

ARTS & CULTURE

September in the UAE

► From exploring Khaleeji identity to celebrating calligraphic script, the season kicks off with new shows across the Emirates



'The National Championship Team of Afghanistan', a textile installation by Hangama Amiri. Photo: Hangama Amiri / The Arts Club Dubai



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Art season comes back in full swing as we enter September, with Jameel Arts Centre and Tashkeel beginning their autumn programmes this month.

Jameel Arts Centre will present three new exhibitions: a group show featuring pieces from Art Jameel's collection, a solo presentation of works by Pacita Abad and an archival display that taps into Dubai's architectural history. Galleries will also be opening new exhibitions towards the third week of September, while The Arts Club Dubai will be running its summer exhibitions until October.

Farther north, Sharjah continues its third iteration of Sharjapan, which brings Japanese culture and the arts closer to the Gulf. The Sharjah Art Foundation's annual Vantage Point Sharjah photography exhibition opens for its ninth show on

September 18, while at the Sharjah Calligraphy Museum, calligrapher Mohammed Mandi will showcase his creations as part of the Luminous Letters exhibition.

In Abu Dhabi, Manarat Al Saadiyat has opened an exciting show brimming with young talent from the Gulf. Titled Khaleejiness, it features 12 photographers who reflect on Khaleeji identity, and its multiplicity and fluidity.

Here's what to add to your calendars.

Dubai

The Arts Club summer exhibitions

The Arts Club Dubai is currently presenting two shows as part of its summer programme: Geometric Bodies and Radical Threads.

The first is displayed on the club's first-floor landing and showcases pieces tied together by their experimentation with form, such as Shaikha Al Mazrou's material-bending sculptures and Rana Begum's geometric works made from reflectors. Other artists taking part in the show include Amba-Sayal Bennett, Dana Awartani, Maryam Hoseini, Fahd Burki and Kamrooz Aram.



The Arts Club Dubai is currently presenting two shows as part of its summer programme. Photo: The Arts Club Dubai / Ismail Noor

On the second and third floors are textile works as part of Radical Threads. These works reconsider preconceptions about decorative art by showcasing pieces that bear political and aesthetic statements.

This includes Jordan Nassar's Palestinian landscapes that have been hand-embroidered with patterns from Palestinian cross-stitch, and Afghan-Canadian artist Hangama Amiri's textile installations of Afghan women.

Non-members must make an appointment to see the show by emailing rsvp@theartsclub.ae.

Until Saturday, October 23; The Arts Club Dubai; theartsclub.ae

The Distance from Here

As part of its autumn programme, Jameel Arts Centre is staging a group show that includes works from the collection of Art Jameel, along with loans and new commissions.

The exhibition features 11 artists whose works investigate space and time through their personal experiences, with a particular focus on the body and how it carries language, movement and memory. A series of talks, workshops, tours and film screenings will take place alongside the show throughout its four-month run.

The Distance from Here will present works by Yto Barrada, Hrair Sarkissian, Shilpa Gupta, Sreshta Rit Premnath, Do Ho Suh, Anup Mathew Thomas, Mona Ayyash, Jason Dodge, Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, and Hicham Benohoud.

Wednesday, September 8 to Saturday, January 22; Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai; jameelartscentre.org

I Thought the Streets Were Paved with Gold



Pacita Abad's 'I Thought The Streets Were Paved With Gold', a 1991 trapunto painting from the 'Immigrant Experience' series. Photo: Art Jameel

The first exhibition of the late Filipina artist Pacita Abad in the Middle East and South Asia, I Thought the Streets Were Paved with Gold presents a number of the artist's major works, including her vibrant trapunto tapestries and many significant paintings.

Abad was born in the Philippines and moved to the US in her twenties, where she produced works reflecting on the immigrant experience in America, as well as social justice issues. During the span of her career, she had more than 40 solo shows and 50 group shows across the world. Abad died in 2004 at the age of 58.

From Wednesday, September 8 to Saturday, January 22; Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai; jameelartscentre.org

Growing Like A Tree: Static In The Air

Curated by photographer and filmmaker Sohrab Hura, Growing Like A Tree: Static In The Air is the second iteration of Ishara Art Foundation's previous exhibition.

Over the course of five days, from Saturday to Thursday, September 11 to 16, Hura will return to the foundation's space in Dubai and transform the show, rearranging and adding new works, while accompanied by a sound element. These live interventions can be witnessed by visitors in real-time, giving them a glimpse of exhibition-making as an unfixed form.

The initial show draws together various artists and photographers as a way to build a dialogue on themes of urbanism, collective memory, the environment and the archive. The latest iteration will include works by Aishwarya Arumbakkam, Bunu Dhungana, Farah Mulla, Jaisingh Nageswaran, Katrin Koenning, Kushal Ray, Nida Mehboob, Prantik Basu, Rahee Punyashloka, Raqs Media Collective, Reetu Sattar, Sarker Protick, Sathish Kumar, The Packet and Zainab Mufti.

Saturday, September 11 to Thursday, December 9; Ishara Art Foundation, Dubai; ishara.org

Cairo Illustrated: Stories from Heliopolis at Tashkeel

Tashkeel's autumn season kicks off with illustrator Nora Zeid's first solo exhibition. Her black-and-white works depict the dense cityscape of Cairo, highlighting the textures of its bustling streets and the patchwork of signage across its buildings.

"To walk in a busy street of Cairo is to have your senses saturated and overwhelmed ... Every inch of the city demands your constant, and undivided attention," the artist said. Zeid, who earned her degree at the American University of Sharjah, says her practice is fuelled by a desire to reconnect with her home city of Cairo. To create her works, she examines the connections between memory and place.

The illustrator has recently completed Tashkeel's Critical Practice Programme, where her research investigated regional perceptions and narratives, and how they might be upheld or challenged through illustration, design and psychology. Her style of using bold and dark lines enables her to strip down Cairo's features to specific and intimately observed forms.

Tuesday, September 14 to Saturday, October 23; Tashkeel, Dubai; tashkeel.org

Thanks a Million by Anthony Akinbola



Nigerian-American artist Anthony Akinbola, who will present his first solo at Carbon 12 in September. Photo: Carbon 12

Nigerian-American artist Anthony Akinbola presents textile paintings that examine the cultural and historical significance of the durag, a cloth cap typically used for African hair. Using the ready-made product as a symbol and a starting point, the artist examines its cultural associations, but also removes it from its quotidian use in order to see it as an object. On view at Carbon 12, the show draws its title from the artist's own sentiments following the turbulence of the past year.

Akinbola's textured canvases comprise durag fabric stretched and configured in various ways, at times interlocking various colours across a wooden panel. Depending on his configurations, the durags can appear as dripped paint. Other times, his compositions are quilt-like.

In part, his use of ready-mades also considers consumerism and commodification, particularly of African-American culture and the durag's role in shaping a certain image of blackness in the US.

Wednesday, September 22 to Thursday, November 4; Carbon 12, Dubai; carbon12.art

Off Centre / On Stage at Jameel Arts Centre



A 1977 photograph taken from the Dubai World Trade Centre. Photo: John R Harris Library

In this exhibition, visitors glimpse an earlier Dubai, before it became a global city of glitz and skyscrapers. Around 60 photographs will be on view, along with documentation from archives and newspapers collected by the show's curator Todd Reisz over the decades. Reisz has also recently edited [a book with Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi about Sharjah's architectural history](#).

To be shown for the first time are slides from 1976 to 1979, taken by architects Stephen Finch and Mark Harris during explorations of Dubai's construction sites. A preview text for the exhibition describes the images as "not commercial, documentary or art photography", but rather as "visual notes" taken by the architects.

"None of them was taken to be exhibited. Through the eyes of the viewer, their assembly offers a means to investigate the newly planned city," the statement continues.

Wednesday, September 29 to Saturday, February 19; Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai; jameelartscentre.org

Sharjah

Sharjapan 3 at Sharjah Art Foundation



Hasshoukan restaurant's Miyuki-no-ma, or Imperial room, in 1950, designed by architect Sutemi Horiguchi. Photo: Hasshoukan

Now in the third year of its four-year series, Sharjah Art Foundation's Sharjapan reflects on the role of architecture in shaping our daily lives.

Curated by Yuko Hasegawa, the latest iteration examines how the Japanese architectural tradition often considers the spiritual and environmental aspects of a structure, from its conceptualisation to its creation.

Drawing inspiration from the 13th-century poet Kamo no Chomei, the show includes sculptural models, multimedia installations, drawings and photographs of various architectural projects in Japan.

Until Friday, October 1; Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah; sharjahart.org

The Rain Forever Will be Made of Bullets



Sharjah Art Foundation's collection exhibition 'The Rain Forever Will be Made of Bullets' reflects on conflicts and wars. Photo: Sharjah Art Foundation / Danko Stjepanovic

Borrowing its title from a work by artist Simone Fattal, the exhibition is one of two group shows curated by Sharjah Art Foundation director Hoor Al Qasimi that brings together works from the foundation's collection.

The Rain Forever Will be Made of Bullets includes works by prominent figures in Arab art, including Fattal, Etel Adnan and Chaouki Choukini, and the highly regarded Pakistani artist Lala Rukh. It reflects on conflicts and wars that have affected the home countries of the artists and how these sociopolitical situations surface in the artworks.

Until Friday, October 1; Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah; sharjahart.org

When I Count, There Are Only You ...

The second group show curated by Al Qasimi takes a wider view, considering how various radical ideas and perspectives have affected humanity.

The show's title is drawn from a work by Farideh Lashai, which itself was inspired by Spanish painter Francisco Goya's *The Disasters of War*. Lashai's work, bearing the full title *But When I Look, There is Only a Shadow and When I Count There are Only You ...*, is a video installation in which the artist has modified an original print and animated the figures to create a disjointed, eerie and memorable moving image.

Other artists in the show include Prajakta Potnis, whose work *The Kitchen Debate* playfully explores political diplomacy in a staged scene set in a futuristic kitchen. There is also Rasheed Araeen's *I Love it, It Loves I* from 1979 to 1983, as well as works by Nari Ward, Iman Issa and Farhad Moshiri, Mandy El-Sayegh and Rabih Mroue.

Until Friday, October 1; Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah; sharjahart.org

Luminous Letters by Mohammed Mandi

An international name in calligraphy, Emirati artist and calligrapher Mohammed Mandi will present key works from his oeuvre at Sharjah Calligraphy Museum.

Mandi graduated from the Arabic Calligraphy Improvement School in Cairo in 1977 and continued to train in Turkey under notable Turkish calligrapher Hassan Chalabi. His works include calligraphy designs for the logos of UAE government ministries, as well as the passports of the UAE, Kuwait, Oman and Yemen. Mandi's designs have also been used for banknotes of the UAE and Bahrain, as well as Syrian pound notes.

Throughout his decades-long career, he has exhibited his work at commercial events and cultural spaces. In 2001, he presented a solo exhibition at the Institut du monde arabe in Paris.

Until Saturday, December 4; Sharjah Calligraphy Museum, Sharjah; sharjahmuseums.ae

Vantage Point Sharjah 9

The foundation's annual photography initiative returns for its ninth iteration. This year, Vantage Point Sharjah 9 is located in Al Hamriyah Studios, one of the foundation's off-site venues north of Ajman.

VPS9 will feature almost 200 images across the categories of conceptual, experimental, photojournalism, documentary and staged photography. The foundation received 500 applicants for its open call, announced in June, from which the jury selected 53 photographers from more than 30 countries around the world. For this iteration, the jury consisted of artists Ammar Al Attar, M'hammed Kilito, Sham Enbashi and Alia Al Shamsi.

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[UAE pavilion wins prestigious Golden Lion award at Venice Architecture Biennale](#)

Since its first presentation in 2013, the initiative has expanded its open call criteria geographically and thematically. In 2019, it began accepting applicants outside the GCC and allowed works across various themes and styles. In 2020, more than 30 photographers from 20 countries were included in the show.

Saturday, September 18 to Saturday, December 18; Al Hamriyah Studios; sharjahart.org

Abu Dhabi

Khaleejiness



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تذاكر معرض #الخليجية متوفرة الآن! احجزوا تذاكركم لحضور المعرض في #مناورة السعديات ابتداءً من 31 أغسطس ومشاهدة فعالياته الرائعة من ورش عمل وحوارات وأعمال فنية لأكثر من 10 فناناً خليجياً يعرضون مواضيع متنوعة بطابع خليجي معاصر.

سيرحب بكم المعرض يومياً من الساعة 10:00 صباحاً - 8:00 مساءً

لمزيد من التفاصيل وشراء التذاكر، زوروا الرابط في البايو.

Tickets are already on sale! Visit the #Khaleejiness exhibit at #ManaratAlSaadiyat starting 31 August for workshops, talks, and artwork by over 10 artists from around the region describing the contemporary khaleeji identity.

The exhibition will welcome you daily from 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Drop in on the link in bio for more details & to buy your ticket.

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Is there such a thing as a Khaleeji identity? A dozen young artists and photographers from the Gulf explore this question in a new show at Abu Dhabi's Manarat Al Saadiyat.

Held as a collaboration between MAS Photography Studio and Swalif Publishing House, the exhibition features photos, videos and installations that reflect on being Khaleeji, questioning whether it is a fixed state rooted in traditional markers or an ever-changing idea that changes with the times. Drawing from personal experiences, the show offers a complex portrait of a young generation navigating their multifaceted societies and new histories.

Participating artists include Khaldoun Khelaifi, Abdulaziz Abdullah Alhosni, Hajar AlMutairi, Hamad Al Fayhani, Ishaq Madan, Lama Al Jalal, Mahmood Al Zadjali, Shamsa Al Mansoori, Ali Al Hosani, Mariam AlKatheeri, Zayed Alhaddar and Tariq Al Hajri.

Until Thursday, February 10; Manarat Al Saadiyat Exhibition Hall A, Abu Dhabi; manaratsaadiyat.ae

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