of a photographic series/book collaboration with architect Youssef Tohme. Exploring Beirut's architecture, where one sees only a faint outline in the distance, the image (\$12,000) invites the viewer to come closer to the slightly pink tones to attempt visual clarity and fill in the blanks independently.



Jaber Al-Azmeh. *Untitled*. 2015. Printed on cotton rag fine art archival paper. 80 x 105 cm. Image courtesy Green Art Gallery, Dubai.

Syrian-born photographer Jaber Al-Azmeh presents an unnamed photograph (priced between \$3000–5000) that depicts an equally anonymous environment in Qatar in greyed-out tones. Interrupted only by the residual traces of vehicles that fade out towards the sea, is it reminiscent or ominous? "Where are we now? What paths did our dreams take? Are we lost, or going in vicious circles?" Al-Azmeh's practice would indicate that a heavy bleakness resides in the still displacement of the shots captured.



Nikhil Chopra. *Rehearsal 1*. 2014. Ink and watercolour on paper. 14 x 39 cm. Image courtesy Chatterjee & Lal, Mumbai.

Indian-born Nikhil Chopra's practice revolves as much around drawing and painting as the performative act of doing so. Using this drawing (\$7500) to indicate his relationship to drawing and painting, it is a vehicle of rehearsal towards site-specific performances. The improvisation of live drawing can be seen in the delicately gestural qualities of his monochromatic scenes capture everyday elements such as waterscapes.

HOW SUSTAINABLE IS THE MARKET FOR MODERN REGIONAL WORKS?



VALERIE HESS, CLIENT LIAISON AND SALE MANAGER, CHRISTIE'S

Browsing through the 158 lots in the Christie's Dubai 18 March catalogue should provide a clear indication of the depth and sustainability of the Modern Middle Eastern art market. Still young, this market covers a wide geographical area

and there are still new names being introduced all the time, as demonstrated in the March sale with the likes of Ramses Younan, Kamel El-Temissany and Marguerite Nakhla. Furthermore, the Contemporary of today will become the Modern of tomorrow, which will further broaden the supply chain. Whilst there may be periods where the quality of works can vary depending on availability, overall the supply chain of Modern Middle Eastern art remains extremely strong.

SHIVA BALAGHI, CULTURAL HISTORIAN, BROWN UNIVERSITY

In the summer of 2000, I went to Andrea Rosen Gallery with my dear friend Anthony Shadid (the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who died tragically in Syria). We looked at Abbas Kiarostami's first-ever US photography exhibit in preparation for our interview with the master. As we left the gallery and walked through Chelsea's streets, Anthony spoke of how much he wanted to purchase some of the works. They were relatively affordable, but still too expensive for us. At the time, he was an AP reporter and I was an NYU professor. So we joked that we should get a credit card, buy a few of the photographs and consider it an investment. The joke was on us, because it actually would have been an incredibly sound financial investment! Those photographs now fetch amazing prices at auction.

Image courtesy the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Boston.



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LEILA HELLER, FOUNDER, EPONYMOUS GALLERY

I believe that the market for Modern Middle Eastern art is actually very undervalued for many artists. I think that as more museums and institutions recognise its importance by acquiring and exhibiting such work and placing it within a global context, the stronger the

market will become. The market for some Modern Middle Eastern artists grew too quickly and will probably plateau soon. But in many other cases, markets are steadily and healthily growing. For example, I work with the estates of both Marcos Grigorian and Farideh Lashai, and feel that neither of their markets have fully matured yet. I think that if we work strategically and don't rely solely on auctions to legitimise an artist's market, then there is still the potential for these artists' markets to continue to grow.