MODES AND METHODS
AN EXHIBITION OF UAE ARTISTS May 06 - 07, 2014
معرض لفنانين من الإمارات العربية المتحدة ٦-٧ مايو، ٢٠١٤
FEATURED ARTISTS

Ebtisam Abdulaziz
Maitha Demithan
Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim
Layla Juma
Mohammed Kazem
Lateefa bint Maktoum
Khalid Mezaina
Abdul Qader Al Rais
Hassan Sharif
Noor Al Suwaidi
Barjeel Art Foundation is an independent, United Arab Emirates-based initiative established to manage, preserve and exhibit the personal art collection of Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi.

The foundation's guiding principle is to contribute to the intellectual development of the art scene in the Gulf region by building a prominent, publicly accessible art collection in the UAE. Part of this objective involves developing a public platform to foster critical dialogue around modern and contemporary art, with a focus on artists with Arab heritage internationally.

By hosting in-house exhibitions, lending artwork to international forums, producing print as well as online publications, and fashioning interactive public programmes, the Barjeel Art Foundation strives to serve as an informative resource for modern and contemporary art locally and on the global stage.

The Modes and Methods exhibition, organised by Barjeel Art Foundation in collaboration with Google House highlights local talent, showcasing creative work produced within the UAE. Google’s passion for supporting regional artists and the development of visual arts in the UAE served as a driving force behind integrating art into the Google House event.

Barjeel Art Foundation

The foundation’s guiding principle is to contribute to the intellectual development of the art scene in the Gulf region by building a prominent, publicly accessible art collection in the UAE. Part of this objective involves developing a public platform to foster critical dialogue around modern and contemporary art, with a focus on artists with Arab heritage internationally.

By hosting in-house exhibitions, lending artwork to international forums, producing print as well as online publications, and fashioning interactive public programmes, the Barjeel Art Foundation strives to serve as an informative resource for modern and contemporary art locally and on the global stage.

Google House

Google House is a two-day event that showcases first-hand how Google can help people in their everyday life - from preparing a meal or commuting to work, to planning a trip. It includes live demonstrations of products that provide users with essential information they need throughout the day, so they can focus on the things that really matter.
Methods of making in the field of art have traditionally been reflective of the era in which an artist was operating, and the tools/technology available for creative production within a given context. With advances in technology and the emergence of alternative fabrication methods and materials, the processes of art-making have begun to branch out and morph, catering to the individual visions of artists. At present, art makers have the option of delving into a number of different media and processes at once, creating composite approaches that are distinctive of their individual practice and oeuvre. Methods and procedures involved in making artifacts, undivided from a piece’s subject matter, reveal the preoccupations and objectives of their maker.

With an exceptionally rapid economic development and technological advancements that the United Arab Emirates has experienced since the 1970s, methods of making in the realm of art have visibly transformed and swiftly expanded into territories such as photography, scangraphy, video and performance, among numerous other previously untapped areas. Changes and developments have also found their way into traditional modes of art-making, such as painting and sculpture, highlighting a growing interest in abstraction and conceptual thought over naturalistic representation.

Alongside urban and technological developments, a transformation in culture, environment and lifestyle was occurring as well, often turning the once familiar into barely recognisable. Reflecting on the swift changes, creating social commentaries and attempting to reconcile tradition with modernity became some of the prevalent themes concerning contemporary artists of the region. For some, the past became a subject of nostalgia, and memories turned into material for documentation and preservation. Others pursued an approach that called for observation and critical response to their current living conditions, considering modernity in the context of Emirati history.

Artists featured in this show all use starkly different methods of production, ranging from painting, print-making and digital collage, to the realms of working with found objects, mathematical systems and performance. Considering the distinctive approaches developed by this group of artists towards creating a piece of work, the procedures and methods involved in the emergence of alternative fabrication methods and materials, the processes of art-making have begun to branch out and morph, catering to the individual visions of artists. At present, art makers have the option of delving into a number of different media and processes at once, creating composite approaches that are distinctive of their individual practice and oeuvre. Methods and procedures involved in making artifacts, undivided from a piece’s subject matter, reveal the preoccupations and objectives of their maker.
Ebtisam Abdulaziz

Method: System Art

Ebtisam Abdulaziz is a multi-disciplinary artist, well-known for her work in the realm of system art. Having pursued a degree in science and mathematics prior to her artistic career, Abdulaziz continues to be fascinated with numbers, codes, sequences and geometric forms.

In her work My Home, My Studio, the artist documents an experience of being driven from her house to her studio, using a coded system of numerical data. During a trip that is a nearly daily ritual in her experience as an artist, Abdulaziz observes and records the number-plates of cars driving in front. She then maps those numbers on a canvas, translating numerals into an organised layout of dominos.

Her work Autobiography makes use of found objects that the artist comes across during her daily journeys through the city. Abdulaziz collects items she finds, covers them with a film of paint, and arranges them carefully into glass cylinders, creating what seems to be a bottled memory of a moment or a journey.

ARTWORK: My Home My Studio
YEAR: 2010
MEDIUM: Acrylic on canvas
DIMENSIONS: 70 x 90 cm

ARTWORK: Autobiography
YEAR: 2012
MEDIUM: Mixed Media
DIMENSIONS: 60 x 25 x 25 cm

Image courtesy of The Third Line
Maitha Demithan is well known for her fascination with the human figure, and the female form in particular. The artist often uses a flat-bed scanner to scan parts of her subjects, followed by reconstructing the images digitally. Employing a process that is traditionally used to record and create copies of two-dimensional documents, Demithan is able to flatten out her subjects and reduce their three-dimensional form to a paper-thin surface.

This process reflects a long established approach to record-keeping, and treats people the same way a document would be treated. However, apart from being a mechanical method of recording information, this process allows for a personal/emotional statement to come through in the pose and gestures of each individual being scanned. It also allows for composite images, where a body part appears in an unnatural position, or is repeated several times, as is seen in her work *Flower in the Garden*.

Maitha Demithan is well known for her fascination with the human figure, and the female form in particular. The artist often uses a flat-bed scanner to scan parts of her subjects, followed by reconstructing the images digitally. Employing a process that is traditionally used to record and create copies of two-dimensional documents, Demithan is able to flatten out her subjects and reduce their three-dimensional form to a paper-thin surface.

This process reflects a long established approach to record-keeping, and treats people the same way a document would be treated. However, apart from being a mechanical method of recording information, this process allows for a personal/emotional statement to come through in the pose and gestures of each individual being scanned. It also allows for composite images, where a body part appears in an unnatural position, or is repeated several times, as is seen in her work *Flower in the Garden*.

Maitha Demithan is well known for her fascination with the human figure, and the female form in particular. The artist often uses a flat-bed scanner to scan parts of her subjects, followed by reconstructing the images digitally. Employing a process that is traditionally used to record and create copies of two-dimensional documents, Demithan is able to flatten out her subjects and reduce their three-dimensional form to a paper-thin surface.

This process reflects a long established approach to record-keeping, and treats people the same way a document would be treated. However, apart from being a mechanical method of recording information, this process allows for a personal/emotional statement to come through in the pose and gestures of each individual being scanned. It also allows for composite images, where a body part appears in an unnatural position, or is repeated several times, as is seen in her work *Flower in the Garden*.

**ARTWORK:** *Flower in the Garden*

**YEAR:** 2009

**MEDIUM:** Scanography on paper

**DIMENSIONS:** 179 x 143 cm

**ARTWORK:** *Sanawat (years)*

**YEAR:** 2007

**MEDIUM:** Scanography on paper

**DIMENSIONS:** 178 x 143 cm
Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim makes use of primitive shapes and forms in his work, creating objects that allude to a primordial age and an instinctive way of connecting elements to one another. He was born and grew up in the coastal area of Khorfakkan, and a lot of his inspiration comes from the visual nature of his environment.

In his sculptures entitled ‘Khorfakkan 4’, the artist makes use of papier-mâché as a medium, exploring organic ways of building and giving form to three dimensional objects, while retaining a visual link to ancient civilizations and primitive structures. The bright colours the artist selects for each of his pieces in this series place the works into a more current context, drawing relationships to contemporary pop culture.

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim

METHOD: PAPIER–MÂCHÉ

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim makes use of primitive shapes and forms in his work, creating objects that allude to a primordial age and an instinctive way of connecting elements to one another. He was born and grew up in the coastal area of Khorfakkan, and a lot of his inspiration comes from the visual nature of his environment.

In his sculptures entitled ‘Khorfakkan 4’, the artist makes use of papier-mâché as a medium, exploring organic ways of building and giving form to three dimensional objects, while retaining a visual link to ancient civilizations and primitive structures. The bright colours the artist selects for each of his pieces in this series place the works into a more current context, drawing relationships to contemporary pop culture.

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim

METHOD: PAPIER–MÂCHÉ

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim makes use of primitive shapes and forms in his work, creating objects that allude to a primordial age and an instinctive way of connecting elements to one another. He was born and grew up in the coastal area of Khorfakkan, and a lot of his inspiration comes from the visual nature of his environment.

In his sculptures entitled ‘Khorfakkan 4’, the artist makes use of papier-mâché as a medium, exploring organic ways of building and giving form to three dimensional objects, while retaining a visual link to ancient civilizations and primitive structures. The bright colours the artist selects for each of his pieces in this series place the works into a more current context, drawing relationships to contemporary pop culture.

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim

METHOD: PAPIER–MÂCHÉ

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim makes use of primitive shapes and forms in his work, creating objects that allude to a primordial age and an instinctive way of connecting elements to one another. He was born and grew up in the coastal area of Khorfakkan, and a lot of his inspiration comes from the visual nature of his environment.

In his sculptures entitled ‘Khorfakkan 4’, the artist makes use of papier-mâché as a medium, exploring organic ways of building and giving form to three dimensional objects, while retaining a visual link to ancient civilizations and primitive structures. The bright colours the artist selects for each of his pieces in this series place the works into a more current context, drawing relationships to contemporary pop culture.

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim

METHOD: PAPIER–MÂCHÉ

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim makes use of primitive shapes and forms in his work, creating objects that allude to a primordial age and an instinctive way of connecting elements to one another. He was born and grew up in the coastal area of Khorfakkan, and a lot of his inspiration comes from the visual nature of his environment.

In his sculptures entitled ‘Khorfakkan 4’, the artist makes use of papier-mâché as a medium, exploring organic ways of building and giving form to three dimensional objects, while retaining a visual link to ancient civilizations and primitive structures. The bright colours the artist selects for each of his pieces in this series place the works into a more current context, drawing relationships to contemporary pop culture.

Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim

METHOD: PAPIER–MÂCHÉ
Layla Juma is an interdisciplinary artist with a fascination in geometry. She often works with mathematically constructed compositions that explore ideas of rhythm, repetition and modularity. In her work Red Circle, Juma creates one hundred square panels that contain two-dimensional depictions of circles on their surfaces. The circles appear in different sizes and thicknesses, creating an illusion of depth and motion.

Historically, the circle has always been associated with notions of eternity, unity and protection. Having no sharp edges or a defined beginning or end, it is symbolic of all-inclusiveness and infinity. This geometric shape has also been closely linked with the spiritual realm throughout the world, symbolising divine perfection, and lying at the core of many spiritual practices, such as a whirling dervish's dance for instance. In some cultures it is believed to be an image of fertility, drawing associations to the womb and to a cycle of life.

ARTWORK: Red Circle
YEAR: 2004
MEDIUM: Mixed media on wood block
DIMENSIONS: 23 x 23 cm

Layla Juma is an interdisciplinary artist with a fascination in geometry. She often works with mathematically constructed compositions that explore ideas of rhythm, repetition and modularity. In her work Red Circle, Juma creates one hundred square panels that contain two-dimensional depictions of circles on their surfaces. The circles appear in different sizes and thicknesses, creating an illusion of depth and motion. Historically, the circle has always been associated with notions of eternity, unity and protection. Having no sharp edges or a defined beginning or end, it is symbolic of all-inclusiveness and infinity. This geometric shape has also been closely linked with the spiritual realm throughout the world, symbolising divine perfection, and lying at the core of many spiritual practices, such as a whirling dervish's dance for instance. In some cultures it is believed to be an image of fertility, drawing associations to the womb and to a cycle of life.
Mohammed Kazem is a conceptual artist with an extensive interest in data collection and documentation. He works in a variety of media, exploring starkly different ways of recording information and giving material form to his findings.

Kazem’s work suggests that the artist is well aware of his environment, and is keen on documenting the traces left on, as well as the changes occurring within a given physical context. He monitors his surroundings over prolonged periods of time, making his practice both time and space oriented.

In his work Scratch on Paper, Kazem scrapes the surface of his medium, in an attempt to incorporate sound, time and the body into a single piece of work. This work reflects an experience of being within a particular geographic environment, and noting elements like voices, shadows, light, as well as the subtle transformations that occur in the artist’s sonic and visual surroundings. Those experiences are then reduced to their bare essence and expressed on paper through an organic interaction between the artist and his medium.

Mohammed Kazem
METHOD: SCRATCHING

ARWORK: Scratch on Paper
YEAR: 2008
MEDIUM: Scratch and ink on paper
DIMENSIONS: 152 x 152 cm
Lateefa bint Maktoum

Method: digital collage

A witness to the enormous and rapid development that Dubai has been going through in the past several years, Lateefa bint Maktoum is fascinated by the changes and transformations she experiences in her day-to-day environment, ranging from its physical appearance to the rhythm and way of life within it. The artist often creates manipulated photographic compositions that juxtapose elements of the modern and the traditional, infusing her work with a sense of nostalgia.

In her work The Last Look, the artist depicts a figure with a suitcase, situated in a vast and indefinite landscape, seemingly leaving what was once familiar behind. In her words, she treats her photographs the same way she would treat a painting, gradually constructing them from smaller individual elements. As a result, she often photographs in several different locations, later combining the images into a digital collage.

ARTWORK: The Last Look
YEAR: 2008
MEDIUM: Archival print on paper
DIMENSIONS: 100 x 150 cm

Image courtesy of Tashkeel
Apart from being an artist, Khalid Mezaina is also an independent illustrator and graphic designer, with an educational background in the field of visual communication. Mezaina's unconventional work is inspired by pop culture, comic books and the rapid transformation he sees Dubai go through on a day-to-day basis. He draws influences from both western and Arab cultural icons and symbols, creating a fusion of references within his oeuvre.

In his work Tarboush Boy, the artist depicts a young person that appears to be himself, wearing a tarboush - a headdress that gained its popularity as a cultural icon through Egyptian cinematography. The boy is shown holding a long cane - a prop traditionally used by male dancers of the Gulf region during their performances. The inscription on his shirt, however, reads "Khalid Says Relax", alluding to the famous song performed by Frankie Goes to Hollywood - a musical band that originated in Liverpool in the 1980s.

APART FROM BEING AN ARTIST, KHALID MEZAINA IS ALSO AN INDEPENDENT ILLUSTRATOR AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER, WITH AN EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND IN THE FIELD OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION. MEZAINA'S UNCONVENTIONAL WORK IS INSPIRED BY POP CULTURE, COMIC BOOKS AND THE RAPID TRANSFORMATION HE SEES DUBAI GO THROUGH ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS. HE DRAWS INFLUENCES FROM BOTH WESTERN AND ARAB CULTURAL ICONS AND SYMBOLS, CREATING A FUSION OF REFERENCES WITHIN HIS OEUVE.

In his work Tarboush Boy, the artist depicts a young person that appears to be himself, wearing a tarboush - a headdress that gained its popularity as a cultural icon through Egyptian cinematography. The boy is shown holding a long cane - a prop traditionally used by male dancers of the Gulf region during their performances. The inscription on his shirt, however, reads "Khalid Says Relax", alluding to the famous song performed by Frankie Goes to Hollywood - a musical band that originated in Liverpool in the 1980s.

METHOD: SERIGRAPHY

DIMENSIONS: 69 x 49 cm
Abdul Qader Al Rais, one of the most celebrated artists in the United Arab Emirates, began his extensive career with an exploration of local scenery and architecture. He created naturalistic depictions of the region's landscapes and coastlines, working within the realm of realism and gaining recognition for a unique eye.

However, with the development of his practice as an artist, Al Rais’s approach gradually shifted into areas of calligraphy, geometry and abstraction. Floating squares of varying sizes became the artist’s signature style, and carried through the vast majority of his later works.

His Untitled piece from the year 2009 is an illustrative example of the artist’s abstract work, and demonstrates Al Rais’s complete break from representation, showcasing the stylistic approach he became so well known for.

Abdul Qader Al Rais, one of the most celebrated artists in the United Arab Emirates, began his extensive career with an exploration of local scenery and architecture. He created naturalistic depictions of the region's landscapes and coastlines, working within the realm of realism and gaining recognition for a unique eye.

However, with the development of his practice as an artist, Al Rais’s approach gradually shifted into areas of calligraphy, geometry and abstraction. Floating squares of varying sizes became the artist’s signature style, and carried through the vast majority of his later works.

His Untitled piece from the year 2009 is an illustrative example of the artist’s abstract work, and demonstrates Al Rais’s complete break from representation, showcasing the stylistic approach he became so well known for.
Hassan Sharif is widely recognised as the grandfather and pioneer of conceptual and experimental art in the UAE. Rather than working within a single discipline, his practice unites various media and approaches, such as performance, installation, photography, painting and drawing, among others.

Much of Hassan Sharif’s work explores notions of consumerism and the overwhelming preoccupation of societies with acquiring commercial goods. Through his experience of working on caricatures for local newspapers and magazines in the 1970s, the artist’s oeuvre gained a satirical stance, and in his own words, he “started to look at life with increasing skepticism, becoming more and more cynical by the day.” As a result, much of his work is a critical social commentary, drawing on issues of mass manufacturing, pandemic consumption, and lack of adequate judgement on the part of brainwashed consumers.
Noor Al Suwaidi explores the domains of abstraction and portraiture in her work as an artist. Rather than creating life-like representations of her subjects, she is more interested in considering the formal elements and colour relationships in her two-dimensional compositions.

The artist creates bold arrangements of irregularly shaped planes, infusing her work with visual tension through the juxtaposition of contrasting hues. Through prolonged observation, one can begin to trace the contours of human figures and faces in Al Suwaidi’s work that may appear non-figurative at first glance.

Her sculptural piece entitled The Head is a very rare example of the artist’s three-dimensional work. Similar to her approach in painting, the sculpture depicts an abstracted and distorted human face, exploring the formal elements of her subject, rather than their naturalistic appearance.

Noor Al Suwaidi
نور السويدي

METHODS: PAINTING, SCULPTURE
أساليب رسم ونحت

ARTWORK: Landscape of Colour (triptych)
YEAR: 2008
MEDIUM: Acrylic on canvas
DIMENSIONS: 91 x 61 cm (each panel)

ARTWORK: The Head
YEAR: 2003
MEDIUM: Plaster cast
DIMENSIONS: 42 x 19 x 25 cm
ORGANISED IN COLLABORATION WITH GOOGLE HOUSE

GOOGLE HOUSE

تم تنظيم هذا المعرض بالتعاون مع