

BROWNBOOK
ART DUBAI — 2012

March 21 - 24, 2012 at Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai

Cartier



WELCOME

March in Dubai is all about art and Art Week 2012 sees the region's most exciting cultural programme to date. Under the umbrella of Art Week, Dubai hosts Design Days Dubai, SIKKA and the sixth edition of MENASA's leading international art fair - Art Dubai.

Art Dubai takes place
March 21-24, 2012
at Madinat Jumeirah,
Dubai

The fair will feature 75 galleries from 32 countries, showing works from more than 500 artists and is hoping to exceed last year's visitor count of 20,000. There will also be a brand new programme of artists' and curators' residencies, commissioned projects, performative tours and workshops as well as the unveiling of the works by Abraaj Capital Art Prize winners and the critically acclaimed Global Art Forum.

For this publication Brownbook talks to galleries, artists and curators about their work, their involvement with Art Dubai and their perspective on the region's prolific art scene.

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Schedule

Tuesday March 20

18.00
Unveiling of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (by invitation only)

19.00 – 21.30
Jumeirah Patrons' Preview (by invitation only)

Wednesday March 21

11.30 – 14.00
Art Dubai Ladies' Day

14.00 – 17.00
Global Art Forum_6

16.00 – 21.30
Opening Night (by invitation only)

Thursday March 22

14.00 – 17.00
Global Art Forum_6

16.00 – 21.30
Art Dubai Public Day

Friday March 23

12.00 – 19.30
Art Dubai Public Day

14.00 – 17.00
Global Art Forum_6

Saturday March 24

12.00 – 17.30
Art Dubai Public Day

14.00 – 17.00
Global Art Forum_6

What's Happening

Education

Art Dubai places education at the heart of the fair. Educational programming includes the Global Art Forum, an open-to-all leading platform for debate in the MENASA region

Projects

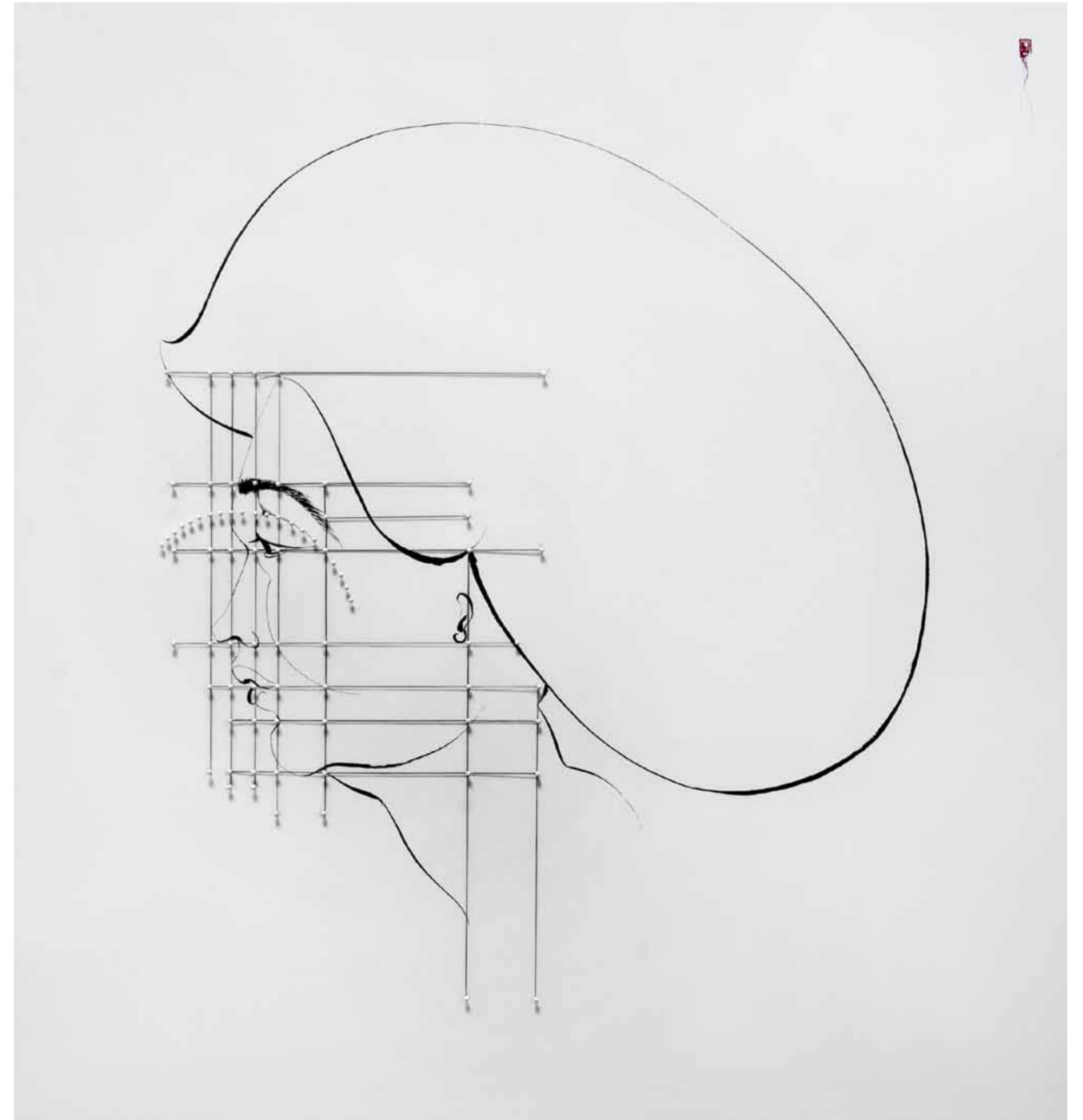
A rolling programme of new works and performances that explore the fabric and economy of an art fair, embracing the theatrical nature of the event to run during each day

DXB Store

A not-for-profit space designed to showcase limited edition objects, jewellery, stationery, clothes and other design collectibles, all made in the UAE. The DXB Store will be based across three venues: Sikka, Bastakiya, March 15-25; Design Days Dubai, Downtown Dubai, March 18-21; Art Dubai, Madinat Jumeirah, March 21-24

2011
Hayv Kahraman,
Anthropometric Side
View: ink on paper,
wood-mounted
human hair and
map pins

Courtesy The Third
Line Gallery





SOUK MADINAT JUMEIRAH
ART DUBAI

The Palm Jumeirah

Fann A Porter
Jumeirah Road

Burj Al Arab

Jumeria Beach Hotel

Funoon

Mercato

Pro Art Gallery

Marsam Mattar

Al Mina Road

- Beautiful People
- Art Connection
- Tashkeel Studio Space
- XVA Gallery
- Majlis Gallery

BUR DUBAI

World Trade Centre Complex

- The Empty Quarter
- Ayyam
- Cuadro Gallery
- Opera Gallery
- The Farjam Collection
- Art Sawa

Oud Meitha Road

Dubai Creek

Festival City

- Al Serkal
- Carbon 12
- Gulf Photo Plus
- Grey Noise
- Mojo Gallery
- Green Art
- Lawrie Shabibi
- Etemad
- Ayyam Art Center
- Satellite
- Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde (IVDE)
- Salsali
- Barakat Gallery
- fn Designs
- Shelter

- The Third Line
- Hamail
- The Jamjar
- The Cartoon Gallery
- Courtyard & Total Arts
- 1x1 Contemporary

Traffic

Al Khail Road

Sheikh Zayed Road

AL QUOZ

DUBAI

Tashkeel

Nad Al Sheba

The Pavillion

Ara Gallery

Business Bay

Trade Centre

Emirates Hills



Cartier Naturellement

A collaboration between a landscape architect and Cartier results in an eye-catching installation

Luxury jewellery and landscape architecture are not the most likely partners, but when luxury jewellery house Cartier invited Christophe Ponceau, co-founder of Paris-based landscape architecture practice, Rue du Repos, to collaborate with them on an installation for Art Dubai, he rose to the challenge.

Ponceau usually initiates research for new projects with both the eye of an architect and his knowledge as a designer. For this project, Louis Cartier's own love of nature reflected in many of his jewellery designs, proved to be an ideal starting point for Ponceau's own creation. 'I found inspiration from examining Cartier's style - his designs and his figurative creations,' Ponceau explains. 'He was passionate about the beauty and wildness of the natural world. It inspired him - birds, orchids, flowers and of course the iconic panther - the world he created was amazing, dazzling.'

Cartier has produced, over the decades, a bejewelled menagerie of birds, reptiles and felines, as well as a sparkling nursery of beautiful flowers. The most celebrated of the animal collections produced by the French jewellery house is Panthère de Cartier, which originates from the first panther designed by Jeanne Toussaint - former creative designer at Cartier. She first created her figurative designs

in the 1920s: it was a range that included flamingos, parrots and other birds.

Ponceau trained as an architect but shifted his focus from construction to nature as his love of plants won through. 'I am passionate about nature and the living world, but I also try to incorporate a contemporary feel within my projects. For this assignment I applied my architect's eye to the theme, and included vegetal elements.'

The outcome is a poetic garden filled with plants, flowers and decorated with sparkling jewellery. 'Cartier Naturellement' is a natural jewelscape, in which Ponceau has incorporated a dazzling range of textural elements - fur, flowers, feathers and a range of jewellery which has never before been seen in the region. The installation only serves to highlight the beauty of the precious stones, but for Ponceau, the most difficult part of the installation was sourcing the flower, he says. 'And then having the patience to install them one by one,' he laughs.

'I found inspiration from Cartier's style - he was passionate about the beauty and wildness of the natural world'

*Cartier
Naturellement*



Laila Binbrek - The Third Line

Third Line Gallery is striving to raise the bar on contemporary Middle Eastern art and culture

For Laila Binbrek - director of The Third Line - pursuing her love of art wasn't a difficult decision to make. A Canadian, but of Arab heritage, one could easily be fooled into thinking that she would take the conventional route of going into a science or business stream at university. However, this wasn't the case for Binbrek. 'I was always interested in art and as a child, I would often be found with my drawing book and colouring pencils. Instead of going to university, I decided to attend Art College in London and eventually moved back to Canada where I majored in drawing and sculpture at the University of Waterloo,' she explains.

Binbrek who has been at the helm of The Third Line since 2007 - two years since its inception - is no stranger to being at the top of her game. Fresh out of university, she practised as an artist for a few years and eventually found herself volunteering in the not-for-profit sector in Toronto by promoting and leading discussions on Canadian Arab art. Such was her enthusiasm for arts and culture that she landed positions on the boards of several non-profit organisations such as the Canadian Arab Federation, Toronto Arts Council and Community Arts, Ontario.

However, it didn't take long for this driven lady to return to her roots. 'Having grown up in the

Middle East, I was always curious to return to the region. I saw how Dubai was beginning to take notice of culture and art, so I decided to make the move here in 2006. Since arriving here, I have had the privilege of witnessing and participating in a city's discovery of its cultural heritage, as well as being a part of a vibrant cultural scene.'

Binbrek, who works closely with artists to 'nurture their development', explains that The Third Line is strongly committed to developing young and emerging talent, originating from and based in the region. From time to time, works of established Middle Eastern artists in the West are also exhibited in the gallery.

'The Third Line is dedicated to raising the bar for contemporary Middle Eastern art and culture. As such, we are constantly striving to provide a platform where artistic talent can be showcased and nurtured. Our exhibitions so far have included photography, painting, video screening and installations,' Binbrek maintains.

Not just an exhibition space, the gallery also hosts non-profit programmes such as film screenings, Kutub - a bilingual book club where works of fiction by Arab writers are discussed - and Pecha Kucha Night Dubai - an international multimedia forum for artists and designers.

01. Laila Binbrek, director of The Third Line has held previous positions on the boards of the Toronto Arts Council and Community Arts, Ontario
02. The Third Line strives to create a platform for Middle Eastern artistic talent to be nurtured

Added to this, the gallery has a publishing division - Works on Paper, which publishes books on artists from the region.

For the fifth consecutive year, The Third Line is participating at Art Dubai and will focus on showcasing new works by artists: this time they will include Amir H. Fallah, Hayv Kahraman and Laleh Khorramian. 'Fallah presents works from his new series of painted collages which marries materials in ways that playfully lead the viewer to wonder if there is any real difference between new and used, fact and fiction, the beautiful and the ugly. Kahraman's works, on the other hand, delve into the creation of boundaries, which occur in exterior or physical locations but also subjectively within the internal body space. Khorramian will be presenting mono-prints and drawings, using oil, crayon, pen and ink to describing the end result of art than the process itself,' Binbrek explains.

Binbrek concludes that Art Dubai has established its home in the centre of the Middle East's growing contemporary art community and provides a wonderful opportunity for the gallery to strengthen its image and for it to be featured alongside eighty leading regional and international galleries.

'Art Dubai has established its home in the centre of the Middle East's growing contemporary art community and provides a wonderful opportunity for The Third Line' to strengthen its image'



Tashkeel - Lateefa bint Maktoum

Tashkeel's founder explains her vision to unite artists of many nationalities and ages under one roof

Away from the hustle and bustle of the city, and tucked away in a side street of Nad Al Sheba, a leafy Dubai suburb lies Tashkeel, a thriving arts community and treasure trove, of sorts, for artists and designers alike. The brainchild of Lateefa bint Maktoum, Tashkeel was founded in 2008 to provide a dynamic environment to unite artists and designers of different nationalities and ages.

An artist, and a very passionate one at that, Maktoum explains why she felt the need to set up Tashkeel. 'After graduating from Zayed University with a degree in fine arts, I saw that there was a lack of places in Dubai where artists, who leave their university setting, can physically come together to work, exchange ideas and get feedback.'

By uniting people from various backgrounds, whose main language is art, Tashkeel promotes cross-cultural and creative exchange through mediums such as painting, photography, printing and jewellery design. 'We provide a platform where artists, after becoming members, can produce their work using studio facilities such as a MAC suite, jewellery studio and a darkroom,' explains Maktoum. She is strongly committed to promoting cross-cultural exchange, which is why she is very excited that for Art Dubai, Tashkeel is collaborating with

the London-based Delfina Foundation. The two organisations are coming together to work on the second edition of Artists-In-Residence (AIR) Dubai, a three-month residency programme where three international artists are hosted in Dubai to working alongside three Emirati artists. 'Through AIR, we give international artists who want to come to the region, a platform to showcase their work,' says Maktoum. 'The participating Emirati artists also have the opportunity to engage in inter-cultural dialogue with the artists, thus reiterating Dubai's position as a vibrant cultural hub.'

Khaled Al Mezaina, project co-ordinator at Tashkeel has been heavily involved with the AIR programme. He is just as thrilled about the collaboration. 'Delfina Foundation is a well-reputed name in artist residencies around the world and to be affiliated with it is a huge accomplishment,' he says. 'We accommodate the international artists in Bastakiya as it is a historical place and they have easy access to the city. Then, they have three months to create a piece based on their experiences here which is showcased at Sikka Art Fair during Art Dubai,' explains Mezaina.

The three international artists are Glasgow-based Turkish sculptor Deniz Uster, Egyptian Majid Mustafa and Algerian Faycal Bagriche



'Through AIR, we give international artists, who want to come to the region, a platform to showcase their work. The Emirati artists also have the opportunity to engage in intercultural dialogue'

01. Khaled Al Mezaina, project co-ordinator at Tashkeel is thrilled to be collaborating with Delfina Foundation
02. Tashkeel places heavy emphasis on supporting the local art scene and hosts regular exhibitions in the gallery

Yasmin Atassi - Green Art Gallery

The director of this established gallery explains how she is continuing the legacy left by her mother

One of the oldest art institutions in Dubai, Green Art Gallery has come a long way from its humble beginnings. Yasmin Atassi, the director, reminisces about the business, 'Before my late mother - Mayla - opened the gallery here in 1995, she was very active in Damascus in the Syrian art world.'

Since setting up in Dubai, the gallery has garnered a reputation for introducing Arab art to the region. 'My mother's core strength lay in developing modern Arab artists such as Fateh Moudaress from Syria and Ismail Fatah from Iraq. They are now considered regional masters in the context of the wider history of modern Arab art,' Atassi explains, her eyes glittering as she speaks proudly of her mother.

Adamant about following in her mother's footsteps and after a brief stint working in the technology industry, she took over the reins of the gallery in 2008. 'My goal was to establish Green Art Gallery as an international gallery. Previously, we dealt a lot with modern Arab art, whereas I relaunched the concept of our gallery so we could become much more contemporary and edgier. Now we work with artists from the Middle East, North Africa and Asia.

'Our curatorial programme is focused on artists

who research heavily. There has to be a strong idea behind their works. Before we take on any artist, we look at their works to see if it carries a significant message,' she explains.

Despite hailing from a family of gallerists, Atassi is quick to dismiss the notion that this has simplified her job as a gallery director. Passion and dedication, according to Atassi, are vital to making it in the fickle art world. 'If you can't transmit these elements to your audience and artists, you won't last that long. Working in a gallery needs to be more than a job. It should be your life.'

Describing herself as a workaholic, Atassi appears to be reaping the fruits of her labour. Green Art Gallery is busy gearing up for a packed year. 'March is an important period of the art calendar year, as we have Art Dubai happening then. Every gallery has their crème de la crème of shows then. One day prior to Art Dubai, we will be opening a two-person show featuring works by New York-based Iranian artists, Kamrooz Aram and Sehr Shah and curated by Murtaza Valli called Brute Ornaments.

'This time for Art Dubai, we have a larger booth compared to the last two years. Previously, we

had booths dedicated to solo presentations by artists. This year, we will be showcasing a group presentation by artists Kamrooz Aram, Sehr Shah, Jabar Al Adami and Shadi Habiballah. They will be producing works specifically for the fair,' she explains.

Atassi is very happy with her plans for the next six months. She is particularly ecstatic that it has been accepted to participate in Art Basel in June - an achievement in the art world which she describes as similar to 'winning the Oscars. The goal of any art gallery is to take part in Art Basel at some point.'

'We applied with a very strong project and were accepted. Art Basel is the most important platform in the world for emerging artists to be showcased from,' Atassi concludes beaming.

'Our curatorial programme is focused on artists who research heavily. There has to be a strong idea behind their works'

01. Green Art Gallery's curatorial programme is focused on artists who employ a research-based approach
02. In 2008, Yasmin Atassi, director of Green Art Gallery relaunched its concept to become more contemporary



Alia Swastika - Marker

The curator embraces the opportunity to promote art from her native Indonesia

Alia Swastika, born in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, began her career as a writer of arts and culture, and is now a curator. 'I have always loved the arts,' Swastika explains. 'I was regularly taken to the theatre, the cinema and to visit places of historical interest when I was a child, and when I was at high school, if it was boring, I'd skip lessons and disappear to the galleries across the road. As a result I fell in love with the arts and would try to go to as many exhibitions as I possibly could.'

Becoming a curator was not something Swastika planned. 'In Indonesia, there were no courses at university to study curating or art history. I wrote articles for exhibitions in magazines and newspapers, became associate editor for SURAT, a visual arts magazine published by Cemeti Arts Foundation, and then landed a job at Cemeti Art House as artistic manager', she smiles. Cemeti Art House is highly influential in actively promoting and stimulating Indonesia's contemporary art scene to a wider international platform and Swastika's role between 2004 and 2009 was to work with the artists, planning and curating exhibitions, write features about them and communicate to the public. Her move into full time curating was a gradual process.

Since 2008, she has been curating exhibitions for Ark Galerie in Jakarta. Recent shows include Wall Street Arts: a Jakarta Paris Graffiti Exhibition as well as solo exhibitions of works by Eko Nugroho, Wimo Ambala Bayang and Tintin Wulia.

Commissioned by Art Dubai to work on Marker - the curated section of 'concept stands' at the art fair - which this year turns its focus to the Indonesian arts scene, Swastika invited five Indonesian galleries to participate - Ark Galerie, Biasa ArtSpace, Galerie Canna, D'Gallerie and logia Contemporary. She selected galleries with an unusual approach to art and the creative process and she worked with the artists on the theme of Self/Faith. A theme chosen to reflect the new direction of young artists in Indonesia and their perception of what is happening in society today.

Curator of the upcoming Jogja Biennial and one of the artistic directors of the ninth Gwangju Biennial, Swastika explains that Indonesia is beginning to witness the growth of an extraordinarily dynamic arts scene, where art is perceived not only as an integral part of daily life, but as a tool to reflect society's moods. 'I think Indonesia is now ready for the global art scene which Dubai is already exposed to.

Here [in Dubai] people are able to appreciate different cultures and other societies' ways of thinking. Indonesia would benefit enormously from this - not only as a means to put it on the global art map, but also as a way to introduce it to new art forms and new ways of thinking.

'Exhibiting at Art Dubai offers Indonesian artists a connecting door', she concludes. 'They have the chance to be a part of this new era in the contemporary Muslim world, and it is the ideal opportunity for the art world at large to get to know our artists, as they begin to take to the international stage.'

'Exhibiting at Art Dubai offers Indonesian artists a connecting door as it is the ideal opportunity for the art world to get to know our artists'

01. Alia Swastika has been curating exhibitions for Ark Galerie in Jakarta
02. Swastika's curated piece at the Jogja Biennale 2011



Carbon 12

Iranian duo Kourosh Nouri and Nadine Knotzer act as mentors and as a link between artist and buyer

Kourosh Nouri and Nadine Knotzer, the dynamic directors of Carbon 12, describe with exuberance their passion for discovering emerging artists. 'We go to graduation shows in Europe and travel all around the Middle East,' Nouri explains. 'We look at portfolios, we talk to artists and see how serious they are. We look at their body of work. And after that it is left to instinct.'

Both Nouri, an Iranian, and Knotzer, of Austrian and Iranian descent, grew up immersed in art. After meeting five years ago in Austria, they moved to Dubai and opened Carbon 12 in 2008. 'One of our main responsibilities is to take care of our artists. As far as we're concerned a gallery has no reason to exist if it's not centred around an artist,' Nouri continues. 'There are no ground rules for forging relationships with artists. What's important is to create a unique bond. And not just with the artist, but the collector also. They are after all the people who support the gallery.'

It is Knotzer who tends to discover Carbon 12's new artists. 'When I see an artist's work which appeals to me, for whatever reason, then I start to do my research,' she says. 'I start to look for other artists who work from the same angle. I have to know different styles, different art movements. With contemporary art, your research never stops. I know what I don't want to look at, but you never stop learning what you do want to discover. If you want to be taken seriously as a gallery, you have to expose yourself to everything that's out there in the world of art. You have to know major artists, the history of art. I think the essence of contemporary art is to be open-minded. That's the key.'

Carbon 12 currently represents 22 artists both established and emerging and is one of the first truly international galleries in the region. Nouri and Knotzer believe that their role is to act as mentor to new artists and as a link between artist and buyer, whether it's a private collector, a museum, a patron or a dealer. Like the age-old chicken and egg scenario as to which comes first, the question here is who is more important to the gallery – the artist or the collector? Certainly, Nouri and Knotzer believe, that without the artist there is no reason for a gallery to exist.

'When we take on a new artist – an emerging artist,' Nouri says. 'We organise group shows for them over the first two years. We look at

how they are developing, how they sell, then we see if their work is evolving. If it's not we don't continue to represent them. We want to see them grow and move into our established artists' section. So some leave us, others join us. For many young artists, it's a steep learning curve – working with other artists. One of our responsibilities – or one of the responsibilities of the 21st century gallery is to take care of the artist. We become very connected with them. When they leave us we feel bereft.'

Equally important is the relationship between gallery and collector. 'The only way to support an artist is to buy from the gallery,' Nouri explains. 'We do press relations and catalogues, thus we are able to place the artist's work in museums and foundations.'

'We also document our artists' work in books and catalogues,' Knotzer adds. Constantly striving to increase the profile of their artists is one of their primary goals and for this reason they hold Art Dubai in high regard.

'It is an amazing art fair,' Knotzer enthuses. 'They do everything for us – they invite a group of about 60 museums to attend the fair, there is incredible press presence, it's the most fantastic way to increase exposure for our artists. From the VIP opening to the Collectors' Circle, everything is so well organised. There is a great rapport between all the galleries and the artists. It is like a celebration of our profession; it makes us feel acknowledged.'

Carbon 12 will have two booths at the fair. One will show the works of seven of their artists including the Iranian artist Sara Rahbar, who

with her family fled Iran during the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution at the start of the Iran-Iraq war. 'We are full of admiration for Sara,' Nouri says. 'She only became a professional artist four years ago. We discovered her works in 2007 and as soon as we opened Carbon 12, we started to work with her. Her work is already collected by the likes of Saatchi and the Pompidou Centre. She's an exceptional artist; close to prodigy.'

Rahbar's work is distinctive and instantly recognisable. At Art Dubai she will be exhibiting two pieces - War Series: An Armful of Freedom, A Fistful of Lies - which mimics stars from the American flag and incorporates blue wooden wheels, bullets, assorted patches and text and - Confessions of a Sinner: 10 Solitary - which has been created with obstetrical forceps, mannequin hands, industrial wooden foundry moulds and a various assortment of workmen's tools. Both pieces display Rahbar's signature style: strong narrative relating a distinctive story, and as with much of her work she hints at elements of her personal experiences.

'We are very privileged in our profession,' Nouri says, 'We represent a dream team of artists, but we don't have to limit ourselves. We have the opportunity to continue our research, to discover new artists and to surround ourselves with some of the finest talent on the planet.'

'We are very privileged in our profession...we have the opportunity to continue our research, to discover new artists and to surround ourselves with some of the finest talent on the planet'

01. Nadine Knotzer and Kourosh Nouri
02. Director of Carbon 12, Kourosh Nouri
03. Nadine Knotzer spends her time scouting different artists to exhibit



01



02



03

Rose Issa

While she continues to support Arab art in London, she is giving a platform to new voices in Dubai

In 1982, Rose Issa, a young mathematician-turned-journalist, was studying for her MA in History and Literature, when news broke that her home country of Lebanon had been invaded. With her love of the arts and knowledge of the media she hatched a plan to support her fellow compatriots through an event involving Arab film and art. 'I discovered that a lot of Europeans didn't know much about the Arab world or about the filmmakers and artists that I considered as our representatives', she explains. 'Within two weeks, I had organised the very first Arab Film Festival in Paris, with the theme of occupation and resistance. The aim was to shine a positive light on the Arab world.'

Three decades later, aged 62, Rose Issa is now considered a doyenne of Arab and Iranian art and film, responsible for introducing many of today's luminaries to Western audiences. She counts Iranian film director Abbas Kiarostami, Iranian businessman Farhad Moshiri and Algerian Rachid Koraichi, amongst some of her greatest supporters. With the mission to promote the work of artists, young and old, her criteria is simple: 'if their work is good and needs to be out there, my job is to make it happen; to be the catalyst.'

After founding the first film festival, which promoted Arab film, Issa went on to advise the Cannes Film Festival on Arab and Iranian film. As a result, festivals all over Europe started to seek her expertise, and over the course of the next 20 years she advised the London Film

Festival and festivals in both Rotterdam and Berlin. 'I always tried to promote visual art and film in Europe, and give another image of the Arab world or Iran, in a time where there were very few representations,' she says.

Going on to establish the Kufa Gallery in London with Iraqi architect Mohamed Makiya, Issa realised that artists would benefit more in public museums than private ones and went on to work freelance for a string of London-based institutions including the Zamana Gallery, the Barbican, the British Museum, and Leighton House Museum.

Finally, in 2008, Issa launched her eponymous art space, establishing a packed annual agenda with bi-monthly exhibitions, solo shows and group photography exhibitions, as well as additional seasonal shows. She has continued with her dedication to Middle Eastern art not only as a curator, but also as an author, editor and art critic, whilst her publishing arm, Beyond Art Productions, has produced many key texts on contemporary art and cinema from Iran and the Arab world.

This year's Art Dubai sees Issa represent the works of, amongst others, Iranian artist Hossein Valamanesh, who emigrated to Australia in 1973. Although his works have been included in most major public Australian art collections, this will be the first time they have been shown in the Middle East. Other featured artists include Iranian Farhad Ahrarnia who re-examines the idea of cultural constructs as

ideological 'stitch ups' through larger-format works which combine embroidery, digital photography, sewing needles, silver-bronze shovels and dustpans; Ayman Baalbaki, born in Lebanon in 1975, who produces works which register the impact of nearly 20 years of war, and British-Moroccan artist Hassan Hajjaj who successfully captures the atmosphere and upbeat rhythm of north African street iconography with great warmth and humour.

Issa's mission still remains as fervent as it was in the 80s: to promote the artist's voice rather than the official voice the media would like us to hear. 'I am not interested in something that is simply good or colourful, or abstract art. It's very valid, but life is short and you have to decide what you want to represent.'

'I am not interested in something that is simply good or colourful, or abstract art. It's very valid, but life is short and you have to decide what you want to represent'

01. The Rose Issa Project space, in a terraced house on Kensington High St in London
02. A bead and string installation by Iranian Taraneh Hemami from his 2008 series: 'Heroes'



Beatriz Milhazes

A unique collaboration with a Brazilian visual artist and Cartier results in a dynamic and glittering creation

Beatriz Milhazes' paintings are instantly recognisable from her vibrant and bold use of colour and patterns. A native of Rio de Janeiro, Milhazes' studio is adjacent to the city's botanical gardens, and this seems to have had a profound impact on her work with the prolific inclusion of flowers in all forms and patterns in her paintings.

For inspiration, Milhazes draws from both her Brazilian heritage and Western traditions, calling this approach 'culture eating culture'. Best known for the painting and collages she has experimented with since becoming an artist she also references Brazilian art and succeeds in creating work that is at once energetic and playful, geometric and organised.

Milhazes has always preferred working on several pieces at once, and rather than making preparatory sketches, she jumps straight to the creative process of working immediately and directly with her chosen media, which can include painting, collage, printmaking, window and set design, sculpture or installation, depending on the commission.

The artist first started collaborating with Cartier in 2009 when Fondation Cartier pour L'Art Contemporain held an exhibition of Milhazes' work from the previous decade. This was the start of a productive union, leading, in 2010, to Milhazes being commissioned by Cartier to create an artwork inspired by the jewellery house's collection of precious stones.

With her experience and knowledge of colour and using her motifs and designs from her collages and paintings as inspiration, Milhazes

imagined and devised an installation made up of suspended elements and decorative designs. With exquisite attention to detail, she created a mobile composed of 15 strands of jewellery, the longest of which measured almost two metres.

Teaming up with Cartier designers and technicians at Ateliers Cartier, she established something similar to an artist's residence programme, where she was able to apply Cartier's expertise to her artistic vision. She chose the best suited gems, materials and techniques, and with the same attention to detail used when choosing the colours for her painting palette, she selected diamonds, rubies, opals, topazes, sapphires, turquoises, as well as rosettes, floral and abstract ornaments, geometric forms, rhythmic motifs and arabesques and unexpected materials like resin and metal to compose a fantastic theatrical work called Aquarium.

Both a unique installation and a work of jewellery, Aquarium not only highlights the sensational creativity of Milhazes' works and the sheer breathtaking beauty of Cartier's jewels, but in effect gives them a magnificent new lease of life.

'The Brazilian artist's collaboration with Cartier produced a dynamic work of art inspired by the jewellery house's collection of precious stones'



