

MENArt Fair 2024 Shines a Light on the Female Gaze From the Arab World

Women are calling the shots in the MENA art scene and the female creatives presented at this Paris exhibition offer a window to the rich cultural fabric of the region

By Maghie Ghali

September 20, 2024



Cynthia Zahar, Shuhud, 2023, book, picture, map, acrylic, cardboard, fabric, paper, 45x70cm. Image courtesy of the artist

MENArt Fair is back for its 5th edition in Paris this week, with a special edition focused solely on female artists and designers from the MENA region, spotlighting the legacy of pioneering modern artists and new works of contemporary and emerging female creators.

Running from 20-22 September at Galerie Joseph Saint Merri – a vast space in the charming Le Marais district, and formerly home to the Musée Pierre Cardin – the fair has gathered 29 galleries from 12 countries; all celebrating the creativity and resilience of female artists and designers, tackling everything from social issues and disappearing heritage, to the effects of war on the region and gender inequality. Here are AD's must-see showcases at 2024 MENArt Fair Paris.

I Reminisce in Colour by Salmah Almansoori

Firetti Contemporary



Salmah Almansoori, *I reminisce in colours*, (1), 2024, watercolour on paper 38x56cm. Image courtesy of the artist



Salmah Almansoori, *I reminisce in colours*, (2), 2024, watercolour on paper 38x56cm. Image courtesy of the artist

Emirati multidisciplinary artist Salmah Almansoori's practice delves into the intersections of place and memory, with a focus on the concept that a place isn't just a geographical place, but an amalgamation of thoughts, emotions, and memories. For her, a place can either connect us more deeply to our roots or lead us to question our identity. Her work 'I Reminisce in Colours' delves into the diverse landscapes of her hometown Ghayathi, from the expansive desert to the evolving urban environment, capturing the essence of the city that has shaped her identity. Inspired by her experiences of moving to Abu Dhabi and embarking on weekly round trips, she began to view Ghayathi from an outsider's perspective, sparking her curiosity about the origins of the city's name and its significance. Her paintings are part of this rediscovery. [@visualsalmah](#)



Salmah Almansoori, Who I became Within these walls, photo transfer on tiles, installation. Image courtesy of the artist