

# ELLE

culture

MARIANAH 11, 2019  
by Sama Alshaibi @ Galerie  
Esther Woerdehoff

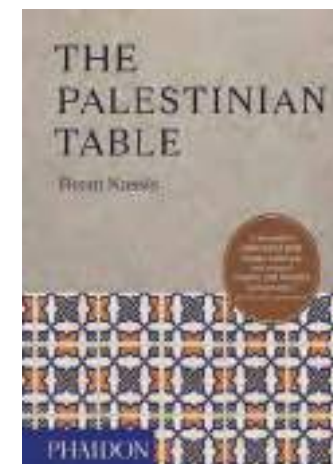
*Stories in Motion...*

MAKE SURE TO CATCH OUR EDIT OF THE SHOWS, PODCASTS,  
BOOKS AND ART FROM THE REGION



## READ

*As families and friends gather  
during Ramadan, we've  
handpicked a collection of books to  
celebrate culture, explore faith and  
foster a sense of shared harmony*



**DUBAI IS MY HOME**  
*by Marie-Jeanne  
Acquaviva*

A 'homemade,' female-driven project, this book brings together a diverse collection of compelling stories from workers to artists of all backgrounds, faiths, and origins in Dubai. Through personal anecdotes, the author offers a relatable voice that captures the vibrant, multicultural spirit of Dubai.

**THE PALESTINIAN TABLE**

*by Reem Kassis*  
Weaving in 150 delicious recipes inspired by three generations of family tradition, Reem Kassis brings joy to authentic modern Palestinian cuisine. The book, along with the recipes, features her personal stories, local traditions and historical context – giving us a seat in the homes of a Palestinian Table. It's the perfect book to inspire the family Iftar and suhoor menu.

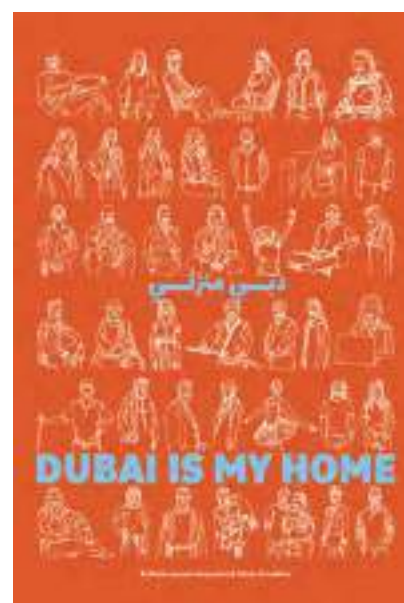


**BAHRAIN CRAFTS**  
*by Assouline*

With the aim of inspiring a new generation of artisans, Bahrain Crafts celebrates the rich diversity of the country's handicrafts and cultural heritage. This beautifully crafted book shines a light on Bahrain's unique handmade maritime traditions, offering a deep dive into the techniques and stories behind these timeless works of art.

**COSTUMES OF SAUDI ARABIA: A HERITAGE OF FASHION**

*by Assouline*  
This ultimate collectable captures the unique traditional fashions adopted in the regions across Saudi Arabia. The book reflects the overlap in style between different tribes and the diverse influences that affected the region's fashion. It's authored by Her Highness Princess Noura bint Faisal Al Saud and Siân Ticha, who journeyed across the Kingdom to bring this book to life.



COMPILED BY SWATJAIN





Arab artists representing the cultural diversity of the Middle East region are bringing new perspectives to *Art Paris 2025* this year. Capturing social and cultural shifts through art, photographs, installations, and experimental animations, the *resulting dialogue* is all set to stir up a *sensational* awakening, or rather, a *much-needed* re-awakening.

# Embracing Identity, Culture & Heritage

The 27th edition of Art Paris is set to return in April this year, celebrating modern and contemporary art, and attracting over 170 exhibitors from 25 countries. As one of the most highly anticipated art fairs in Europe, this edition brings with it a befitting spotlight on the conversations emerging from the Arab world. "In 2018, it was one of the first art fairs in Europe to host a platform dedicated to the Saudi art scene, in collaboration with the Misk Foundation," recalls Guillaume Piens, Director of Art Paris. "This year, we look forward to welcoming Lebanese participants such as Tanit and Saleh Barakat, as well as the Kuwait-based gallery Hunna Art, which exclusively showcases female talent from the region," he says. The program includes two main themes: Immortal: A Focus on Figurative Painting in France, curated by Amélie Adamo and Numa Hambursin, and Out of Bounds, curated by Simon Lamunière, featuring works that shed light on the intersection of culture, heritage, personal memory, and collective history.



Shown for the first time outside of Saudi Arabia, is the stunning installation 'Neuma: The Forgotten Ceremony' by Saudi-American artist Sarah Brahim and French artist, Ugo

BY ODEIA MATHEWS

Left: Galerie Tanit, Humming birds over my city 2022, Zena Assi

Right: Galerie Esther Woerdehoff, The Harvest 2019, Sama Alshaibi  
Right bottom: Galerie Esther Woerdehoff, Marjanah II-2019, Sama Alshaibi



Zena Assi

Schiavi. First unveiled in AIUla as part of the Villa Hegra prefiguration program it pays homage to the rituals of the pre-Islamic tribes, and is inspired by the AIUla's mythology, heritage, and archaeology. Another prominent feature is 'Out of Bounds' which presents a curated selection of 18 international artists, including female Arab artists that are daring to push the limits of understanding, offering new perspective on identity, power, and belonging. "Many artists will also be represented by European galleries, including Saudi artist Mohammad AlFarraj by Mennour, Lebanese artist Zena Assi by Tanit, and Iraqi-origin artist Sama Alshaibi by Esther Woerdehoff Gallery, whose work challenges stereotypes of Arab women," adds Piens. Bringing forward the importance of multi-ethnicity, cross-cultural influences, and cultural hybridization, this year's fair is an invitation for deeper reflection on cultural acceptance, and awareness.

With 'Out of Bounds' Simon Lamunière curates based on themes of origins, gender, history and geography. From Kuwait, artists Raya Kassisieh, Razan AlSarraf, and Nour Elbasuni explore social and cultural differences, while from Beirut, Zena Assi highlights shared human experiences. "Through painting, sculpture, animation, and installation, my work delves into themes of migration, war, gender, identity, and social change. By documenting and reflecting on cultural and social shifts in the Arab world - particularly in Beirut - while drawing from my own journey, I seek to foster cross-cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West, discussions among diverse audiences, and bridging cultural divides," she says.

Meanwhile, Iraqi-artist Sama Alshaibi uses photographs to drive her rather bold message forward. "I'm interested in the societal impact of unequal power relations between the West and the Middle East, and how that domination is articulated through photographs," she says. This collective representation of female Arab artists from the Middle East is sure to leave a lasting impact that begs for a reawakening of sensitivities which serve to foster peace, unity, and restoration.



Sama Alshaibi

Art Paris 2025 will be on view at the Grand Palais from April 3 - 6, 2025. For more info, visit [Artparis.com](http://Artparis.com)