

# The Art Bridge

*Global Perspectives*

*Artiste Culture*

Theatrical Realism:  
Kevin Mackintosh's  
Ode to Cultural  
Fusion

Edition 2 | December 2023





*Mara Firetti, Founder at Firetti Contemporary*

## Innovation, Collaboration, Education: A Conversation with Mara Firetti of Firetti Contemporary



*An Odyssey of Identity Exhibition at Firetti Contemporary Curated by Celine Azem*

Grounded in the conviction that art is a potent catalyst for change, Firetti Contemporary Gallery is committed to fostering global artist recognition. Its mission encompasses meaningful dialogue, empathy, and the illumination of pressing global issues. The gallery places a strong emphasis on sustainability, aligning its operations with conscious choices to reduce environmental impact. The gallery's unique approach not only defines its international standing but also actively influences the burgeoning local art scene in Dubai. Through thoughtfully curated exhibitions, Firetti Contemporary weaves intricate narratives that explore and communicate impactful cultural and social stories. Mara Firetti, the owner of the gallery shared some insightful views on the gallery and how they ensure the fulfilment of their mission towards art.

**What drives your mission to create sustainable art collections and promote global artist recognition, and how does art contribute to sustainability and social issues?**

Our gallery's mission is deeply rooted in the belief that art is a powerful vehicle for change and social impact. The driving force behind our mission is twofold: Firstly, we recognise that art has the unique ability to transcend boundaries and connect with people on a profound level. By curating and supporting artists who create meaningful and thought-provoking works, we aim to spark conversations, inspire empathy, and raise awareness of pressing global issues. Art has the potential to ignite change by shedding light on important topics and offering new perspectives. Secondly, sustainability is a core value in our mission. We understand that the art world, like any other industry, has an environmental footprint. As such, we are committed to making conscious choices in our operations to reduce our impact. We work with artists who share our commitment to sustainable practices and strive to reduce waste in our exhibitions and collections.



*Grand Tour: A Photographic Journey in Italy Exhibition Curated By Michele Bonoumo and Mara Firetti*

**In 15 years of art advisory, international exhibitions, and prestigious events, how has your experience shaped Firetti Contemporary's vision, and what insights have you gained?**

My multifaceted experience has shaped Firetti Contemporary's mission to be artist-centric, collector-focused, institutionally aligned, and operationally robust. It is this fusion of insights and expertise that drives our vision for creating a meaningful and sustainable art space on a global scale. My background in artist management has given me a unique perspective on the needs of artists, enabling me to understand what it takes for them to flourish and succeed. This insight forms the foundation of our gallery's commitment to supporting emerging and established artists by providing them with the necessary platform to showcase their talents.

As an art advisor, I've had the privilege of working closely with art collectors, understanding their desires, preferences, and the personalised approach they seek when building their collections. This knowledge has been instrumental in shaping our gallery's client-centric approach, ensuring that we provide tailored and meaningful experiences for art enthusiasts and collectors. Collaborations with institutions have allowed me to appreciate the importance of having an institutional approach and the calibre of art required to engage with prominent art organisations. This understanding underpins our gallery's commitment to curating and exhibiting works of exceptional quality and cultural significance.

Furthermore, my business background has equipped me with the skills to structure Firetti Contemporary as a 360-degree support system and a visionary space. We aim to not only curate remarkable art but also to operate efficiently, sustainably, and with a forward-thinking orientation, ensuring our gallery remains a dynamic and impactful force in the art world.

Based in Dubai, your vision involves artistic collaborations and community integration. How do you see your gallery influencing the local art scene and supporting emerging artists in the region?

Operating as an art gallery in Dubai presents a distinctive set of challenges and opportunities. The Dubai art scene is relatively new, with limited locally-based collectors, making it imperative for us to structure our approach unconventionally.

One of our key focuses is on education and information. We recognise that there's a need to inform the local community about the vital role that an art gallery plays within the broader art ecosystem. Through various initiatives, such as exhibitions, workshops, and art talks, we strive to educate the public on the significance of art curation and collecting, and the impact it can have on artists and culture.

We also understand the importance of creating events that reach diverse audiences. These events not only serve to engage the community but also play a crucial role in educating individuals about the art-collecting process. By demystifying the art world and making it accessible, we aim to nurture a new generation of art enthusiasts and collectors.

We encourage local institutions to open their collaborations towards art galleries as part of a holistic approach to nurturing the local art scene. Artists thrive when they receive both institutional recognition and commercial support. Institutions can provide a valuable platform for artists to gain recognition and exhibit their work, while art galleries contribute to the commercial side, ensuring artists' sustainability by facilitating the sale of their artworks.

This synergy between institutions and galleries is crucial in empowering artists and enabling the growth of the local art community. By recognising and embracing the complementary roles of both, we can collectively create a thriving ecosystem that benefits artists, collectors, and the cultural landscape as a whole.



*Eyes Wide Shut Exhibition Featuring Self Portrait No. 7, 2016, Sawsan Al Bahar*



*Breaking Boundaries II Exhibition featuring Leaving is Home, 2023, Sawsan Al Bahar*

Curation is a form of storytelling. Can you highlight a recent exhibition where the curation process allowed you to tell a unique and impactful cultural or social story through art?

Our recent exhibition, 'Breaking Boundaries,' was a testament to the storytelling power of curation. This unique and impactful exhibition celebrated the intricate and expansive history of linguistics, transcending its traditional boundaries to explore innovative expressions through the works of five artists from different corners of the world.

'Breaking Boundaries' delved into the rich and comprehensive evolution of the history of language, from its origins in primitive eras to the contemporary era. The exhibition sought to highlight the dynamic impact of language on contemporary artistic visions. It was a narrative that showcased how language has been a catalyst for creativity and innovation throughout history, fostering cultural diversity and social change.

Can you tell us about the unique approach Firetti Contemporary takes in presenting art and how it distinguishes your gallery in the international art scene?

Our approach to presenting art is characterised by a commitment to innovation, collaboration, and education. This approach distinguishes Firetti Contemporary in the international art scene by creating a dynamic and inclusive space that redefines how art is experienced and collected. Our strength lies in thinking outside the box and taking an unconventional approach to the art world.



*Breaking Boundaries ii Exhibition Featuring Artworks By Artist Josh Rowell*

Curating a gallery involves making selections that create a cohesive narrative. How do you approach the process of curating exhibitions at Firetti Gallery, and what themes or messages do you aim to convey through your curation?

At Firetti Gallery, the process of curating exhibitions is a collaborative and multi-generational effort that has proven to be incredibly successful. I'm blessed to have the support of my curator and daughter, Celine Azem, whose insights and perspectives complement and enrich our curation.

Our approach begins with a deep appreciation for the diversity of artistic voices and styles. We aim to create exhibitions that reflect a wide range of artistic expressions, from traditional to contemporary, ensuring a dynamic and engaging experience for our audience.

The themes and messages we aim to convey through our curation are often inspired by the evolving dialogues within the art world and society at large. We believe in the power of art to provoke thought, inspire conversations, and address pressing issues. Our multi-generational collaboration enables us to bring a blend of experience and fresh, contemporary perspectives to our exhibitions, resulting in cohesive narratives that resonate with a broad audience.

In essence, our curatorial approach at Firetti Gallery is a fusion of tradition and innovation, experience and fresh insights, and it has consistently resulted in successful and powerful turnouts for our exhibitions. It's a testament to the strength of intergenerational collaboration in the world of art.

