

YSA



عن قصد on purpose

ATHR FOUNDATION

ATHR FOUNDATION IS AN INDEPENDENT, NON-PROFIT, ORGANIZATION BASED IN JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA. FOUNDED IN 2022, ATHR FOUNDATION BUILDS ON ATHR GALLERY'S LEGACY AND AIMS TO ADDRESS AND RESPOND TO THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF VISUAL ART PRACTITIONERS AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS, BOTH EMERGING AND ESTABLISHED ARTISTS.

THROUGH ITS VARIED AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC PROGRAMS, THE FOUNDATION PROVIDES A UNIQUE PLATFORM THAT SPARKS DEEPER PUBLIC DISCOURSE PERTAINING TO THE ARTS AND CULTURE, ALL WHILST GUIDING AND SUPPORTING VISUAL ARTISTS IN NAVIGATING INDUSTRY COMPLEXITIES AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND SCALABLE PRACTICES. THE FOUNDATION ALSO SEEKS TO ACT AS A TRUSTED ADVISOR TO LOCAL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES ON THEIR CULTURAL ENDEAVORS.

ATHR FOUNDATION DRIVES ITS ESSENCE THROUGH CORE PILLARS UNDER-PINNED BY ITS SERVICE-ORIENTED VISUAL ARTS & CULTURAL NETWORK AND EXPERTISE ENABLER

COMMITMENT

Committed to heritage and Culture

EMPOWERMENT

Artist accelerator implementing sustainable and inclusive programs

ENGAGEMENT

Promoting community engagement in arts and culture

CULTURAL SERVICES

Arts and cultural advisory, consultation & program development

Hamza Serafi
Chairman

Mohammed Hafiz
CEO, Athr Foundation

Ahoud Al Fahad
Managing Director

Ibrahim Romman
Senior Program Manager

Hisham AlHalwani
Communication Manager

Rajaa Al Haj
Exhibitions Manager

Rahel Aima
Editor

Masa Milhem
Event Coordinator

Leila Evangelista
Logistics

Mohammed Saad
Contractor

Hashem Al Shehri
Logistics

Ramadan Bakash
Art Handler

Ramon Cabatuando
Art Handler

Abdullah Salem
Photographer

Hassan Abu Abdallah
PR & Media

Ismail Al Fayed
Contractor

Ashraf bin Taleb
Vinyl Production

RAMI FAROOK

Artist, Curator & Head of Selection Committee

Rami Farook (b.1981, Dubai) is an interdisciplinary artist, curator, patron & producer usually in Dubai, sometimes in Zanzibar & Saudi. He's nurturing his interests in sociocultural development, hospitality, new media, and tech while caring for his parents & children.

He believes that as artists, anything we do may be art.

Self-taught, Rami's purpose is to create social change in understanding & behavior, via possibilities & responsibilities. Using various mediums & methods, his practice presents self & social information, education, entertainment, and intervention.

DUR KATTAN

Consultant and Selection Committee Member

We are pleased to introduce Dur Kattan as an esteemed member of the YSA selection committee. Dur is an accomplished executive leader and advisor, with over a decade of experience specializing in communications, brand development, and arts and culture management. She has worked with a diverse range of creatives, cultural producers, and artists throughout her career, contributing significantly to the growth of the cultural sector.

Dur has extensive experience in building and leading creative teams in the public sector, she is also skilled at managing complex and nationwide projects.

Dur has held advisory roles with various entities, where she has provided strategic counsel and continues to serve on numerous arts and culture selection committees.

AYMAN YOSSRI DAYDBAN

Artist and Selection Committee Member

Ayman Yossri Daydban

Saudi-Palestinian, b. 1966, Palestine

Lives and works Jeddah, KSA Ayman Yossri Daydban is an established Saudi-Palestinian artist whose multidisciplinary practice centers upon the critical examination of national narratives as an artistic undertaking. The artist's last name translates into English as 'watchman' or 'guard', and Yossri Daydban adopts the observant eye of this persona in his acute analysis of identity, existence and belonging as they relate to cultural heritage, national integration and the complex interrelation of East/West influences.

Of particular interest to the artist are the tensions arising at the intersectional points of translation and interdependence, where questions of assimilation and divergent customs come to the fore. Daydban's painting, photography and printmaking explore issues of identity and alienation, often through combinations of cinematic images and text.

WEJDAN REDA

Curator and Selection Committee Member

Wejdan Reda (born in 1992 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia) is the founder of Sahaba, a Saudi-based art consultancy and research hub working with artists, galleries, and public institutions. Co-curator of the first Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale (2021), she also curated *Intimate Dimensions* (2020), a group exhibition exploring the notion of constructed spaces and built environments at Hafez Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and *Every Second in Between* (2018), a large-scale public art commission by artist Kyung Hwa Shon in White City, London, United Kingdom. Initially studying architecture, Reda became interested in curating while pursuing her BA in Contemporary Media Practices at Westminster University, London, after which she returned to Saudi Arabia and worked at Athr Gallery, Jeddah (2015–16). Reda holds an MA in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art (2018).

HAMZA SERAFI

Board Chairman of Athr Foundation and Selection Committee Member

An avid patron of the arts, culture, and creative industries since the early 90s. Hamza co-founded ATHR Art Gallery with Mohamad Hafiz. ATHR, since its establishment in 2009, is recognised as one of the most progressive art spaces in the kingdom and the wider region. They then led the Young Saudi Artist Program, an instrumental platform promoting artistic experimentation and nurturing emerging talents in Saudi. In extension of the gallery's mission, Hamza co-founded the ATHR Foundation, a non-profit organisation supporting artists, and serves as its Chairman of the Board of Trustees



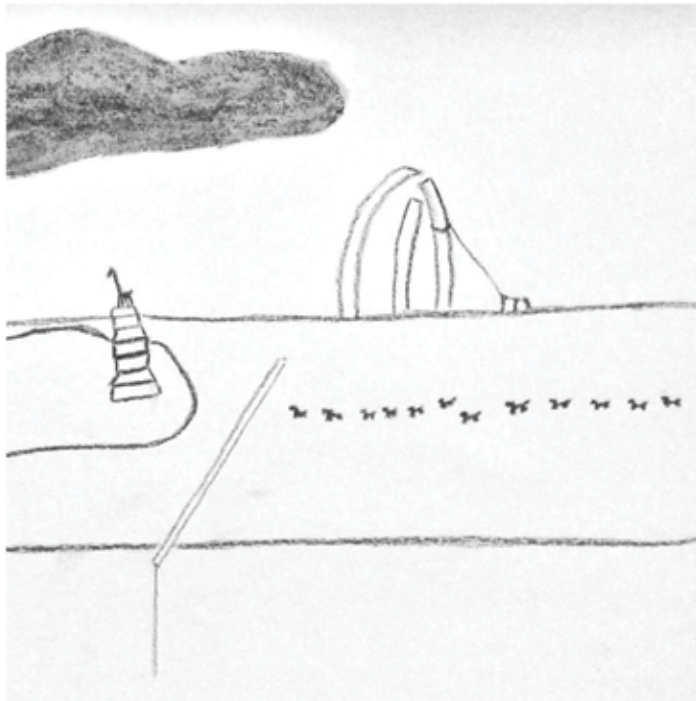
عن قصد on purpose

مقابلة مع القيم

interview with the curator

YSA





ATHR FOUNDATION:

How and when did the concept of purpose come to you?

Rami Farook:

A few years ago I learnt about purpose for organizations -
how the ones that are aware of it succeed
They're guided, focused, consistent, motivated, ambitious...

So far this year, I came across a lot of signs, memes, quotes &
philosophies (like ikigai), that I shared with family, friends & audience.

Also recently I discovered recently that my purpose is
to be useful, honorable & compassionate.

Feels like it pre trending,
with the potential to nourish collective consciousness.

Saudi 2023 seems befitting to have this shared existential experience.

*Taking this opportunity to thank Athr Foundation
for the invitation, freedom & support *

ATHR FOUNDATION:

You're welcome.
What do you mean by "on purpose"?

Rami:

It's the title of this happening about purpose:
what will be created, exhibited & exchanged with it in mind
multi / inter - medium/ disciplinary,
It's open to interpretation, application...
personal, communal, instinctive, literal...

19:09

3G 

< Notes from Saudi Arabia and be  Done

Overview:

"On Purpose" is an exhibition featuring emerging artists who have created artworks inspired by the concept of purpose. The exhibition aims to showcase the creativity and diversity of emerging artists and their unique interpretations & applications of "purpose". The exhibition will feature a range of art forms, highlighting the artists' ability to communicate powerful messages through their chosen medium.

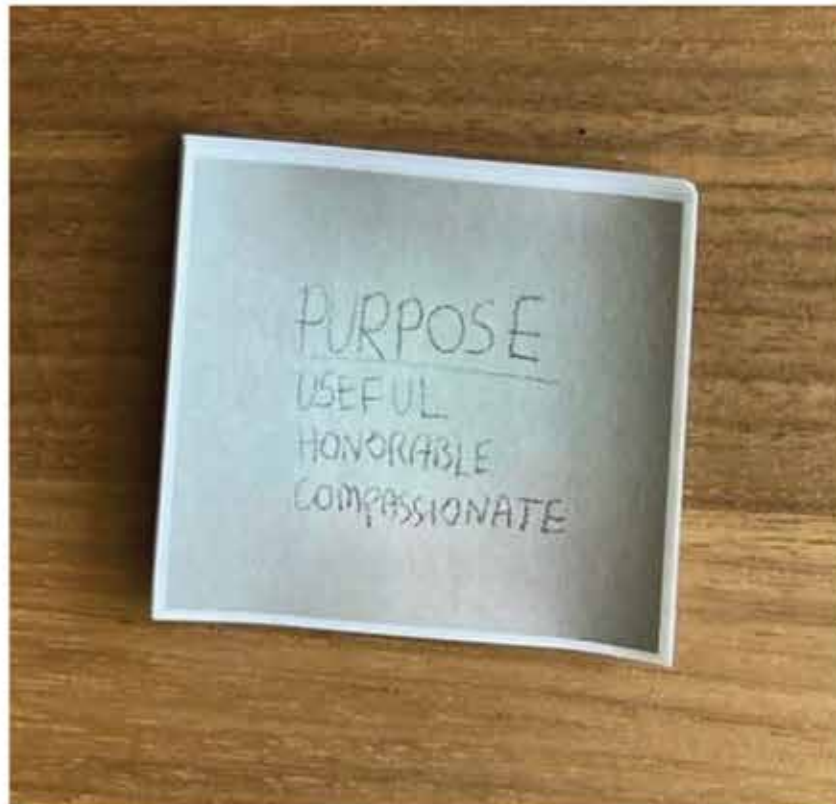
Cowritten with chatGPT 

ATHR FOUNDATION:

What is your purpose with this exhibition?

Rami:

I'm hoping that just hearing about it, will make us think about purpose
I'm curious to see what comes out of this socio-cultural discussion
thoughts, feelings, hacks, proposals, interventions, questions,...
inform, educate & entertain - Inshallah it elevates humanity
show new possibilities & activate responsibility
present diverse & unique perspectives
connect community



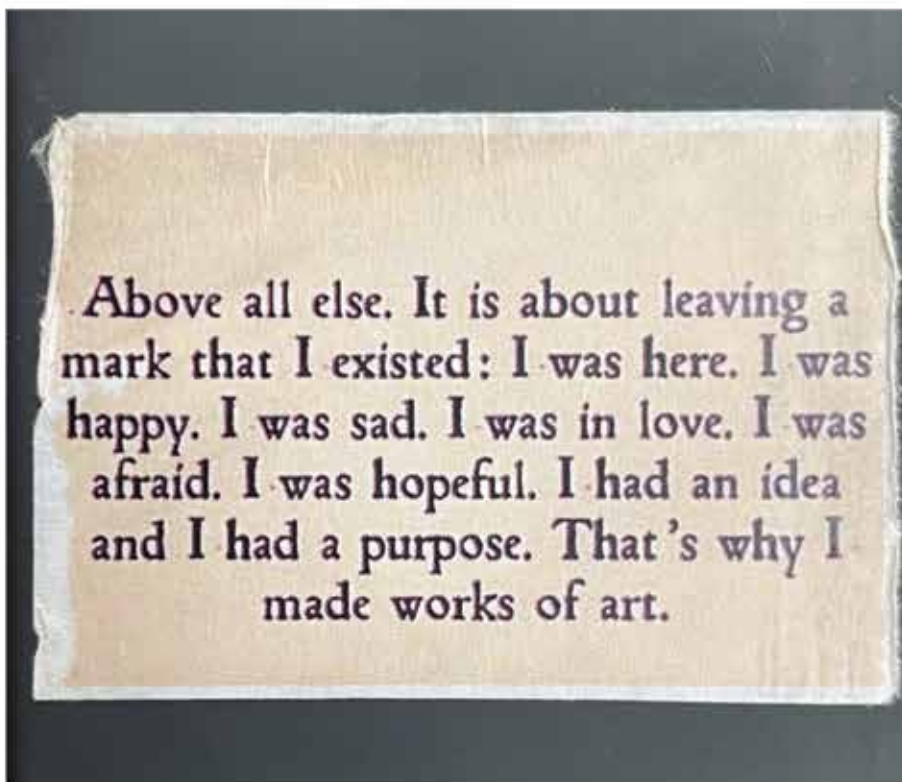
stickers I made of my purpose (inspired by someone's purpose), 2023

ATHR FOUNDATION:

can you give examples of approaches that can be presented?

Rami:

emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social, solutions, “just vibing”, advice...
documentary, fiction,...
manifestation, proposals, memes, public service announcements,...



Felix Gonzalles-Torres (b.1979 - d.1995)

ATHR FOUNDATION:

The fact the medium of the artwork is as open as the interpretation of the word itself,
can u mention examples or your own work which explores the theme as a reference?

Rami:

- since 2007, I've developed & managed permanent & temporary spaces of rest, celebration, nourishment, creation, exhibition, exchange,...
- Stickers like “the Arab man smiling with a pineapple ” & “CALM CARING CONFIDENT CONSISTENT ”
- both debuting as interventions during 2014 the kochi biennale
- urban interventions like “goal posts on empty plots, dubai 2015”



*I don't have a website yet but you get a feel of my practice via my insta

ATHR FOUNDATION:

Anything you'd like to add?

Rami:

Let us know what the purpose of your practice & proposal are know
the answers to who? what? when? where? why? how?

It's a low-waste exhibition

The selection committee will not see the names of applicants

We'll be exhibiting all the proposals sent unless you request otherwise

The work is multimedia - can be both public & private - in any format

Please maintain your freedom

With respect & clear communication

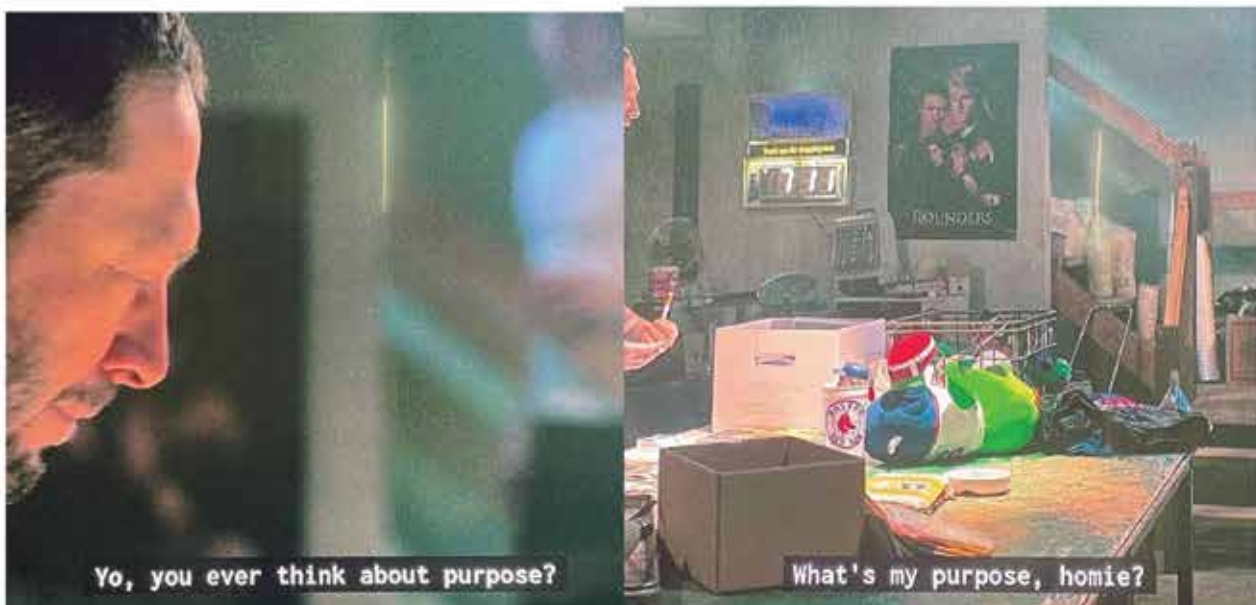
you can apply it to existing work if it's relevant to the theme.

Bullet format where possible

Think "social understanding & behavior"

Be aware of the budget, timeline, and audience... have a plan
please do anything u feel and/or think with it

Innovate, please



The Bear s2

Salam

Thanks for making it to the show, and if you haven't yet, then we're about to take you through it.

I think the interviews say enough about the exhibition, but here's some context.

Around Ramadan 2023, Mohamad Hafez, on behalf of the Athr foundation, invited me to curate the next Young Saudi Artists exhibition (thanks brother). After agreeing, there was a gap of about a month, where I coincidentally stopped painting to attempt activating other areas of my creativity.

Over 2 weeks I came up with 2 concepts, and for the 1st time, I had chat gpt assist me in writing my proposals - which were complete but cold (nothing has been used from it). The option that didn't make it was more "nationalistic", and I felt "purpose" had a better chance of elevating humanity.

Purpose has been a recurring thought, subject & motivator throughout my practice. I chose it here to learn & grow more along with the artists & audience, and hoped the proposals be interventions, multidisciplinary & public.

I've been working with Ahood, Ibrahim, Hisham and Rajaa from The Athr Foundation + Rahel (thanks team): finalizing process & paperwork, deciding on location & dates, picking & inviting our selection committee, planning & designing communication, processing call for entries, designing & renovating space, managing shipping & installation...

We got 119 applications, of which I picked my top 48. The selection committee: Hamza, Wejdan, Dur, Solafa & Ayman selected 18 from them via votes, and I then chose 7 from the remaining 30. Of the 25 artists in this exhibition, 15 are female & 10 male, with around a 50/50 Riyadh Jeddah split (wish it was more nationwide).

Overall the question I'm investigating about art here is "what's the point?". I felt that many artists thought & responded to this, and I got more from them over a chat we had about their practice, purpose, innovation as well as conceptually about proposals. As I write this I'm thinking about the fulfillment I have - hope to bring more to the artists, community & visitors.

A big thanks to the applicants & selected artists for their effort and openness. You were the best part of this experience.

Writing this in a state of war & mourning - dedicating "on purpose" to the oppressed in Palestine & beyond.

A blessed show ahead inshallah,

Rami

Rahel asks Rami:

What differentiates work made on purpose versus accidentally?

Intention mainly
If you have a purpose, then “accidental” works could

**Can work become purposeful in retrospect?
ie someone not understanding what they do as art until much,
maybe even years later?**

Possible
Could be due to audience response + any change in understanding
& behavior that comes about
Could also be on the effect it had on the artist, let's say reducing
anxiety or building confidence

**Is purpose flexible?
What is its shape and direction (ie motivating -> arrow, circular
feedback loop) Does it change over time?**

It is flexible & can evolve over time
Would say it's shaped like an infinity sign, as it flows and has no end

**Who determines purpose ie individual artist vs in conversation
with gallery, peers etc vs externally defined. Put another way, is
purpose individual or collective?**

Individual, but can be inspired by the collective

**How important is framing, gesture of intent and context here
(language, gallery or other demarcated-as-for-art context?)**

It can be important if you want it to be
I frame it for the audience but it's for me first
Context plays a role, as time & place do

**What happens when the artist or exhibition's purpose both coincides and clashes with official (ie government) aims?
How do you avoid being instrumentalised as an artist or curator and also preserve an artist or curator's integrity and vision?**

Depends on the artist

I prefer working independently & with freedom

You let the commissioner know from the start & have it mentioned in your contract

Have the strength to quit if the terms aren't respected & can't come to an agreement

Understand the context of the exhibition & be open ended where possible

Make it genuine & question as much as u listen to your gut

– What happens to old Saudi artists?

“Older” Saudi artists get invited to participate in local Biennales, Desert X, get studios in JAX & representation by Athr

– What does being useful, honourable, and compassionate mean to you?

Useful: to assist, solve, improve

Honorable: to have integrity, honesty, morality & to be fair, respectful, reliable, trustworthy

Compassionate: to show empathy & understanding, support, be kind, offer assistance & comfort

Rami:

These answers are based on my mood, feelings, thoughts & experiences as of 7.11.23

ARTISTS

HAYFA AL GWAIZ

Hayfa Algwaiz (b. 1991) is an artist and architect based between Riyadh, where she was born, and San Francisco. Her homecomings and second life in KSA inspire the sense of place in her practice. Algwaiz transforms cultural nostalgia into anachronistic representations, producing scenography that is traditionally Saudi in nature but rooted in post-modern landscapes and society. Algwaiz' personal background and family histories bring private moments to the public foreground. Grounded foremost in architecture, her multidisciplinary approach employs rendering and axonometric projection techniques to explore the dimensions of time and space, as well as the dialectics between subjects and objects situated in moments of peaceful abandonment. Algwaiz holds a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from California College of the Arts and is a practising architect. She was a recipient of the Misk Art Grant 2023.



Vanishing Points

2023

Watercolor and Pencil on Paper
70x100 cm

Drawing upon her background in architecture, Algwaiz repurposes conventional drawing techniques, originally designed for construction, to evoke emotions and stimulate thought processes. In *Methods of Worldmaking* (2023), she takes inspiration from Umberto Eco's concept of the open work to explore what it means to seek and create meaning through delicate watercolours and pencil. The architect's toolkit, rich with angles and perspectives, becomes a conduit for a new artistic narrative—one that extends beyond the confines of structural design, venturing into the space of human sentiment and cognition. Through the combination of floor plans, elevations, perspective, and axonometric projection, a supergraphic emerges. What appears as a window in elevation from one viewpoint can be perceived as a floor plan from another. By leveraging architectural representation, Algwaiz facilitates an interaction that relies on the viewer's perspective and give it one or many meanings.

NASREEN SHAIKH JAMAL AL LAIL

Nasreen Shaikh Jamal Al-Lail (b.1990) is an artist and photographer whose work revolves around themes of self identity, gender, and flux in a globalised world. She is the founder of Variant Space, a platform to support and promote Muslim female artists, and is especially invested in creating the conditions for broader representation and amplifying underrepresented voices in the UK art scene. Jamal Al-Lail's own work is deeply rooted in her own experience and particularly the way her faith shapes her identity. In her practice, she invites viewers to engage in their own processes of introspection and self discovery to ask themselves a central question: "Who am I, and what can I become?." Jamal Al-Lail holds a BA in Photography and a MA in Photographic Studies.



Here and there

Year 2019

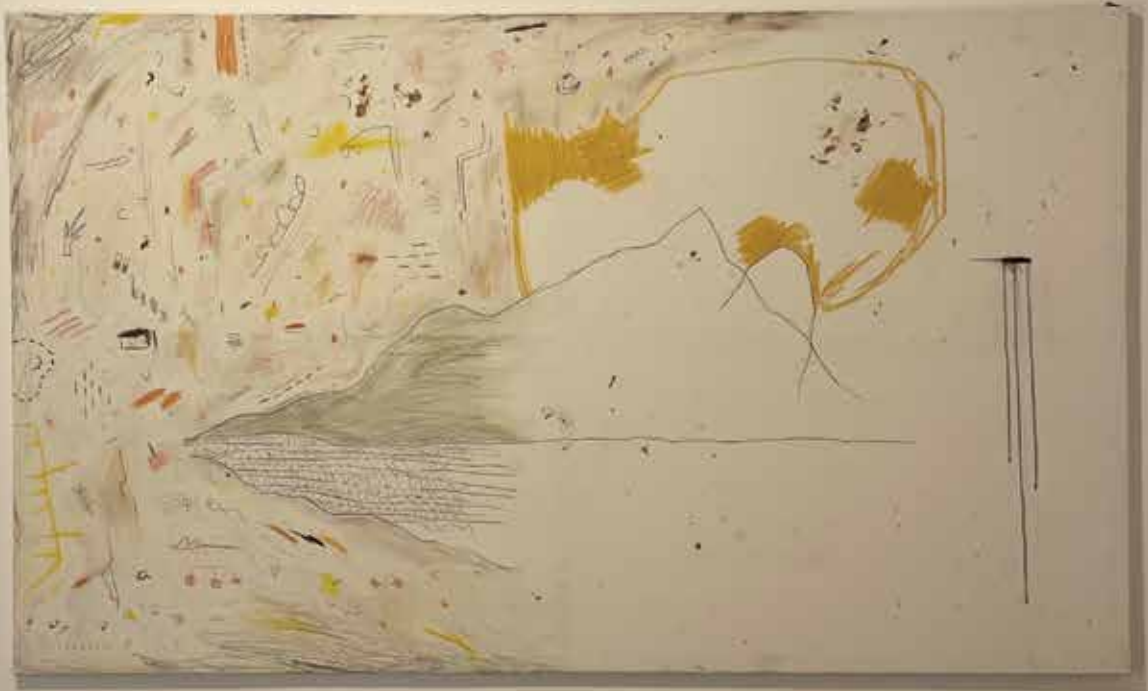
Video/Media

Duration: 12:15

Although she now lives in the UK, some of Jamal Al-Lail's most precious childhood memories come from growing up in the sacred city of Makkah where her father was a mutawwif, or guide for pilgrims. In reflecting on the timeless nature of her own purpose in life, which she locates in the interplay between travel and transformation, she found herself reminiscing about those cherished days. The resulting film *Here and There* paints a nostalgic picture of pilgrimage, eschewing narrative for an accumulation of so many little quieter moments of faith. It was shot on a handheld camcorder to recreate the wobbles, washed out palette, and grainy visual artefacts of older technologies, and mirror the memories imprinted on her own mind.

MOOTHY AL-NWAISIR

Moothy Al-Nwaisir (b. 1991) is a Saudi-American painter and illustrator. Her paintings are particularly influenced by the forms and seasonal rhythms of her hometown of Jeddah. Their palette of mossy greens, dusky pinks, muddied beiges and greige and the occasional grimy yellow are redolent of the city's washed-out walls and building facades, while her abstract compositions speak to its modernist architecture. Over time, Al-Nwaisir has developed a distinctive visual language characterised by child-like doodles, loose paint strokes, and drip painting, and a layered mixed-media technique. She has a BA in Illustration from the University for Creative Arts in London, and also runs a sustainable fashion business.



Leaving Traces

Mixed media on canvas
110 x 185cm

In *Leaving Traces* (2023), Al-Nwaisir contemplates purpose and the potential to have a lasting impact upon the world despite the inherent transience of life. Each one of us has a finite time on this planet, a trajectory represented here with a mountain-like jagged line. Small illustrations, clustered like a patchwork tattoo sleeve suggest the marks—and sometimes scars—that various events leave upon your life. There is a sense of a timeline: half the canvas is yet to be filled in with stories as-yet unexperienced and untold. The painting's canvas was prepared months ago, with rose petals from a family friend. Over time, the flowers wilted like faded memories and melded into the fabric—a snapshot of impermanence and decay that nevertheless functions as loam for new creation, encouraging the viewer to inhabit the present and live their lives to the fullest.

FEDERICO ACCIARDI

Federico Acciardi (b.1998) is an artist based in Riyadh. His work spans sculpture, installation and photography, working against the superstructure's deterministic imposition of meaning, and always in conversation with the artist's own body. The patience to cultivate and wait is essential to his practice, seasoned with a healthy sense of fear, which he explains as the ability to be constantly surprised. Acciardi is particularly concerned with what is left behind. He takes up waste materials, legacies of industrial production, and traces of individual consumers, and encourages them to further disintegrate and degrade into ambiguity before investing them with new semiotic potential. What emerges is a document of our time.



Dove finisco la voce

2023

Installation

500cm x 500cm

Translated as “where my voice ends,” “dove finisco la voce” features a flock of synthetic birds. The creatures have been reduced down to the sparsest, most essential of gestures. Feathers and flesh give way to a synthetic body devoured by hunger, suggesting a kind of hardened, honed fragility. Metal screeches across stone as they occupy the floor, violently whirring in a flat, hysterical danse macabre that encourages the viewer to maintain a respectful distance. Their beaks slowly wear themselves out against the floor. They act with violent necessity, protecting this last piece of land, constructing the nest.

AFNAN ABLADI

Afnan Abladi (b. 1998) is an artist and designer from Jeddah, currently based in Dubai. As a child, her mother encouraged her to begin painting. Abladi initially worked in realism before experimenting with abstraction and other media. More recently, she has begun intervening in the fabric of her paintings themselves. She is particularly interested in practices traditionally gendered as feminine, integrating gestures like ripping, tearing, and stitching into her canvases, and also how gender identity affects the way someone might interact with artwork. Abladi studied Visual Communication at the American University of Sharjah, and has won awards for both her visual art and her commercial design and branding projects. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of the Avant-Garde in Mendrisio, Switzerland.



Hands

2021

Oil painting (5 pieces)

30 cm x 20 cm each

Spotlit against a black background, the five oil paintings of Hands initially invoke both Dutch Baroque still lifes and yogic mudras. Each one features the titular extremity, in various attitudes of tension and relaxation. In this series, the artist chose to depict hands because they are described as being among the most challenging body parts to draw and a mark of skill. While not stylised, the artist pulls back from full hyperrealism: even from a distance, it is evident that these are paintings. Coming closer, however, the viewer notices that each canvas is slashed across in a gesture the artist describes as a riposte to an over-emphasis on technical ability. Yet depending on their placement, the incisions suggest other narratives: a gossamer-thin string about to be plucked, weaving, one or many papercuts.

FARIS BAKUR

Faris Bakur Abdulaziz (b. 1989) is an artist who was born in Al Madinah Al Munawarah, and who continues to defy the limitations of his visual impairment. While his early education in Jeddah took place in classrooms for students with functional needs, integration programs coupled with his academic excellence resulted in his graduating from King Abdulaziz University with a degree in Management and Economics. A self-taught sculptor, working with ceramics became a mode of self-expression that allowed him to express his thoughts and feelings in a tangible way by channelling his subconscious wholly through touch.



Touching Purpose

2023

Clay

Various sizes

Faris's perspective on purpose differs from the common view. He doesn't see it as a simple reason or a goal to strive for. Instead, he envisions purpose as a complex journey of transformation that goes beyond what we can see. It's a journey that you can sense, shape, and mold, like a carefully choreographed dance of fingertips. This transformation isn't limited to his art; it's a personal journey for Faris as an artist. The sculpture has two parts: a hand and a foot. These elements represent the balance between introspection and taking action. They have a raw, vibrant quality. The hand symbolizes being open to our deepest motivations, like a welcoming gesture. The foot, on the other hand, signifies progress and forward movement, turning our dreams into active pursuits and taking that first step on our individual paths of self-discovery.

EISSA ATTAR

Eissa Attar (b. 2000) is an interdisciplinary artist, designer, and photographer currently pursuing a dual degree MFA in Interdisciplinary Design and Masters in City Planning at the University of Pennsylvania. His artistic practice encompasses various mediums, including photography, prints, sculpture, and video, all centred around the exploration and documentation of space and its absence. He is particularly interested in archival practices and glitch points in both geography and society: that which is revealed by misinformation and a lack of data. Currently splitting his time between Philadelphia and Jeddah, Attar previously lived in New York City, where he obtained a BFA in Architectural Design from Parsons School of Design.



Refiguring

2023

3 channel installation on 55inch screens
Video installation

Struck by the dearth of Google Street View in Saudi Arabia, Attar began investigating 360° uploads across the kingdom. Even as they revealed unexpected insights, as he navigated through the uploads he noticed several instances where parts of the image were deliberately obscured. In addition to licence plates and militarily sensitive sites, the human body is consistently blurred, a small gesture of individual privacy at a time of collective hyper-surveillance. The short videos of Refigured document a contemporary politics of recognition where it is an algorithm that decides whether you are a robot, whether you are human or not. But still, snatches of corporeality persist. A pair of shoes, or a shadow offer fleeting reminders of these erased persons even as it illustrates not human but algorithmic imagination, through AI's interpretation of what could have been there.

hand, signifies progress and forward movement, turning our dreams into active pursuits and taking that first step on our individual paths of self-discovery.

DANAH GARII

Danah Garii (b.1995), a creator and curator of visual and sonic aesthetics, based in Jeddah.

Her practice is focused on introspection & expression mused by human feelings and behaviours.

Her inner monologues and existential observation of her surroundings form mixed medium works between sound, words, collages, and installations. Cultivating connection, vulnerability, and intimacy through truth and contradiction.

Curating and recreating what exists to express things left unsaid. In themes varying between feelings, identity, desire, human relationships, the self and the other.

Danah also curated a number of artists' most intimate feelings through electronic sound recordings on her Mixed Feelings SoundCloud Podcast. The Series was mused by a desire to indulge artists in vulnerable self introspection and form felt intimate connections through sound.



Here, Now, Sometime, Everywhere

2023

Custom Mirror Installation, light fixture, sound & video

Mirror 200x180 cm

Video 2:13

Danah's reflective, immersive installation unfolds from an introspective moment coming across caliph Ali ibn Abi Taleb's words: "You think yourself a minuscule being, yet within you the whole universe is folded." and Ram Dass' persuasion to "Be Here Now." soothing her neurotic sways between the intense presence and lack of purpose.

Described as a mirror reflecting "beyond yourself"
everything that you are and aren't
everyone you've ever been
everyone & everything
you
could
& perhaps
will be

An experience that requires presence & solitude.
Invoking reflection & introspection on the spectator's purpose.

YUSEF FAGEEH

Yusef Fageeh (b. 2000) is an artist based in Orlando. Through painting, he explores familial norms, religious beliefs, and multiculturalism as informed by his time moving between Saudi Arabia and the United States. Growing up in an ever-changing household, Fageeh's early adaptation and experiences of vulnerability mean that as an artist, he seeks equilibrium among uncontrollable factors. Crucial to his practice is investigating perspectives that are often ignored in his community. Currently, it centers the essential role that homes play in modern living, and the implications of natural disasters: how we prepare for and react to them, and how our collective societal awareness of these phenomena shifts over time. Fageeh is currently completing a BFA in Drawing and Painting at the University of Central Florida.



Triptych (Electric Series)

2022

Acrylic on canvas

50.8 cm x 50.8 cm

In his Electric Series (2022), red bricks, acid green grass and an assortment of infrastructural objects tell us that we are not in Saudi anymore. And indeed these paintings were specifically informed by experiencing grid outages during a recent Florida hurricane, underscoring just how disruptive a lack of power can be in our electricity-driven lives. As such, it is particularly relevant to a local context that relies on technologies such as air conditioning to comfortably sustain life. The triptych is part of Fageeh's ongoing engagement with social and physical structures that are frequently overlooked, and what they reveal both about collective identity and our social trajectories.

ZAHIYAH ALRADDADI

Zahiyah Alraddadi (b.1995) is an architect and artist based In Jeddah. Since graduating from architecture school in 2019, she has worked as an architect across multiple cultural projects.

As an artist she is wholly self taught, and has more recently expanded to graphic and book design, including illustrating a book of poems. Her practice is grounded in dreams, spontaneity and the nature of duality. She is particularly interested in what lies beneath the surface: consciousness and subconsciousness, reality and delusion, severity and stillness. Rather than posit these states in binary opposition however, she sees them as intertwined. In 2021 Alraddadi participated in the 21,39 annual exhibition in Jeddah and in 2022, was a resident at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris.



Numb

2021

Oil on Canvas (1) Oil on unstretched canvas (8)
76x120 cm (1) 36x45 (8)

Over the years, regular visitations of self-doubt that drain any pleasure in painting has meant that Alraddadi has quit making art several times over. Yet she always returns, all the same, trying not to suppress her self-sabotaging thoughts and letting them flow, even as she works to ensure they do not get in her way again. More recently, to override these anxieties she spent years generating studies and filling canvases until she no longer felt paralysed by her lack of answers, a period she describes as automating herself. The life sized self portrait Numb (2021) comes from this time, slowly taking form over two years through a multi-layered process of erasing and building.

LATIFA AL BOKHARI

Latifa AlBokhari (b.1994) is a multidisciplinary artist working across analogue photography and installation. Through an ongoing reflection upon herself and others alike, AlBokhari's practice documents the complexities of memory and nostalgia. Building a perspective which redefines what it means to belong. Having spent a large part of her life in Texas, her bicultural experience underwrites how she both sees and engages with the world around her, how she understands belonging, and where she seeks to build community.



To Care and Be Cared For

2023

Linen Sofa, Cyanotype

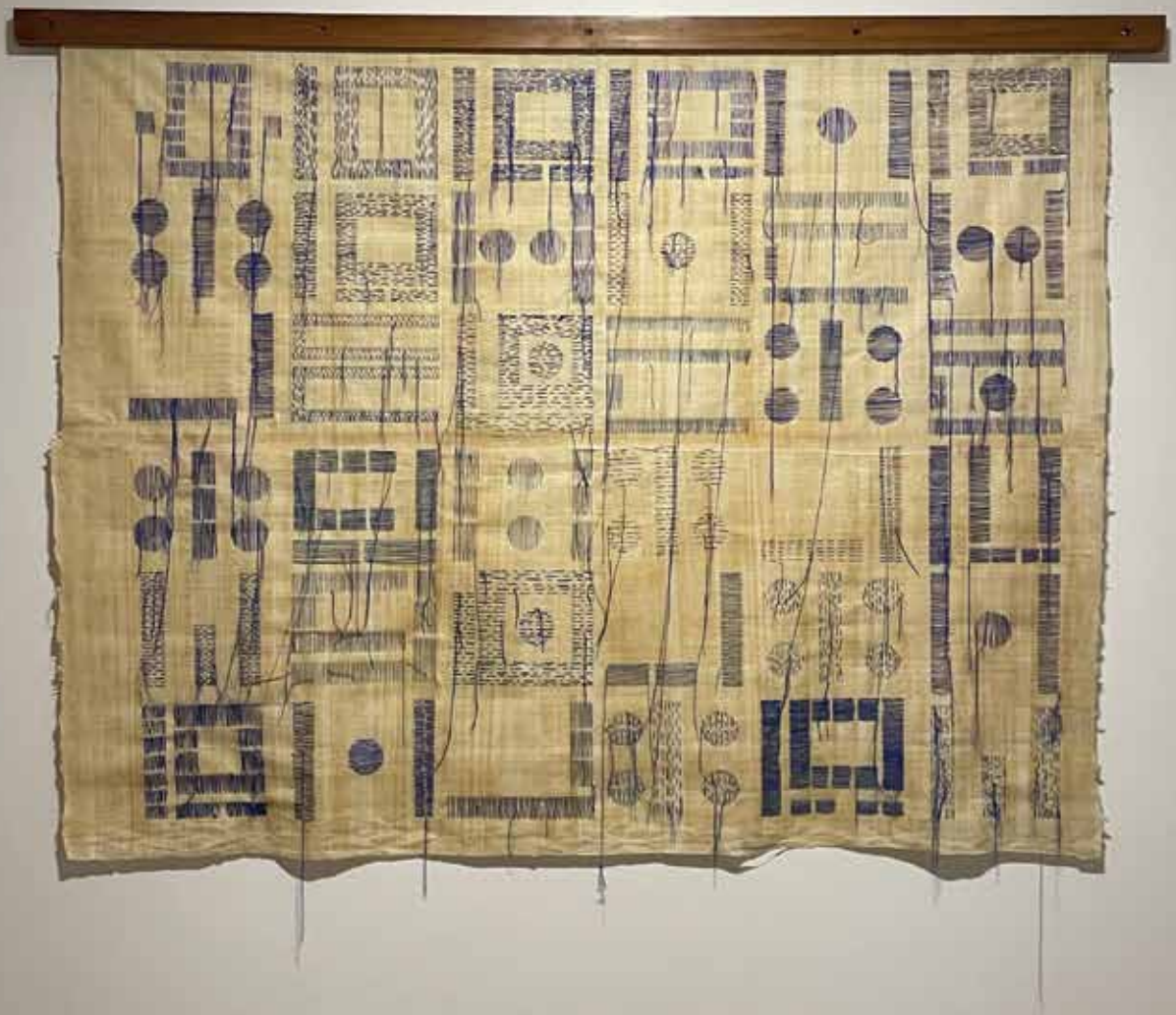
160cm x 67cm

Concerning purpose, the artist distorts a familiar image to convey memory — a couch where the bodies that once sat chatting leave their marks. This memory reverberates the power of community, sharing and caring which the artist understands as integral to both her creative practice as well as her personal well being, embodying the safe space that we provide each other.

Using cyanotype printing, AlBokhari enlisted a friend to help with the sunprinting process, having a conversation in the process of creating the final piece which echoes the intimacy of the moment. This installation invites you to connect with a purpose that is integral to all people and have a conversation.

OMNIA ABDULQADIR

Omnia Abdulqadir (b. 1993) is a multidisciplinary artist and curator with a background in graphic design and digital media. As such, she believes that visual communication is critical to capturing emotional memories across the fields of culture and history. Her art practice encompasses numerous media and techniques, including printmaking, embroidery, and video, to document human experiences and tease out the individual elements that define their being and belonging. Of particular interest are infrastructures: of class, of transport, and of patriotism and national identity. Abdulqadir's visual language is inspired by Arabic calligraphy and Egyptian hieroglyphics, synthesised to forge a new script and a new semiotics. She is currently exploring the use of embroidery and riso printing text on papyrus as a storytelling medium.



Reader of Fortune

2023

Egyptian Blue Hand dyed silk threads Embroidered on Papyrus
paper
200 X 150 cm

Abdulqadir made this work in memory of her late grandmother, as a marker of her ongoing journey of grief, healing, and finding a purpose again. It was inspired by the lyrics of her grandmother's favourite song "You roam from seas to oceans and your tears overflow into rivers," while its materials reflect her origins: papyrus paper and silk threads hand-dyed in Egyptian blue. The artist's pervasive image is of her grandmother sitting in a cozy chair in the living room, and sewing something both for her family to enjoy and to feel a sense of purpose. As a child, she would also be scolded when she threaded a needle for her grandmother with a very long thread—so as to not have to do it every few minutes—and told that only lazy women do this when sewing. In tribute, the embroidered letters on this piece are all connected with very, and really excessively long thread.

DEEMA SABBAGH

Deema Sabbagh (b.1996) is a filmmaker, art director, and visual poet. She harnesses a vast range of Arabic poetry, film, collage, and art as references to understand the diversity of identity within her practice. Within the field of art direction, she explores how furniture and interior design can tell stories and finds herself increasingly drawn to flowers as an expressive artistic medium. Sabbagh was born and raised in Riyadh by Syrian parents who immigrated from Hama in 1980. Her family's journey continues to reverberate through her practice, which explores notions of collective memory alignment and is underwritten by a singular search for home. At the same time, She holds a BSc in Computer Science and Digital Media from Prince Sultan University, and works across television, film, advertising, and arts programming.



بلطنا البحر لكي نعيش

We tiled the sea so that we live

Barjees

2023
Video Art

With its beautifully embroidered velvet cloth, and cowrie shells used as dice, the boardgame Barjees is a fixture in Levantine, and especially Syrian households. It is itself a migrant object, originating in India as Pachisi, before travelling along the Silk Road during Ottoman times. In this eponymous work, it becomes a lens to consider the process of displacement and seeking asylum. In particular, the seashells invoke the boats that refugees take, a mode of transport ruled by luck. A common Levantine phrase recurs in the work, to “go tile the sea” —a dismissal that something is impossible to do, won’t ever happen; here, it becomes a metaphor for Syrians fleeing over water who have to tile the sea, both literally and metaphorically, to survive. Barjees (2023) is a visual poetry video that mixes footage of the sea with digital 3D models and a poem written by the artist. It features a plaintive refrain: they told us to tile the sea; we tiled the sea so that we live.

ALI ALMUSA

Ali Almusa aka Eligatou (b. 1987) is an artist based in Riyadh. Eligatou has developed a colourful, instantly recognisable visual vocabulary, using it to experiment across different techniques and media. His multi-layered practice draws from folk art and the tarnished patina it develops over the years, and the way that pop art integrates itself into the urban fabric. Eligatou holds a master's degree in Finance from the University of New Hampshire. He is particularly inspired by artists like KAWS and Murakami who are able to straddle the worlds of art and business, as well as by the intricately detailed illustrations of Kim Jung Gi. He has participated in several residencies, including with the Berlin Art Institute in 2021 and Misk Art Institute in 2023.

Big Boys Never Cry

2023
Installation

In *Big Boys Never Cry* (2023) Eligatou takes on mental health. Its three glass layers, one frosted, emphasise that there's always more to mental health than what is visible on the surface. The work is informed by Eligatou's own struggles with OCD, invoked here in the repeated lines of handwritten text. But the installation features a familiar face, his feline alter ego SUKI, who understands the strength that it takes to be vulnerable in public. SUKI is not afraid to cry. His tears freeze instantly into crystalline sculptures, which he wears as both armour and a show of defiance against societal conventions that dictate when and where a man can show his emotions. We are reminded that every teardrop holds a universe of stories, waiting to be acknowledged

ASEEL ALAMOUDI

Aseel Othman Alamoudi (b.1993) is an artist and architect based in Jeddah. Her practice unspools the role that context plays in defining—and by extension, essentially producing—objects. Her visual language is grounded in a set of ambiguous assets, which she reuses across multiple narratives, compositions and scales to chart how their meanings and significance shift. She explores the ontology of these objects in different contexts, dissolving the boundaries between art and architecture. Alamoudi works across multiple media, from resin casting and 3D printing to animation and video art. She holds a Master's in Architecture from SCI-Arc (Southern California Institute of Architecture).



Untitled Objects: The Table

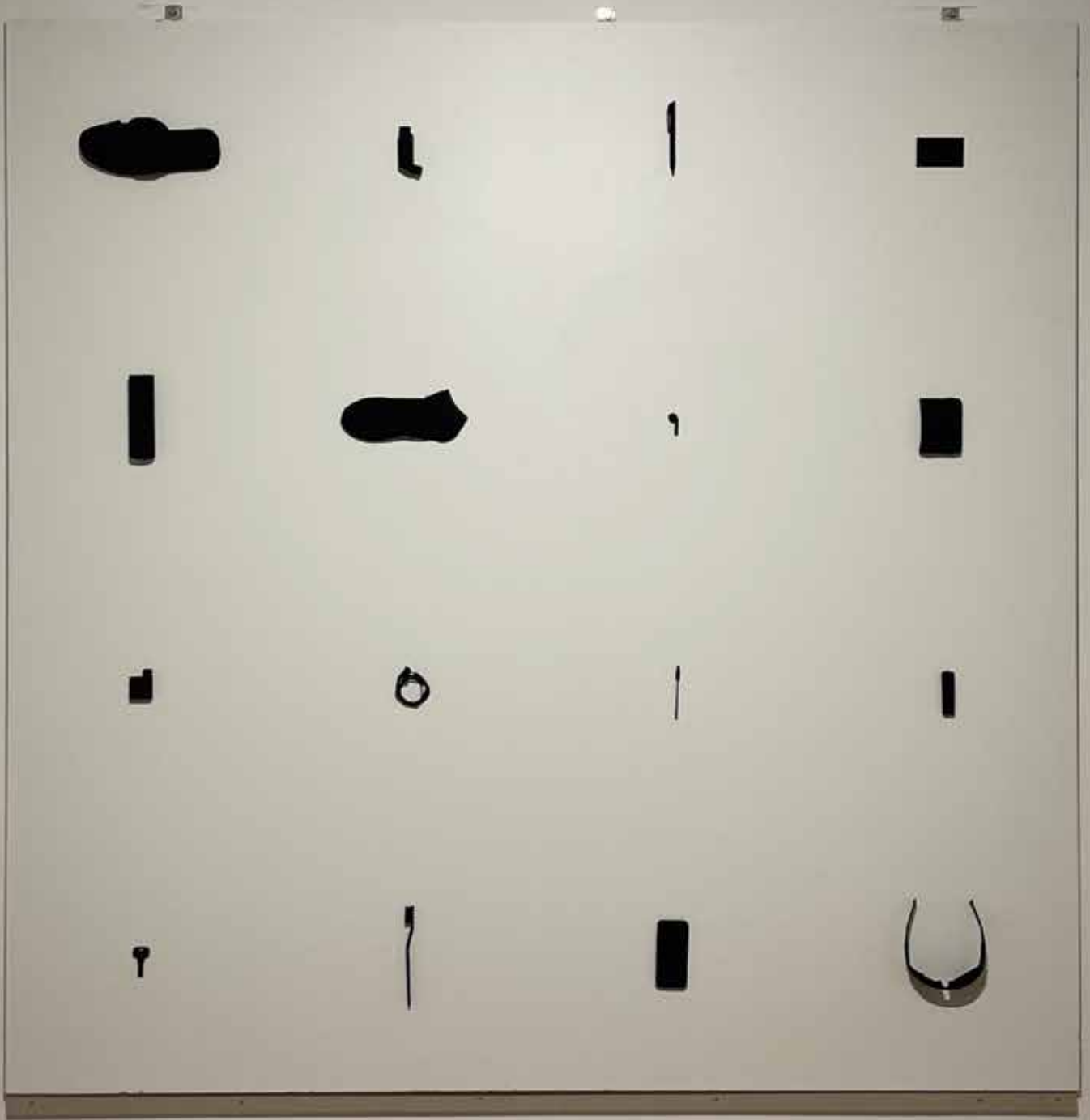
2023

3D printed objects
various sizes

In a world where functionality often takes precedence, *Untitled Objects: The Table* (2023) explores the aesthetic potential of the mundane, the absurd, and the seemingly irrational. Conventional notions of utility give way to an aesthetics of the impractical, inviting viewers to contemplate the pleasure that can be found in the pointless. Each of its 3D printed components is an enigmatic paradox, finely calibrated to have absolutely no purpose whatsoever. Viewers, in turn, are encouraged to question the necessity of purpose in art. Through these objects, Alamoudi invites us to rediscover the beauty that can be found in the absence of function—a beauty that challenges, captivates, and ultimately, expands the boundaries of the imagination.

YASSER AL-ZAHRANI

Yasser Al-Zahrani (b. 1998) is an art director, content creator and artist. Much of his practice involves small-scale worldbuilding, and creating the conditions for other creatives to thrive, whether through casting, sourcing props—and making them himself when need be—or otherwise creating the scaffolding for other people’s visions. He believes that not everyone can be an artist, but at the same time everyone is an artist, bearing the ability to create something from nothing. Al-Zahrani is also particularly energised by Saudi’s rapid pace of cultural change, which he sees as a blank canvas for youth, and particularly Gen Z artists.



Even if!

2023

Installation

2x2 wood board

Do you lose yourself when you lose something essential? Even If unfolds from the discovery of a poetic paradox: the top 20 items that we tend to misplace the most aren't those we rarely use but rather things that are crucial to daily life. Wallets, car keys, glasses, wedding rings, vapes, and so on. More than the objects themselves, however, Al-Zahrani is most interested in how we predicate our identities upon them, and unravelling the tension between needing and wanting. As such, the over 30 objects on view here are visually dematerialised, painted with the blackest black in contrast with the glossy white board they are mounted on. The effect is one akin to a locked character or a "coming soon" item in a video game. Do they need us as much as we need them? And do they possess the inherent capability to sustain themselves and thrive autonomously without us?

SARAH ALBAIZ

Sarah Waleed AlBaiz (b. 1999) is a digital conceptual artist based in Riyadh. Her work spans collage, video, and creative coding to examine how technology buttresses and intersects with the story of KSA's culture and the relationship between the individual and the collective; between the various identities she inhabits. Above all, she is interested in inclusive modes of cultural reclamation and preservation, and particularly individual experiences and stories that do not align with the dominant narrative, and get sidelined as a result. AlBaiz holds a BSc in Software Engineering from Prince Sultan University, and currently works as both an independent art market analyst and as a product strategist in fintech. She was a 2021 recipient of Athr's Ma'an Grant.

مخاطرة - 0.65 ▼ نجاح 0.83 ▲ فشل - 7

Trading my calling like a penny stock

2023

LED sign with data analyzed for sentiments
2.5 m x 20 cm

AlBaiz' real-time ticker offers an immersion into the financial heartbeat of society, the stock market. As numbers and letters flash by, the work doesn't just chart economic values, but also exhibits the ever-fluctuating worth of our intents and desires. The artist draws comparisons between market dynamics and people's personal quests for purpose, both of which are rarely legible to society as a whole, and parsed through the values and sentiments we are socialised to hold. She understands it as a representation not just of digital intent, but also as a visualisation of a digital souk, where stories, news, and reflections convene. With this work, AlBaiz asks a simple question: in the grand market of life, what is the value of our purpose?

TAMARA KALO

Tamara Kalo (b. 1994) is an interdisciplinary Lebanese-French artist, who was born in Saida and raised in Riyadh. This double consciousness of being between countries underwrites her practice, which is informed by research and embodied knowledge to reframe landscapes through fragmentation and typology. Through light and time-based media such as photography, video, sculpture and performance she investigates narratives that shape home, displacement and identity. Her practice locates itself at interstitial boundaries, such as between public and private or comfort and discomfort, and the blurry spaces in between. By juxtaposing familiar materials and objects, she seeks to represent the fragility of what lies between a moment in time and place, and its memory. Kalo has a degree in architecture from the University of California Berkeley.



Current Sea

2023

Silk, linen, cotton, beads, pearls
90 cm x150 cm

Earlier this year, amidst spiralling inflation Kalo commissioned women from Saida to produce the initial iteration of Current Sea (2023) as a way to support craftspeople during an unprecedented economic crisis. The result is a gorgeously embroidered silken distortion of the Lebanese Lira that melts into fluid forms and colours and waves like a 1990s Java lake applet. The work comments on the unrecognisability of what a banknote used to represent, in contrast with the everyday lived reality of the country's skilled labour force. In this second iteration, several months of economic freefall later, Kalo scans and further manipulates the work. In its new form, it offers a new question: what hap-

SUMAYAH FALLATAH

Sumayah Fallatah (b. 2000) is a Saudi-Nigerian photographer and graphic designer. In design, she focuses on providing the best solutions for the design problems she is faced with, thinking outside the box, and experimenting with different forms. Her photography, usually shot in black and white, investigates the loss of identity, fear, and beauty, focusing on racial diversity & representation. More recently, her research has focused on northern Nigeria, and the long history of Hausa migration to Saudi Arabia—a product of both colonialism and wanting to protect their religious practices—as a means to understand her own Saudi-Nigerian identity.



Fruits of meditation

2023
Video Art

Every morning, Sumayah's father used to enjoy a particular meditative ritual which fascinated her as a child. He would close his eyes and enunciate different fruit names, all while making squeezing motions, as a means to disconnect from the outside world. Guava, orange, pomegranate, kiwi, apple. The same self-soothing refrain can be heard over an immersive ambient soundtrack in *Fruits of Meditation*, in which the artist tries to encapsulate the essence of her father's daily ritual in two parallel videos. The video on the left, depicts the father in meditation, witnessing the profound connection he forges with fruits and the process of selecting them. The act of choosing the fruit takes on a meditative quality. On the right, the artist attempts to replicate her father's ritual, albeit not fully comprehending its significance as she is still trying to understand the process.

MARAM ALSULIMAN

Maram ALSuliman (b. 1997) is an artist based between Jeddah and Riyadh, with ancestral roots in Najran. The rich heritage and culture of this southern region forms the bedrock of her research-based practice, characterised by its fusion of traditional and contemporary elements. Ancient Najrani petroglyphs and inscriptions are a recurring motif in her work, which explores the potential of new technologies to create immersive, interactive experiences. ALSuliman graduated from the College of Art and Design at the University of Jeddah.



I feel connected again

2023

Video installation, metal canister

4:28

This short video is a testament to the cherished tradition of preparing Rub, the date syrup that is a vital component of Najrani cuisine. Its crafting brings people together, forging a sense of community around this time honoured tradition and binding people to both their immediate heritage and a broader cultural narrative. Shot from above, we see a group of women gathered around a large pot: their hands as they select and prepare dates, and the alchemical process that transforms the fruit into a rich brown syrup. We understand that food is more than just sustenance, and a condiment more than just seasoning. Here, food becomes a medium of communication and a testament to the power of culinary traditions as vessels of cultural memory.

TAHA BAAGEEL

Maram ALSuliman (b. 1997) is an artist based between Jeddah and Riyadh, with ancestral roots in Najran. The rich heritage and culture of this southern region forms the bedrock of her research-based practice, characterised by its fusion of traditional and contemporary elements. Ancient Najrani petroglyphs and inscriptions are a recurring motif in her work, which explores the potential of new technologies to create immersive, interactive experiences. ALSuliman graduated from the College of Art and Design at the University of Jeddah.



GrGrh

2023

Fountain, wood, plastic

80cm x 60cm

This short video is a testament to the cherished tradition of preparing Rub, the date syrup that is a vital component of Najrani cuisine. Its crafting brings people together, forging a sense of community around this time honoured tradition and binding people to both their immediate heritage and a broader cultural narrative. Shot from above, we see a group of women gathered around a large pot: their hands as they select and prepare dates, and the alchemical process that transforms the fruit into a rich brown syrup. We understand that food is more than just sustenance, and a condiment more than just seasoning. Here, food becomes a medium of communication and a testament to the power of culinary traditions as vessels of cultural memory.

HAFSA AL KHUDAIRY

Hafsa Alkhudairi (b. 1992) is a writer, curator, and researcher. She is particularly interested in pop culture, family inheritances, and the generational development of regional art collections, all parsed through a feminist lens. Since finishing her MA in Contemporary Literature and Culture at Birkbeck College, University of London, she has published papers on comic books, articles on contemporary art and artists, and short fiction and nonfiction stories. Her visual work is characterised by a juxtaposition between visual representation and the written word.



A Cage of My Own Making / A Diary

2023

Metal, Cloth, Mixed Media in a Watercolor Journal
Various sizes

Playing on René Descartes' famous cogito, Alkhudairi offers that "I write therefore I am." For her, writing is her purpose and her purpose is to write. She invokes Almutannabi's lines in which he is equally recognised by his environment—the horse, the night, the desert—as by his tools, namely his weapons and his writing instruments. Regardless of whether or not it can be read, her sense of self is predicated upon being a writer, on putting pen to paper until these objects come to know her as much as she knows them. But not all writing is intended for publication, mass consumption or anything quite so revealing. In *A Cage of my Own Making/A Diary*, Alkhudairi considers the vulnerability of private experimental or diaristic writing made public. What will you learn about the writer? And what will she learn about herself?

RASHID BIN BANI ALSUBAIE

Rashed bin Bani Alsubaie (B. 1987) is a photographer documenting everyday life in Saudi Arabia. Every project begins with a question, the downbeat that signals the beginning of exploring behind closed doors through the lens. Subjects range from seasonal shifts in desert hump palettes to multiyear documentation of his sister's children to Al Maramy. In 2022, he was a resident at Misk Art Institute in Riyadh and He took part in an art residency in Avignon the south of France the same year, and also participated in several local exhibitions.



Qamrat Betna

2023

Video Projection

In this artwork, the artist reflects a scene that he saw at the age of nine behind the door of his house. He saw the passers-by from outside on the wall of the house from the inside, not through the holes in the door, but through the reflection of their images on the wall, as if the room was a pinhole camera.

This scene raised several questions for the artist. After years of learning photography and learning about the camera obscura, on the basis of which the camera was invented, the artist wonders if the reflection of the passersby through the holes is a reflection of what he is now as a photographer, or if it is simply a coincidence? Or was this question intentional?

Through this work, (Qamrat Betna), the artist reminds us of the camera obscura, and invites us to explore unknown worlds and strive for a deeper understanding of things. It shows us that there is always more to what we see on the surface, and that we have the opportunity to access those other dimensions if we are willing to explore them.

SALIH ALBARRAK

Salih Albarrak (b. 2000) is an architect and artist based in Los Angeles. He locates himself in the overlap between storytelling, alchemy, and architecture to challenge the behaviour of earthly systems. In his artistic practice, he mobilises spirit and dreamlike states as both design tools and strategies in order to reintroduce an element of mysticism into the practice of world-building. Albarrak's work speaks to sociopolitical structures that reside on the fringes of reality, on the precipice of the subliminal. They problematise frameworks of fantasy to dissect the intimate bonds between collective delusion, magick, and transience. Albarrak holds a B.Arch and a MSc in Synthetic Landscapes from SCI-Arc.



Lulu: Pearls Among Pixels

2023

Print on paper

150 x 150cm

In Lulu: Pearls Among Pixels (2023), Albarrak considers the glossily curated perfection of social media. It speaks to our current technologically-driven era in which we don't merely consume products, but carefully constructed ideals and archetypes too. The digital sprawl, where every image, pixel, and even byte is painstakingly curated, is transposed here to an ocean. In the face of a sea of uniformly symmetrical nacre he wonders what happened to the imperfect pearls. Whether we grind our particularities, eccentricities, and genuine selves down to fit in, and whether we aren't forsaking the irregular for the ideal. Albarrak's pixelated kaleidoscopic portal, is an entreaty for a place less polished, more profound, where worth isn't measured by likes and engagement but rather the depth of narrative.

Blinks on transitions

2023

Video Installation, 7 Monitors, Backdrop Fabric, Found Footage, 35mm Film Footage, 4k digital Microscopic Footage, VFX software, Audio Visualization Software, Drawing Software, AI Video Generation, Editing Software
Multiple dimensions

Blinks on transitions (2023) Is an installation of seven monitors screening multiple applications of dots, specks, points, particles, sparkles, occurrences, and molecules in random motion, ranging within; The scattered spa of chemically sensitive layout on a light screening film, pixel specks from antenna received projections of cosmic microwave radiation stretching to the infinite, a particle system visual effect, an audio reactive visualization instancing random occurrences of ambience on a virtual geometry, an AI deep learning generated video of a calculus simulation model of random movement, randomly given points on layers of animated canvas, and microscopic Brownian motion.

This work unfurls from the interdisciplinary idea of holism, the idea that natural systems are made up of inextricably interconnected and interdependent parts, and must be understood as a whole. apart from the properties of their component parts. The setting of such elements screened on cutting transitions followed by blinks raises questions about self, and narration...?

AZIZ ALSEMARY

Filmmaker, producer, scriptwriter and copywriter Aziz Alsemary (b. 1988) has worked in video production for the past decade. As a director, he believes that cinema is cultural duty, emphasising production value and stylistic clarity towards new narrative modes. In addition to his commercial work and producing films for other artists, he currently has three shorts pre-production, and other projects on a range of interests including cognitive linguistics, and the problem of objectivity. While contemporary art has always been a touchstone and visual reference, Alsemary has more recently built upon his cinematic background to experiment with video and installation art, which he is particularly drawn to for its representational capacities.

YSA



عن قصد on purpose

