

PRESS RELEASE

Ayyam Gallery

Bougainvillea Center, 3rd floor

King Abdulaziz Road, Jeddah

Gallery Hours:

T: +966 12 613 4111

F: +966 12 613 2011

Sun-Thu: 10:00am-9:00pm

Sat: 5:00pm-9:00pm



Contemporary Arabia

Ayyam Gallery Jeddah

5 May - 7 July 2014

Opening reception: Monday, 5 May from 7:00 - 9:00pm

Ayyam Gallery Jeddah is pleased to present *Contemporary Arabia*, a multimedia exhibition featuring a selection of established and emerging Arab artists, including Samia Halaby, Tammam Azzam, and Shaweesh, to be held 5 May until 7 July 2014.

Contemporary Arabia will mark the first time a broad survey of Ayyam Gallery's stable of artists has been shown in the Kingdom. Representing several generations of painters and photographers from across the region, this forthcoming group show will highlight the myriad ways that today's painters and photographers are exploring the intricacies of modern life through such themes as the impact of globalisation, the presence of militarised conflicts, and the oversaturation of media that has redefined our everyday existence. Other points of departure include explorations of form, such as visceral uses of colour, symphonic brushwork, and ethereal compositions, as springboards for sensory associations.

In his ongoing *Dream* series, Syrian painter Safwan Dahoul unearths the psychology of solitude, depicting moments of crisis as a place of confinement, whether the death of a loved one, periods of estrangement, or the onset of political conflict. Through a recurring female protagonist whose Pharaonic eyes and calligraphic body situates her fragile state as of a phenomenon from time immemorial, Dahoul underscores the fragility of man amidst the variability of experiential realities.

In a playful body of photographs, Saudi artist Huda Beydoun explores the anonymity of public spaces and the interactions of random passersby as daily happenings unfold on city streets. During a trip to Morocco, Beydoun captured the scenes of her *Tagged and Documented* series by focusing on the routine action of urban settings while also framing the details of the different environs that define social organisation although outwardly banal. Adorning her subjects with Mickey Mouse heads in silhouette and matching attire, she adds a sense of whimsy with a nod to the reach of consumerist culture to what might otherwise constitute as rituals of the mundane.

Palestinian painter Oussama Diab utilises a conceptual approach to painting by appropriating the iconic markers and styles of seminal art movements to underscore the complexities of political conflict and exile. Ranging in neo-expressionist canvases employing symbolist imagery derived from popular culture to a more recent realist body of work that places images associated with violence in settings that are historically reserved for sanctified subjects, Diab locates the intersections of visual culture and politics, emphasising how imagery has become one of the most powerful forms of mediation.

The exhibition will also feature artists engaging regional traditions such as Syrian painter Mouteea Murad who reinterprets the aestheticised harmony of Islamic art and adheres to its bases in spirituality, mathematics, and the natural sciences. Through vivid, geometrically precise compositions, Murad articulates a sense of splendour in the world around him as confirmation of the sublime.

About Ayyam Gallery

Founded in Damascus in 2006, Ayyam Gallery is recognised as a leading cultural voice in the region, representing a roster of Middle Eastern artists with an international profile and museum presence. Spaces in Beirut, Dubai, Jeddah, and London have further succeeded in showcasing the work of Middle Eastern artists with the aim of educating a wider audience about the art of this significant region.

Exhibition Facts

Ayyam Gallery Jeddah

Opening Reception: Monday, 5 May from 7:00-9:00pm

Exhibition Dates: 5 May - 7 July 2014

Location: Bougainvillea Center Jeddah, 3rd floor

King Abdulaziz Road, next to Stars Avenue

Al-Zahra District, Jeddah

Tel: +966 12 613 4111

Email: jeddah@ayyamgallery.com

For press information and artwork images, please contact press@ayyamgallery.com or call +966 12 613 4111.