

CONTEMPORARY ART MARKET IN BAHRAIN – 2014

A RESEARCH COMMISSIONED BY **THE CURATORS**



Balqees Fakhro, Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 140 cm, 2014

Executive Summary

- *Bahraini Contemporary Art transactions in 2014 are expected to amount to 3.3 million BHD*
- *18 International Artists, 148 Local Artists and 259 Market Potential Artists are identified*
- *Bahraini Contemporary Art by International Artists is, on average, twice as cheap as Qatar's Contemporary Art, leading to a regional arbitrage opportunity*
- *Bahrain is positioned in the Gulf as the centre for contemporary art made by regional artists*
- *Bahrain can bank on its long history of arts and crafts to differentiate itself from neighbours*
- *Market microstructure in Bahrain is specific in the way artists easily bypass galleries to reach collectors, leading to a pressure on supply*
- *We recommend four actions to enhance the market and stimulate price growth:*
 1. *Encourage private bodies and artists associations to control supply,*
 2. *Restrict access to public space to artists who already have an established commercial success,*
 3. *Encourage museums to acquire artworks on the high-end of the market to purge supply created by local initiatives that overstimulate production,*
 4. *Focus efforts on consumption rather than production*

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About TUTELA

TUTELA is a Brussels-based company devoted to alternative investment goods such as art or precious books. It marries traditional investment and valuation techniques with cutting-edge quantitative analysis. It is active in research, consulting, proprietary trading and brokerage of works of art.

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Foreword

Bahrain is a unique place for art and culture in the Gulf. Whereas most Gulf countries import massively European art to fill their museums with Western culture, Bahrain maintains a wise policy aimed at developing its own market, and own artists, enriched by thousands of years of culture and civilization unique to this archipelago. As such, the contemporary art market is the logical continuation of a long tradition of arts and crafts in a country that has embraced several generations of mixed populations. Because government intervention in the cultural sector is significant, but rightly limited to providing freedom of expression to artists as well as offering physical places for them to exhibit, the art scene is flourishing with diversity and originality. The many public spaces on the island are not devoted to the latest Western frenzy, or to French impressionist masters, but to the actual work of the Bahraini people, and the long, rich history of Bahrain, a precious jewel that no money can buy. Art is everywhere on the island, largely available and freely displayed outside on public walls, or exhibited in private homes. Bahraini people live and work in a culturally rich world, full of beauty and with a proud history.

Introduction

A race to invest in art and culture has been observed in the entire Middle Eastern region.

Bahrain' Ministry of Culture has equally turned its attention to this field. It is unsurprising that Bahrain wishes to participate to this development, responding to the growing competition against its neighbour countries.

Bahrain was the first country of the Gulf to establish painting classes in 1919, later followed by Kuwait. In the 1930s, theatre was booming and the first cinema opened in 1937. In the 1950s, an art movement emerged leading to the establishment of an art and literature club for professional and amateur artists, musicians and actors. In addition, the first art exhibition was organised in Bahrain in 1956 and included modern Arab paintings, expressionist, surrealist and abstract expressionism. These are still today popular genres among the local artists and remain illustrative of the Kingdom's artistic style.

The mid-20th century saw its first generation of painters emerge and the Bahrain Arts Society was founded in 1983, supported by Shaikh Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and following the request of 34 Bahraini artists. Nowadays, the Bahrain Arts Society accounts for 71 member artists.

The nineteenth century was a turning point for Bahrain. The Kingdom had not been particularly influenced by the outside world artistic era and so the main form of artistic expression were local crafts. In addition, aniconism played its part: this practice to avoid the depiction of living creatures or divine beings rather limited the subjects, and there are no existing records of painted pictures representing life in Bahrain in the nineteenth century. The only pictorial approaches found at the time were sketches and drawings of boats in view of their construction. Therefore, there were more practical and necessary illustrations than actually artistic creations representing sea scenes¹.

Bahrain and its people were first depicted by foreigners working at the time on the island. One of the most notable was Charles Belgrave (1894-1969), a successful English artist who painted daily life scenes while in Bahrain². He was also an advisor to the rulers of Bahrain from 1926 to 1957, serving under Shaikh Hamad Ibn Isa Khalifa (1872-1942) and later under Shaikh ibn Hamad Al Khalifa (1895-1961).

The first paintings by Bahraini artists were thought to be lacking of personal input and interpretation and rather simply reproducing what was observed. However, this

¹ *Abbas Al Mosawi and the Colours of Bahrain*, Denis O'Dwyer, 2010, p.18

² Denis O'Dwyer, p.21

is because by the end of the 1930s the approach was to paint exactly what one saw – from a photograph for instance³.

The first exhibition with Bahraini painters took place in 1956 at the Uruba Club and presented the pioneer generation of artists from the 1950s: the self-taught artists Karim Al Orrayed, Aziz Zubari, Rashid Al Oraifi, Nasser Al Yousef, Rashid Swar and the Sinni Brothers.

The mid-1970s have given today's leading painters who were among the first to be sent abroad to study. These included Abdulraheem Sharif who went to Paris; Khalil Hashimi who studied in Leningrad; Balqees Fakhro who went to San Francisco; Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa who studied in England; Ibrahim Busaad, Mahmoud Al Yamani and Mohammed Salih Al-Muqahwi who all went to Bagdad; Ahmed Hussain Al Oraifi and Abbas Al Mosawi who studied in Cairo.

Since the 1950s, archaeological excavations on the site of Qal'at al-Bahrain, the Bahrain Fort, have come to illustrate the ancient civilisation of Dilmun with burial mounds dating back to circa 2200 BCE⁴. The objects found in the excavations may be considered as the first artefacts from the Kingdom and are exhibited in a dedicated section of the Bahrain National Museum.

The styles observed in Bahraini art include abstract art, expressionist art, abstract expressionist art and calligraphic art. Considering the art style observed in the Gulf region, the art of Bahrain remains rather close to modern art movements while countries such as the United Arab Emirates with Dubai and Qatar appear to have a more Westernised contemporary approach to their artistic production. Calligraphic art remains however common and popular in the region.

Bahrain accounts for numerous cultural institutions supported by the Government. There is a real drive from the Ministry of Culture to develop the arts and culture at large as it is aware of the positive impact it has on the economy. The Government has been helping financially initiatives to build a strong cultural base and compete with its neighbour countries' positioning.

³ Denis O'Dwyer, p.20

⁴ 'Bahrain', Robert Kluijver, Gulf Art Guide, Arie Amaya-Akkermans, *Contemporary Visual Arts in the Arabian Peninsula*, <http://gulfartguide.com/essay/bahrain/>

Market size for Bahraini artists

Artists

The market for Bahraini artists can be split into three categories:

1. artists visible internationally,
2. artists visible locally,
3. artists/amateurs whose potential is promising but still untapped.

We enumerate 18 Bahraini artists who gained international visibility and regularly sell abroad, against 148 professional artists who exhibit locally very regularly but whose international recognition is not yet anchored, or limited to occasional exhibitions in neighbouring countries. We identify a further 259 artists who are creative professionals active in Bahrain but are not visual artists pursuing a professional career through galleries. In the same category, we classify gifted people who paint occasionally and sometimes participate to exhibitions. For clarity, we identify the 18 Bahraini artists active globally as “International Artists”, the 148 professional local artists as “Local Artists” and the 259 artists as “Market Potential”. Artists names are disclosed in the last section of this report.

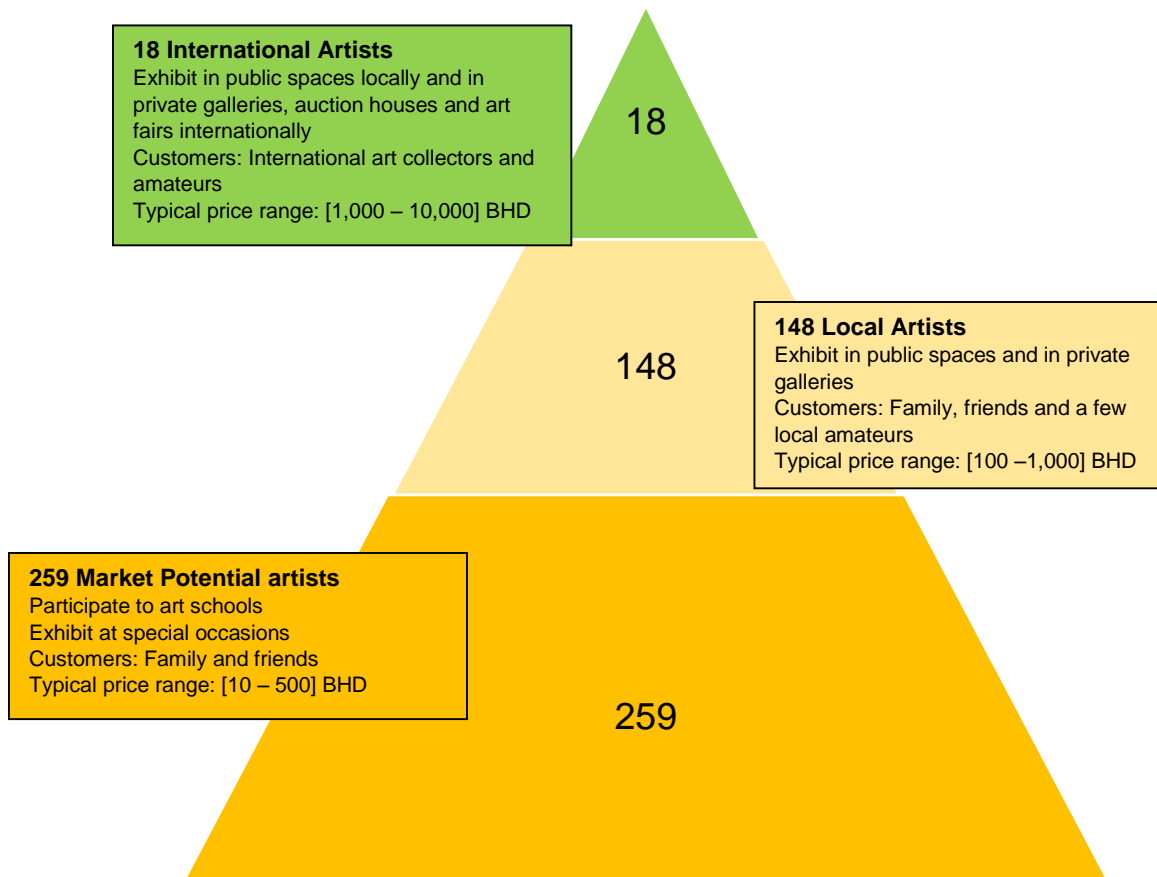


Figure 1. Hierarchy in the market: Bahraini contemporary artists

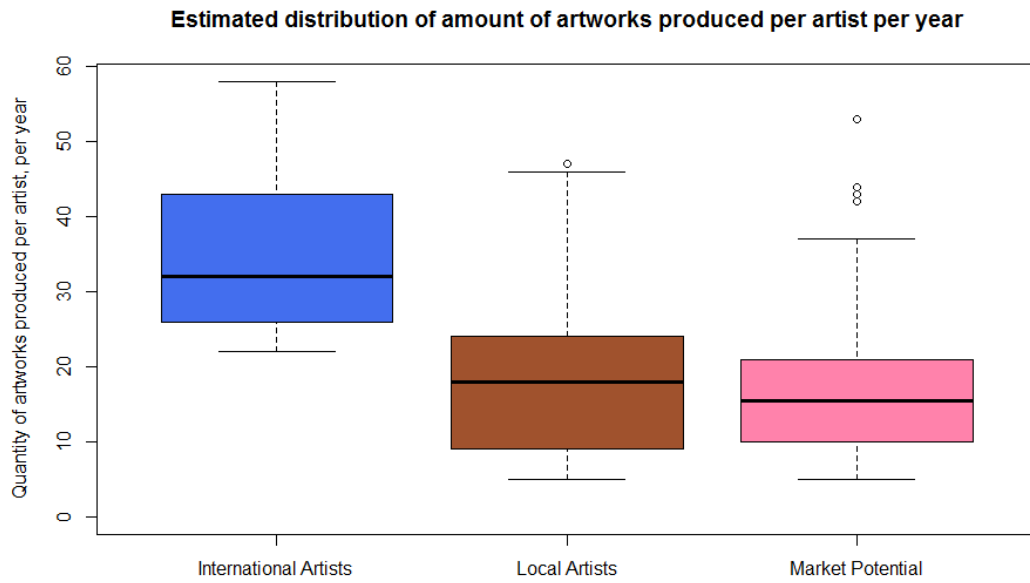


Figure 2. Distribution of amount of artworks produced per category of artists (Estimated).

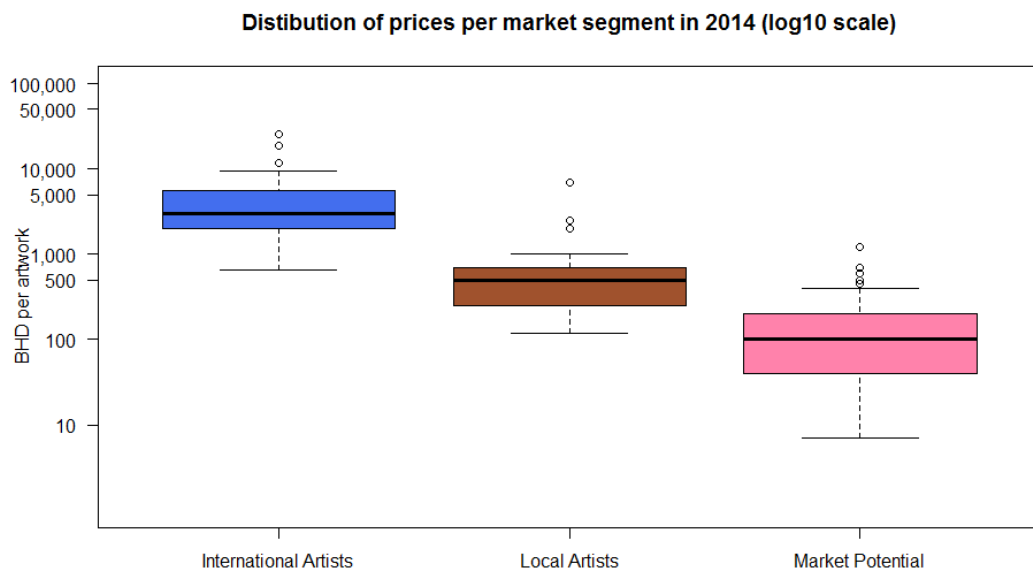


Figure 3. Distribution of prices per category of artists.

Production

International Artists have, on average, a higher production than the other sub-groups. It is estimated that they produce between 30 and 40 pieces per year, as compared to 10-20 pieces on average for Local Artists. However, the quantity produced does not define the artist category, as some international artists have a lower production than local artists.

Prices

International exposure has a significant impact on market value of professional artists. The median price of an artwork by a professional international Bahraini artist is 3,000 BHD. 75% of all artworks produced in Bahrain by art market professionals that are sold internationally sell for less 5,600 BHD. Among the few exceptions, artists like Shaikh Rashid Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Abdulla Al-Muharraqi or Abulrahim Sharif regularly sell well beyond 6,000 BHD, in the 10,000 BHD – 30,000 BHD range. Nevertheless, overall, very few artworks in the market sell for more than 10,000 BHD. The market for International Artists is supported by art collectors and connoisseurs, who acquire this art to complement or augment their collections of Middle-Eastern art, or by people who desire to acquire great contemporary art from the Middle-East at affordable prices, at least with respect to other players in the region (see section of Regional Positioning). Most of international artists are traded in the secondary market by art market professionals such as international galleries and auction houses, though liquidity can still prove an issue outside the Middle-East.

By contrast, Local Artists' price range is typically situated between 250 BHD and 700 BHD. Only the top 10% Local Artists sell above 2,000 BHD. The differential between average prices of Local Artists and average prices of International Artists is almost of a factor 10. The market for Local Artists is generally supported by fellow Bahrainis who buy local art for decoration purpose, or because they know directly the artist and his/her work. There is almost no secondary market for Local Artists.

Market Potential artists' prices can go anywhere between 10 BHD to 700 BHD but the bulk of them (75%) are capped at 200 BHD, with an average price of 100 BHD per artwork. Their market is made of family and friends who encourage artists to produce works of art. Prices higher than 500 BHD asked by certain artists reflect their willingness to penetrate the local market more seriously, but are unlikely to meet genuine demand at this level apart from their close relationships. Crossing the gap between being a Market Potential and a Local Artist means being adopted by a private gallery in a group or solo exhibition and having a clear understanding of the local demand for the artworks exhibited. Endorsement by the Bahrain Art Society is another type of formal recognition that the artist has reached a certain level of both quality and understanding of Bahrain's art market microstructure.

Liquidity

The art market in Bahrain suffers from a relatively high illiquidity. It is estimated that between 60% and 80% of artworks exhibited by Local Artists in galleries in Manama fail to find buyers. International Bahraini Artists exhibiting in Manama have a higher

liquidity, on average, more than 60% of artworks by International Artists sell at exhibitions, but this is still much lower than the average 85% in the region.

Market size

Because no statistics are readily available on the art market, a Monte Carlo simulation is performed to predict the range for the total volume of sales made by Bahraini artists, both locally and internationally. In 2014, the 18 International Artists are expected to sell for approximately 2,000,000 BHD. All 148 Local Artists that we identified should sell between 789,000 BHD and 966,000 BHD worth of artworks. The rest of sales by artists who are tagged as “Market Potential” is estimated to fetch between 236,000 BHD and 388,000 BHD. All in all, total turnover for Bahraini contemporary art in 2014 should lie between 3,000,000 BHD and 3,400,000 BHD.

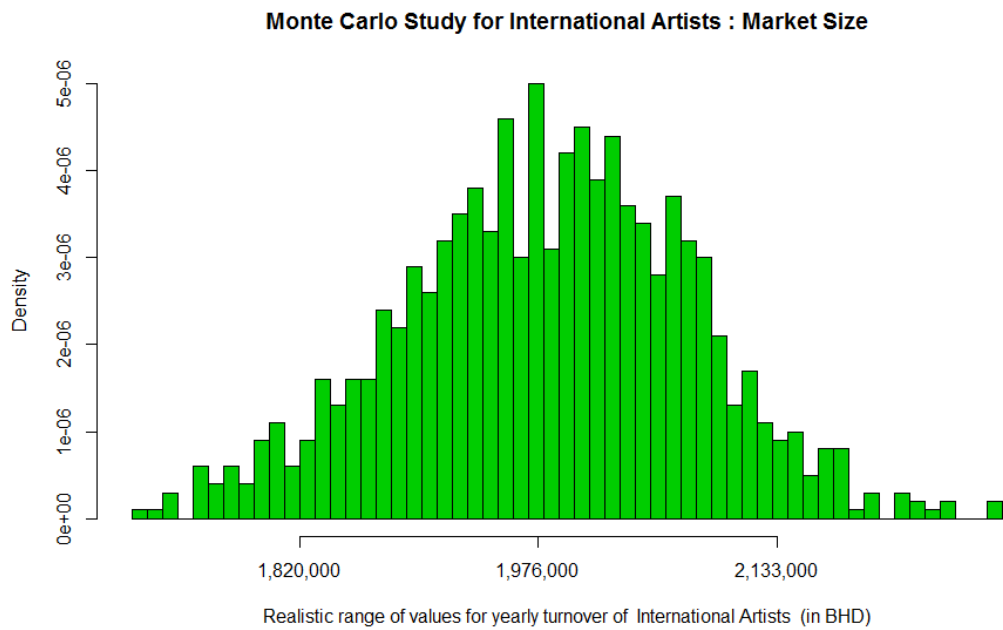


Figure 4. Histogram of results from a Monte Carlo Simulation to predict market size for International Bahraini Artists in 2014.

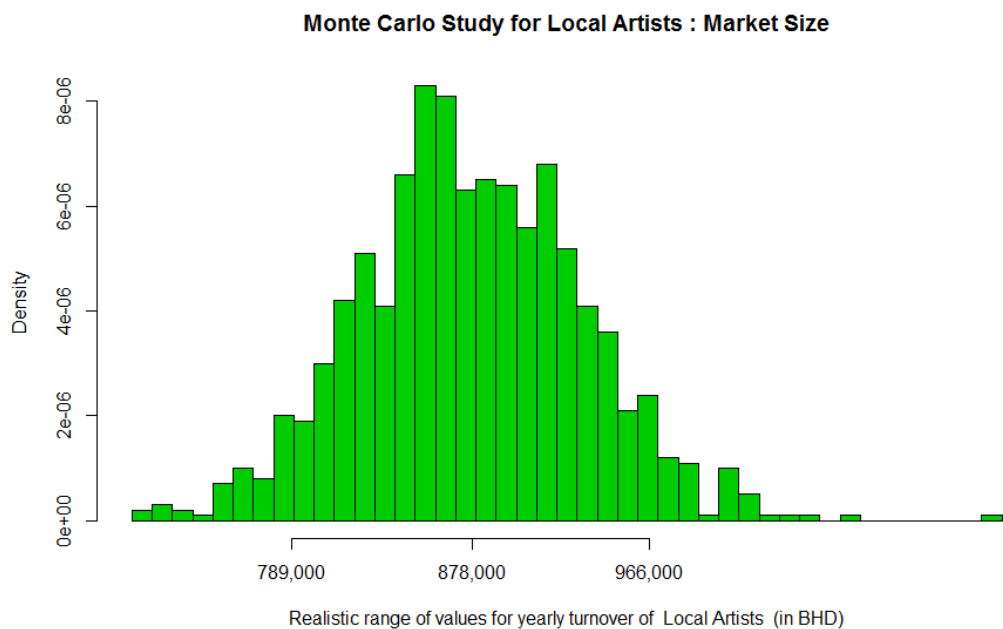


Figure 5. Histogram of results from a Monte Carlo Simulation to predict market size for Local Bahraini Artists in 2014.

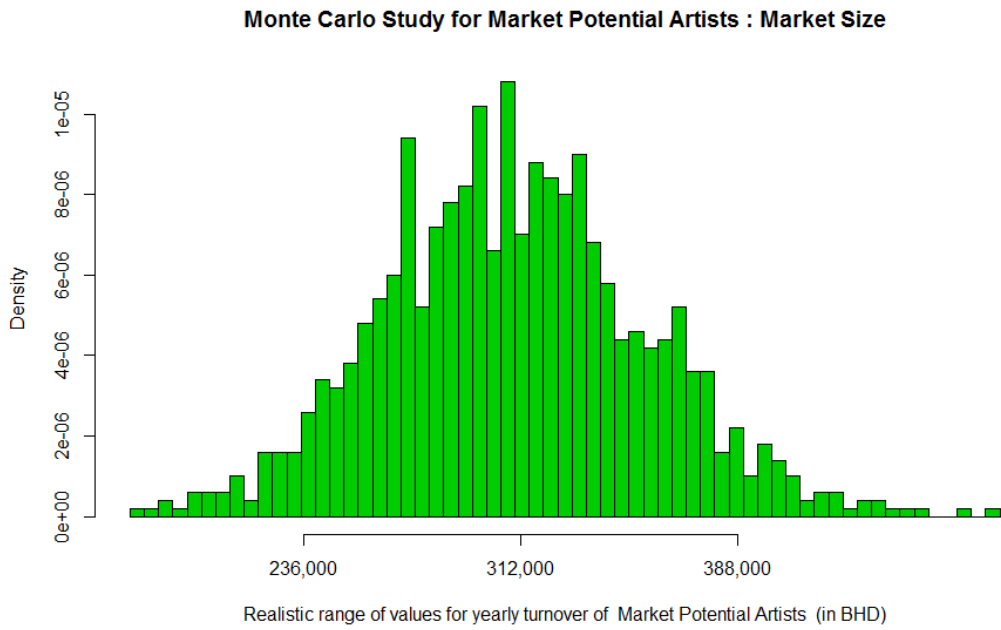


Figure 6. Histogram of results from a Monte Carlo Simulation to predict market size for Market Potential Bahraini Artists in 2014.

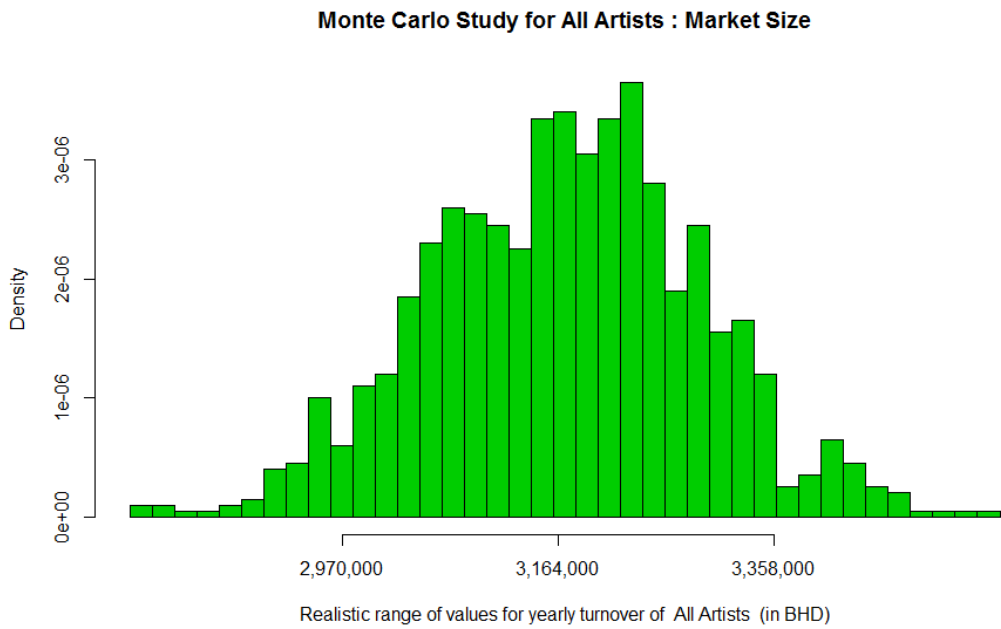


Figure 7. Histogram of results from a Monte Carlo Simulation to predict market size for All Bahraini Artists in 2014.

Artists representative of Bahraini contemporary art

In this section, we cover four International Artists who illustrate the diversity of genres in Bahrain: Shaikh Rashid Al Khalifa, Balqees Fakhro, Jamal Rahim and Abbas Al Mosawi. Two local artists are also presented so as to illustrate styles that are typically consumed by Bahrain collectors: Mariam Fakhro and Ali Hussain Mirza. Finally, a strong Market Potential, Shaimaa Murad, is introduced in order to visually represent this category. These artists have been selected to best reflect the wide range of styles and artistic levels in Bahrain, and are not the result of a ranking. Many other artists are worth of interest. For the complete list of all Bahraini artists, see last section of this report.

Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa – International Artist



Figure 8. *Incomprehensible Vision*, Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, 90cm x 90cm, oil on convex canvas, 2003.
Courtesy: Victoria Vivero

Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa was born in 1952 and belongs to the Kingdom of Bahrain's ruling family. Most commonly, such prominent families have demonstrated their support to art through patronage.

Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa was always interested in art, attending exhibitions and visiting artists from a very young age. In fact, it was at the age 14 that he made an oil painting from a picture of the Khamis mosque. Presented at the annual high school art exhibition, it received great attention from the late Amir, Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa who was with the Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa. They encouraged the young artist to pursue and develop his talent. In 1972 he was granted a scholarship to go to England to study art and design at the Brighton and Hastings Art College. This is where he studied methodically the European masters. During this period, he started working on an art inspired by realism and impressionism. However, he departed from the classical style to include his magical touch that has since been his landmark defining a unique style: a mix of realism and impressionism that much later evolved into individualism and

abstraction. Nevertheless, even today, this Bahraini master is still faithful to his figurative roots.

Back in Bahrain at the end of the 1970s, he was considered a leader in promoting art, and insisted in exhibiting to popular venues such as the Dilmun Hotel in Manama, then a cornerstone for the burgeoning world of Bahraini art market. His art at the time still contained many classical references to typical theme of the local art scene: desert landscapes. The artist managed to transform this very classic subject into a brand new style that has inspired many followers of the Bahraini school. To this day, Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa keeps on studying landscapes in his modern day creations, an important component of the artistic process that slowly emerged in the late 1970s for the artist. Craving to see the Bahraini art scene take off, he was a pioneer in establishing the Bahrain Arts Society to support the artists of the Kingdom back in 1983, of which he was the first President. He is today the Honorary President of the Bahrain Arts Society. Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa is still moved today by the contact with the public, the feedback it offers and the look of complete strangers on his art and style. The artist fully embraces the art world and its structure, and constantly looks for new eyes to gauge his success, a process that leads him to continuously improve his technique, his style, his reflexion on the world and the people.

Back in Bahrain in the 1980s, he first focused his art on landscape expressionist paintings to later turn his attention to figurative studies in rich and vibrant colours. The study of figures and portrait came as true revelation for the artist, who is now largely considered as a master of human anatomy. While he is mostly known for his paintings, Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa has also worked on designing manufactured products, murals and tapestries.⁵

Since the 1990s, he has been experiencing with three-dimensional art forms, expressing his abstract landscapes or figurative subjects either on plain, or rough textured surfaces, or even convex canvases. His abstract artworks reflect his past experience that he recalls and interprets spontaneously on chrome surfaces⁶.

In his latest artistic innovations, the artist sees in the convex canvases a way of adding an illusion of dimension to a commonly flat surface⁷. The artist genial touch that reminds the incredible innovation of Masters like Lucio Fontana is to use the canvas as three-dimensional object. In the late 1990s, Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa started bowing the canvas, stretching it by approximately 25 degrees. The method proves an incredible balance between simplicity and innovation: the result rendered has been internationally acclaimed. From master of the canvas, the artist has become a master of the Light, playing with the environment like no other, offering

⁵ 'The evolution of master artist Shaikh Rashid', by Roy Kietzman, in *Clientele*, Jan/Feb 2008, <http://bahrainguide.org/content/view/68/49/>

⁶ 'Reflection: Artist's Statement', Rashid Al Khalifa, January 2012, http://rashidalkhalifa.me/main/?page_id=467

⁷ 'The evolution of master artist Shaikh Rashid', by Roy Kietzman, in *Clientele*, Jan/Feb 2008, <http://bahrainguide.org/content/view/68/49/>

a true multi-dimensional experience to the viewer. “A new perspective” is what the artist modestly calls his creation. He has also recently been experiencing on aluminium and stainless still supports, creating a reflection of the onlooker in his artwork. The public thus becomes part of the actual artwork⁸ and painting acts as ‘a bridge between the viewer and the work of art’⁹. The Bahraini master said in a statement that he conveyed his feelings thought the colours on his forms and shapes coming from his various memories, being good ones or more painful, his success and disappointments¹⁰. The chrome surface allows for spontaneity in the painting process, inspired by women veils which partially mask aspects of society and life. As Sheikh Rashid bin Kalhifa Al Khalifa’s puts it: “we see fractions of ourselves - broken, buried, whole, empty, blurred and full – reminiscent of the paths we travelled to reach where we currently stand. Once the viewer is face to face with the artwork, it breaks down the barriers; it becomes a journeying encounter like a free-flowing sense of interaction - a glance of the real, a starting point, waiting to be followed through, allowing the viewer to do the completing, the reflection of self”¹¹. He thus offers an opportunity to the viewer to review his past and ‘reflect’ about where to go from there. His convex art form includes various materials such as cloth, wood and Japanese lacquer. Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa insists on the importance of interpretation when it comes to see the art style evolve¹². Nowadays, this over achieving artist, patron of the arts, and avid promoter of the Bahraini art scene is looking abroad to promote his works and the ones of his fellow Bahraini artists. The master endorses not only art and visual art, but encourages the entire Bahraini people to include creativity, imagination and thorough thinking into their own work environment.

⁸ ‘Interview with Rashid Al Khalifa’, Art Bahrain, 25th February 2014,

⁹ Ministry of Culture, 16th January-16th February 2013, p.19

¹⁰ ‘Reflection’ Artist’s Statement’, Rashid Al Khalifa, January 2012,
http://rashidalkhalifa.me/main/?page_id=467

¹¹ ‘Reflection’ Artist’s Statement’, Rashid Al Khalifa, January 2012,
http://rashidalkhalifa.me/main/?page_id=467

¹² ‘The evolution of master artist Shaikh Rashid’, by Roy Kietzman, in *Clientele*, Jan/Feb 2008,
<http://bahrainguide.org/content/view/68/49/>

Balqees Fakhro – International Artist



Figure 9. Balqees Fakhro, *Untitled*, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 140 cm, 2014. Courtesy: Balqees Fakhro

Balqees Fakhro was born in 1950 in Manama, Capital of the Kingdom of Bahrain. She graduated in Fine Arts and Art History from the University of San Francisco, USA in 1975.

Since 1976, she has been part of the annual national art exhibition, winning twice the Dana Award in 1999 and 2002. She is also a member of the Formative Art Society (in which she has played an active role in its development), the Artists Group of the Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council, as well as of The Bahrain Arts Society and the International Center for Women Artists.

Through her abstract paintings, Balqees Fakhro creates ‘memories of places’ on the theme of belonging and the basic form of living¹³. Playing on the contrast between lighter and darker patches, also known as *chiaroscuro*, she creates textures as well as dream-like effects through her monochromes as she believes it gives way to interpretation according to the viewer’s background¹⁴.

Working with mixed media, Balqees Fakhro creates her artworks, sometimes of great dimension, to relate the events observed on a local, regional and world scale. Such events have inspired artworks about refugee camps as well as her mother’s

¹³ Balqees Fakhro in ‘Moscow Celebrating Bahraini Art’, Asharq Al-Awsat, Source: <http://www.aawsat.net/2013/09/article55317795>

¹⁴ Balqees Fakhro, ‘My Painting Style’ artist statement

home country, Irak, both denouncing the artist' feeling of injustice. She believes in humanity bringing together the world as one along with modernism¹⁵.

In the early works, her paintings included distinguishable buildings and landscapes of Bahrain. These disappeared progressively to become real abstract depiction, while the main city structure remains visible. She prefers to focus on the essence and spirit behind the obvious buildings and leave only the main lines¹⁶. As the artist puts it: "The city becomes someplace, somewhere..."¹⁷, leaving the eye of the public to navigate from his/her own experience. As these abstract landscapes could be from anywhere, a large audience is able to approach, appreciate and interact with Balqees Fakhro's message.

Her distinctive use of a vivid range of colours includes greys, blues, reds and ochre. Her abstract style also comes from her interest in the great master of abstract expressionism Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko¹⁸. Balqees Fakhro's works show similarities with Rothko's ascendancy on the canvas with the large and defined colourful areas reverberating special lights and intensity, both inviting to deep contemplation.

Balqees Fakhro is considered as one of the most important woman artist in Bahrain and has been contributing to the promotion of the artistic scene of the Kingdom.

She is also known for having written several critics and analysis on art.

Her work is found on an international level in institutions such as The Bahrain National Museum, the Modern Art Museum of Jordan, The Kinda Foundation of Saudi Arabia, The Hamburg State House in Berlin, Germany, The Arabic Modern Art Museum in Doha, Qatar and the Dubai Financial Center.

Balqees Fakhro has an international presence seen for instance with the work *City* which was selected as the poster for the 19th Symposium at the Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies in Georgetown University in Washington DC. Furthermore, her works have been part of major exhibitions including in Dublin and in Berlin in 2005 and more recently in 2013 in Moscow with the Bahrain Art Exhibition and in Miami on the occasion of the International Sculpture Conference.

¹⁵ P.56, *Visible Differences*, 2014, Kingdom of Bahrain

¹⁶ 'The Essence of Abstraction', Bahrain Confidential, October 2003, http://www.artlounge08.com/pdf/press_oct08_06.pdf

¹⁷ Balqees Fakhro, by Gerhard Haupt and Pat Binder, June 2004, <http://universes-in-universe.org/eng/nafas/articles/2004/fakhro>

¹⁸ 'The Essence of Abstraction', Bahrain Confidential, October 2003, http://www.artlounge08.com/pdf/press_oct08_06.pdf

Jamal Rahim – International Artist



Figure 10. Om Kolthoum, Jamal Abdul-Rahim, acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 150 x 200 cm, 2008. Courtesy: Bonhams

Born in 1965 in Al-Muharraq, Jamal Abdul-Rahim is one of the most notable artists in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Jamal became particularly interested in art in 1984, upon his return from India where he had spent four years and studied engineering drawing. At first, Abdul-Rahim enjoyed drawing in his free time. However, it turned into a profession after his participation to an exhibition at the Al-Hala club in Al-Muharraq in 1987, where he met the renowned Bahraini artist Ibrahim Busaad. Ibrahim Busaad encouraged Jamal Abdul-Rahim to develop his skills and study drawing, anatomy and painting. Since then, he has become a true workaholic of the arts, always improving his style and technique through research and relentless work. Jamal Abdul-Rahim is an ethical, independent professional artist, a free-thinker who openly denounces what he calls “the art world mafia”.

Jamal Abdul-Rahim has been a member of The Bahrain Arts Society since 1988 as he was introduced with another famous Bahraini artist Abdel-Jabbar Ghadban.

Jamal Abdul-Rahim is a multidisciplinary artist as his works account for paintings, stone and bronzes sculptures, drawing, sketches and printmaking, having also made more than 30 *livres d’artistes*. He was awarded twice in 2005 for one these artistic books named *The Black*, where he gave his opinion about the invasion of Irak: he won the first prize in the 25th Mini Print International of Cadaquès in Spain and was

later granted a prize in the 3rd Muestra Print Internacional de Miniprint de Rosario in Argentina.

Jamal Abdul-Rahim tells in his work about the links between Man and the universe while approaching his point of view as a Bahraini Arab artist. He is also highly attached to his direct environment, city life, as well as to the sea as he grew up with it and was originally a fisherman.

Abdul-Rahim does not follow any particular art school and he qualifies his style as 'pure reality' while preferring to focus on the materials¹⁹. Furthermore, his work is inspired by his Arab origins, noticeably with the calligraphy and its artistic possibilities seen in his prints for instance.

Abdul-Rahim has also worked on figurative subjects such as the series on the famous Egyptian singer Om Kolthoum whom he celebrates in his prints, paintings on gold backgrounds or colourful almost abstract – going toward Pop Art style – portraits, along with pencil drawings. He extracts, to a certain extent, all the possibilities from a subject through various mediums that he masters while flooding them under a strong light. Other well-known and historical characters depicted with oil paintings include the Mona Lisa, Marilyn Monroe, the Statue of David, Hend Rostum, Asmahan or Abdul Haleem Hafez which he enhances with bright colours, sometimes adding symbols from the Arabic world. He justifies his choice of warm colours as he explains: "I apply warm colors as we are living in a hot climate with plenty of sunlight"²⁰. His work may sometimes have a Warholesque quality along with influences from Miro.

Abdul-Rahim is aware of the difficulty intrinsic to portrait painting and to overcome this he was found to favour bigger canvases in which he sees a certain help²¹.

His print-making are also noteworthy: he uses hand-made paper to create his prints which he embosses with Arabic calligraphy. He actually has in his studio one of the largest printmaking workshop in the Gulf.

Jamal Abdul-Rahim is one of the most recognised contemporary artists of Bahrain and has had numerous exhibitions in the Middle East as well as in Europe. He has an international positioning as his works have been presented at auction and are moreover found in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Jordan, the British Museum in London, and The Asian Civilisation Museum in Singapore among others.

¹⁹ 'Artists' refuge to abstractionism ends in stalemate', Al Arabiya News, 2nd June 2014, <http://enawafeth.alarabiya.net/content/artists%E2%80%99-refuge-abstractionism-ends-stalemate>

²⁰ 'Arab artists: Abdul Raheem is an artist of many faces', by Al Arabiya, 1st October 2012, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/01/241206.html>

²¹ 'Artists' refuge to abstractionism ends in stalemate', Al Arabiya News, 2nd June 2014, <http://enawafeth.alarabiya.net/content/artists%E2%80%99-refuge-abstractionism-ends-stalemate>

Abbas Al Mosawi – International Artist



Figure 11. *Market Scene*, Abbas Al Mosawi, acrylic on canvas, 2013. Courtesy: The Curators

Abbas Al-Mosawi was born in 1952 in Manama, in the Kingdom of Bahrain. He is a member of the Bahrain Arts Society.

In 1973, he attended the Teacher Training College and to overcome his shyness, he turned to his art classes in which he could affirm himself through his paintings. Already at home but still as a pastime, he was from a very young age copying pictures of artworks brought by his father and was also highly enjoying sketching his brothers and sisters. His father had also decorated the house with prints of famous masterpieces.

He learned how to paint with his mentor, Dr. Ahmed Baqer, a renowned Bahraini artist. When he moved to Cairo in 1975 to study art, he encountered and came to particularly appreciate the impressionist style of the Egyptian illustrator Sabri Ragheb, whom he considers to this day as 'the prince of painters'. It eventually paved the way for his own style depicting mainly the life in old Manama Souq and the villages around while including the modern civilisation in his landscapes. In fact, it was the Egyptian painter and teacher Hamad Nada who recommended to Abbas Al-Mosawi to draw his inspiration from his home country. Abbas Al-Mosawi bridges through his paintings the remains of the past and the modern life in Bahrain.

His keenness to shine through his art as well as his capacity to work for long hours on his paintings paid off early: in 1978, while he was still a student, he won the Dilmon Prize for art in Bahrain. The painting which granted him this prize is *Wedding Preparations* and is exhibited in the Bahrain National Museum.

It is with vivid colours that Abbas Al-Mosawi represents his hometown Manama, telling about the culture and unique atmosphere: "I look at shapes, faces, a rose,

length of fabric. It is out of these feelings that I have for these things that art emerges”²².

Abbas Al-Mosawi is considered as one of the key players in the development of Bahraini artistic scene. Before becoming a professional artist, he taught drawing, arts and crafts for seven years, teaching being a condition to be granted a scholarship from the Government. He is also an interior designer and a professional photographer. His photographs are actually preliminary works for his future paintings, to document the scenes he finds inspiration from: “I then use photos as a visual reference, not to copy from, rather as an extension of memory bank”²³.

He has always deliberately focused on one theme, the landscapes and cityscapes of Bahrain, thus constantly experiencing on variations on a theme in his own expressionistic way. In addition, there is a feeling of instantaneity and spontaneity rendered from the street scenes: Abbas Al-Mosawi also painted from live scenes, also known as *plein air* painting, when temperatures allowed it though. The hive of activity observed in Bahrain is particularly depicted in the dynamic souk paintings.

In terms of style, Abbas Al-Mosawi experienced with the movements of impressionism: going from pointillism in the 1970s, to more expressionist paintings in the 1980s and from the 1990s, his figures faded away and pure impressionist brush strokes were there to stay. Since 2000s, Abbas Al-Mosawi’ artworks have revealed a profound abstract attribute and the use of mixed media such as collages, though still reflecting Bahrain’s society with the incorporation of Arabic elements such as calligraphy, fabric patterns, traditional swords. Furthermore, his landscapes have become even more blurred under his brush while keeping its powerful use of intense colours.

Therefore, his style really evolved thanks to these variations and new interpretations of the unlimited subjects Bahrain has to offer. This practice tends to remind of Monet: he painted and sketched numerous times the same views such as the *Haystacks* series with 25 paintings made between 1890 and 1891 or the *Rouen Cathedral* series comprising more than 30 versions made between 1892 and 1893. Monet wanted to capture the different lights, the effect of seasons, different framings on the landscapes as Abbas Al-Mosawi has been capturing the constant changes of the Bahrain landscape and society. The various versions of the old Manama souk for instance offer a complete different insight in each painting depicting it, depending on the light, people, time and other natural factors.

Moreover, by moving away from figurative depictions of the Bahraini landscapes to more impressionistic and abstract styles, Abbas Al-Mosawi invites the viewer to look deeper and longer his environment as well as to become aware of its changes. He wants the public to experience and not simply see through his paintings²⁴.

²² Abbas Al-Mosawi, statement, <http://abbasalmosawi.info/abbas.php>

²³ Abbas Al-Mosawi, Colours of Bahrain, <http://www.coloursofbahrain.com/abbas-al-mosawi.asp>

²⁴ *Abbas Al-Mosawi and The Colours of Bahrain*, Denis O’Dwyer, Oriental Press, Bahrain, 2010, p.148

As he found a way to vanquish his shyness at first through art, it is only coherent that he prefers to paint instead of explaining and arguing with words²⁵. This is observed in the large number of works he produces, as he transposes his feelings onto the canvas: "I can create ten paintings at the same time. However, if you combine them all in a single framework, you will end with a solo piece of art"²⁶. Abbas Al-Mosawi gives great attention to the approachability and communicability of his art. His art is to be a language to be understood by ordinary people and in which they may see themselves²⁷.

The views of Bahrain seem to never vanish as Abbas Al-Mosawi still depicts them in his typical intense colours. Having always based his inspiration on his home country, his oeuvre may be considered as a historical record and testimony of the Kingdom of Bahrain's transformation throughout the years. Actually, Abbas Al-Mosawi considers the artist as "the symbol of his time", embodying the primary concerns, hopes and dreams²⁸. Therefore, his artworks are of undeniable importance for the cultural heritage of the island: it will provide to the future generations both artistic and visual insights into the history of their Kingdom.

His works are found in collections around the world, including in the Noor Al-Sharif Collection in Cairo, Egypt; in the Ragheb Alama Collection in Beirut, Liban; in several private collections in the United States and in the National Museum of Bahrain.

²⁵ *Abbas Al-Mosawi and The Colours of Bahrain*, Denis O'Dwyer, Oriental Press, Bahrain, 2010, p.230

²⁶ 'Arab artists: Abbas al Musawi reflects his relationship with his country on canvas', Al Arabiya, 11th October 2012, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/11/243107.html>

²⁷ *Abbas Al-Mosawi and The Colours of Bahrain*, Denis O'Dwyer, Oriental Press, Bahrain, 2010, p.155

²⁸ *Abbas Al-Mosawi*, *Colours of Bahrain*, <http://www.coloursofbahrain.com/abbas-al-mosawi.asp>

Mariam Fakhro – Local Artist



Figure 12. *Good Morning*, Mariam Fakhro, acrylic on canvas, 100x100cm, 2012. Courtesy: The Curators

Mariam Fakhro was born in 1952 in Manama, in the Kingdom of Bahrain. She has been a member of the Bahrain Arts Society since 1985. She has a bachelor in Business Administration from Beirut, Lebanon. Mariam Fakhro is known for her colourful paintings depicting her home country's unique sea landscapes and bright sun as well as her life as a woman in Bahrain.

Her figurative paintings embody the light of the Kingdom and invite to a state of contemplation. In fact, the artist prefers to leave the viewer to interpret the meaning behind her expressionist artworks, while she finds also other inspirations for her next creations²⁹. Mariam Fakhro expresses with her sensitivity and realism the places and people of Bahrain in oil and acrylic on canvas as well as in watercolours.

She has had several exhibitions locally and internationally, including in 2011 a solo exhibition at the Art Center in Bahrain. She was part of the 2010 exhibition of Bahraini women artists in Doha, and in 2006 her works were presented in Morocco at the Aseelah International Festival as well as at the UNESCO Arab Culture Festival in Paris. Mariam Fakhro's language is based on the infinite possibilities offered by colours. She expresses through her art her impression and feelings of her home country, depicting it in bright and vibrant colours: deep red and blue, shiny yellow reminding Paul Cézanne's characteristic still life style. Her remarkable attachment to colours is indeed striking from the first look: the eye of the onlooker is directly snatched by the appealing lights sent by the colours and progressively makes out the subtle lines of bodies or interiors.

The depictions of home interiors as well as her choice of patterns bring out Henri Matisse own scenes of interiors in his late works such as are his flower decoupage and collage in the forms used by Mariam Fakhro.

²⁹ Mariam Fakhro, 2011, printed by Arabian Printing & Publishing House W.L.L.

Through her stories about Bahrain and images of memories, the viewer goes back to his own simple life appreciations. Seaside subjects lean to abstract painting and their special almost rough textures recall the technique of palette knife painting.

The recurrent presence of doves in the works, symbol of peace and often complementing women subjects, further evokes Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau and again Henri Matisse.

Bahraini women are often the subjects of Mariam Fakhro's paintings, who chooses to portray them in their homes or set in the landscapes of the Kingdom. It emphasises their importance and position in the Bahraini society.

Mariam Fakhro's paintings are full of hope and offer peaceful and beautiful insights into what Bahrain has to offer.

Ali Hussain Mirza – Local Artist



Figure 13. *My mum kills the fish*, Ali Hussain Mirza, 2012. Courtesy: The Curators

Ali Hussain Mirza was born in Bahrain's capital Manama in 1987. This talented artist and theatre designer studied Dramatic Arts at the Higher Institute for Dramatic Arts in Kuwait. He has a very distinct style reminding of Picasso's cubist period. This is particularly visible in the representation of his characters' faces: they appear full-faced while some lines could be from their profile. The faces depicted present rather sad and melancholic expressions and their caricatured qualities give a certain comic book effect.

For Alwan 338 in 2013, Ali Hussain Mirza created a mural with his characteristic figures colonising a wall of the Aliya district. Using mainly black and white, he seems to denounce in this work the predefined lives and routine designed for men in today's society, limiting their wellbeing and freedom. Ali Hussain Mirza encourages them to break free from these constraints and embrace their lives as they want.

His background in dramatic arts is seen in the way he stages his characters as if depicting a scene right out from a play, from the setting of the scene to the expression of the actors. His palette of colours tend to revolve around neutral shades such as greys and beige on which he may add some patches of blue, bright orange or green as if to add to some ray of lights.

Ali Hussain Mirza has had numerous exhibitions, including at Alwan 338 and the Nanamatna exhibition in Al Riwaq Art Space, at the Bahrain Annual Art Fair and at the First Gulf Festival for Contemporary Arts in Riyadh. In 2013, he was part of the exhibition *Displacement* at the well-known Albareh Gallery in Bahrain and won twice the first place award for best costume and best décor at the Al Sawari Theatre Festival for Youth.

Shaima Murad – Market Potential



Figure 14. *Horse*, Shaima Murad, neon paint on canvas, 2013. Courtesy: The Curators

Shaima Murad was born in Muharraq. She studied art at the University of Bahrain, more specifically modern sculpture, ceramics, drawing and music. She finds her inspiration in her dreams. The artist insists on the limits of reality and intends to make people see and feel through her art.

Shaima Murad likes to follow various styles and does not limit herself to one subject. She remains receptive to the inspirations she may find in her surroundings. However, she particularly enjoys working on horses and doves. The style of Shaima Murad may be defined as Post-Impressionistic with modern influences. Her particular appreciation of Vincent Van Gogh' *Starry Night* (1889) further confirms these styles. The swirls observed in Van Gogh' artworks, which touch Shaima Murad above all, are found reinterpreted in her work. This influence may be depicted in works with beads as well as in the horses' manes, as sinuous lines run deliberately around the canvas while materializing at the same time the subjects. With a view to make unique artworks, Shaima Murad has been experiencing with neon painting following her encounter with the medium in a game room for children. She noticed how distinctively children' attention was captured and saw an opportunity to further attract the viewer's interest and eye in her own works. Considering her neon paintings of horses, the artist offers an interpretation of the dear animal far from reality thanks to a focus on the colour bringing out its beauty. Neon painting artworks also offer the exceptional attribute of being two paintings in one: UV lights set on the painting suggest another vision of the work as well as producing a large palette of colours. The artist thus creates two very different atmospheres for the viewer to appreciate.

Further pursuing her unique approach, Shaima Murad also works with beads which allow her to master another technique and create with diverse textures while keeping the power of colours central. While Shaima Murad has been practicing art for ten years, she is aware of the importance to constantly evolve and renew her approach when it comes to her art, especially through her choices of colours as well as subjects.

Key organizations

The Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture of Bahrain was established in 2008 and is in charge of overseeing culture and tourism in Bahrain. Sheikha Mai Bint Mohammed Al Khalifa is the current Minister of Information and Culture.

The Ministry of Culture has been demonstrating its keenness to promote culture and to link it to the Bahraini economy so as to diversify its economy sources and attain sustainability through productivity.

It aims to protect, promote and contribute to the development of the national Bahraini culture though encouraging artistic creativity and innovation in the Arts. It sees in culture an opportunity to bring together the Kingdom with the universal language of art and ensure the Bahraini heritage and traditions to linger.

The Ministry of Culture is the initiator of many influential events in the Bahraini art scene such as the Annual Bahrain Art Exhibition launched in 1972 and is still under the patronage of Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, or the Ta'a Al Shabab to encourage and interest the young people in art.

Through its support of various cultural initiatives, The Ministry of Culture intends to allow artists and authors to focus fully on their creations and insists on its openness to the world's cultures and arts. It believes in intercultural exchanges and in its undeniable impact on the promotion of Bahraini art on a local, regional and international scale.³⁰

The Art Centre & The Cultural Hall

Both the Art Centre (opened in 1992) and The Cultural Hall (opened in 2004) are adjacent to the Bahrain National Museum. They host temporary exhibitions of local, regional and international art, including with the Bahrain Arts Society, as well as concerts.

Also close by is the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage recently opened in 2012 as part of the Kingdom of Bahrain' nomination as Capital of Arab Culture the same year.

Bahrain National Museum

Inaugurated in 1988 by the late Emir Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Bahrain National Museum is today the eldest in the Gulf as it was one of the first museums in the region. It was also the first among its neighbours to house artefacts discovered locally. Located right by the sea, it houses the numerous discovered archaeological artefacts found in different sites of the Kingdom, covering Bahrain's 6000 years of history. Local costumes and clothing are also featured along with traditional crafts.

³⁰ These information were found on: 'Strategic culture in Kingdom of Bahrain', <http://www.moc.gov.bh/en/ministry/StrategiccultureinKingdomofBahrain/>



The permanent collection of contemporary art and sculpture comprises works by the Bahraini masters and temporary exhibitions are also organised.

Bait al Quran

Opened in 1990, it has one of the most important collections of Qur'an manuscripts in the world. Dr. Abdul Latif Jassim Kanoo is the mastermind behind this impressive project. It also hosts temporary exhibitions: the British Council had organised in Bait al Quran the travelling photo exhibition "My Father's House" in 2009.

Bin Matar House, Muharraq

The Bin Matar House was built in 1905 by the Bin Matar family who were important members of the Kingdom's pearl merchants. Renovated in 2009, the space has been converted and provides remarkable exhibition spaces and regularly presents contemporary works by Bahraini and Arabic artists. A section devoted to the history of pearls and pearl fishing was also created. It is run by the Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed al Khalifa Centre and Research, directly linked to the Minister of Culture Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa.

Qal'at al-Bahrain - The Bahrain Fort Museum

Opened in 2008, Qal'at al Bahrain (Bahrain Fort) was built on the Portuguese archaeological fort site dating back to the 16th century and has the UNESCO World Heritage status since 2005. The Bahrain fort Museum presents archaeological findings from Bahrain's different past civilisations.

500 artefacts are exhibited and trace back the rich history of the site and its excavations. Qal'al al Bahrain was the former capital of the ancient civilisation of Dilmun and one of the most archaeological locations in the Arabian Gulf.

Rashid Al Oraifi Museum

The Rashid Al Oraifi Museum presents artworks inspired by the Dilmun civilisation by Bahraini artist Rashid Al Oraifi in the Al Oraifi's private residence.

Centre for Photographic Arts (CPA), Jamsheer House

The Centre for Photographic Arts (CPA), established in the Jamsheer House – the Bahraini-French Cultural Centre in Muharraq, was inaugurated in January 2014. Financed by the Ministry of Culture of Bahrain, the project is supported by the French Embassy, the Alliance Française and the Shaikh Ibrahim Centre.

It brings together French and Bahraini photographers from the emerging scene, hosting regular exhibitions, projections, conferences and artist residencies. The common objective is to promote these young artists throughout the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Gulf.

The artists in residency see their works exhibited in the National Museum of Bahrain, which comprises a remarkable archaeological and ethnographic collection. They therefore display contemporary art next to pieces from the past. Photographic classes are also organised, as well as initiation courses.

As part of the artist residency program, CPA welcomes international photographers to offer training and insights for the regional emerging and professional photographers.

Isa Cultural Centre

Opened in 2008, this centre is directly linked to the Royal Court. It was named after the late Shaikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa. It aims to spread locally and internationally the Bahraini culture. It houses a library, a historical documents centre, exhibitions, and conference and seminar ballrooms and is the headquarter of the secretariat General of Isa Award for Service to Humanity.

Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Centre for Culture & Research

Founded by Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa in 2002, the Centre was established in memory of Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa who was determined to develop the fields of education, culture and social sciences.

The Centre was created as a platform to install exchanges around philosophy, literature, poetry, culture and the arts. It hosts lectures, exhibitions and recitals by famous writers, philosophers and artists from around the world.

It has also a program of conservation of Bahraini cultural heritage and has restored several tradition Bahraini houses such as the Bin Matar House.

Al Riwaq Art Space

Founded in 1998, it is a leading non-profit art space which was initiated by the Iraqi art patron Bayan Al-Barak Kanoo, known for her support in Bahraini contemporary art and design. It was the first art gallery to open in Bahrain.

Opened at first as a commercial exhibition space for local and regional artists, it changed its status in 2007 and reviewed its missions to become a non-profit organisation, always aiming to bring art to the local community. It is today a major local art hub for the Bahraini people and continues to pursue its encouragement and support in creative thinking of the emerging artistic scene.

The Space showcases cutting edge artistic works by local and international artists, while covering several disciplines with programs comprising exhibitions, workshops, lectures, seminars, charity events, book signings, film screenings, artist residency programs and an alternative art school.

Al Riwaq Art Space plays a key role in training and developing the local artistic talents, besides bringing together Bahraini and international artists in their program, thus enabling collaboration and exchange. Bayab Al-Barak Kanoo actually underlines that the mission of Al Riwaq is to respect culture while changing the current state of mind and invite to question art³¹.

³¹ 'Al Riwaq Art Space seeks to change how Bahrainis approach art [Wamda TV]', Wamda, January 8, 2014, <http://www.wamda.com/2014/01/al-riwaq-art-space-seeks-to-change-how-bahrainis-approach-art-wamda-tv>



During the time of the renovation of its building in 2004, it organised the First Bahrain & Al Riwaq Art project. It consisted in inviting each month a young artist to paint on the outdoor canvas covering the construction site.

The commitment of Al Riwaq to promote Bahraini artists and culture is observed with Market 338 which gathers young local artists exhibited in the Adliya district. The initiative is supported by the Bahrain Economic Development Board and the British Council.

In 2012 and 2013, the Space organised Market 338, an open space dedicated to the street art, inviting artists during the month of art festival to paint murals around the Adliya district.

La Fontaine Centre of Contemporary Art, Manama

La Fontaine Centre is considered as the first private museum in Bahrain. It organises exhibitions with international artists along with regional artists, and include artworks ranging from the traditional and ancient to modern and contemporary. The property belongs to the Alireza family and was fully restored and renovated by the French artist Jean-Marc Sinan.

‘Paste it’ – Local graffiti with Leon D

The street art scene in Bahrain is on the rise with initiatives such as ‘Paste it’ by the local graffiti artist Leon D. The project encouraged artist to set wheat pastes creations around the city so as to uphold artistic expression and make it visible, being in public areas. Leon D is himself known for his wheat paste technique, and also founded the Bahrain street art group ‘Mythicolo-G’³².

SPOTLIGHT ON: LEON D.

Leon D., whose real name is Mohamed Alaabar, is a self-taught Bahraini artist specialised in pop and surreal art with an Arabic touch. His work is influenced by comics and religious concepts, along with science and avant-garde music. His art career began with various approaches to art coming from traditions, culture and media leading to creating characters made out of arabesque and engendering a fantasy world. He creates in works both in his studio and in public spaces. His art expresses the contradiction and culture clashes. His medium is based on mixed media on canvases, as well as spray cans and wheat paste on walls. Leon D. is the founder of the street art squad [Mythicolo-G]. The style of Leon D. includes calligraphic and arabesque elements. His subjects include human forms and owls whose bodies are made out of Arabic calligraphy. Regarding the owl series, this project aims to highlight to contradiction and various symbolic meanings accredited to the animal. From death and bad luck, to mystical ideas and wisdom, the owl has been carrying through history numerous symbols. In the Arabic culture, the owl has been seen as mystical for instance, as well as a sign of bad premonition; whereas, in the Western culture, the animal has been given wisdom qualities. Leon D.’ owl with a crown intends to illustrate this contradiction by representing the animal in Arabic calligraphy, setting a crown on top of its head. Leon D. is therefore an active and engaged Bahraini artist for the development of the art scene in the Kingdom. Leon D. has been exhibited internationally in group exhibitions including: in Leeds, United Kingdom, at the Temple works for the *Caught* exhibition in 2012 as well as in 2011 at the Test Space in the exhibition *Found*; he participated in 2013 to the Alwan 338 outdoor exhibition in the Adliyah district in Bahrain; and in 2012 for the Mega Project 2.0 in Dubai, and was part of the exhibition *If Walls Could Talk* showcased at the Bahrain Financial Harbor. The street art scene has seen a particular development following the 2011 Arab Spring which also hit Bahrain. People turned to the streets of the Kingdom to express their requests and opinions about the event. It resulted in graffiti taking over the street walls, illustrating political messages. With artists such Leon D., his crew and initiatives like Al Riwaq Art Space’s, the street art scene in Bahrain can only grow and develop into a potential contemporary art movement to keep an eye on.

³² ‘An Introduction to Street Art In The Kingdom of Bahrain’, Shahad, September 7th, 2013, <http://www.streetartnews.net/2013/09/street-art-in-bahrain.html>

Albareh Gallery, Manama

The Albareh Gallery was opened in 1998 by Bahraini art patron Hayfa AlJishi. It presents paintings, sculptures and photographs by established and emerging local artists as well as from the Middle East. It promotes the new and emerging scene with different cultures and art trends brought together and houses an exhibition space and two art studios. The gallery participates to international art fairs such as Art Paris-Abu Dhabi, Art Dubai and Zoom-Miami.

Arabesque Art Gallery

Exhibiting mainly antique artworks from the Middle East, the Arabesque Gallery also specialises in paintings influenced by the Bahraini culture and David Roberts 19th century lithographs.

Bashar Art Gallery

Bashar Art Gallery showcases exhibitions with traditional Bahraini art, paintings and etchings by local Bahraini artists.

Globart Gallery

Globart Gallery is based in the Marina Mall and represents Iraqi, Iranian and European artists.

Naqsh Gallery

Since 2011, the Naqsh Gallery has been a platform for artists from the Bahraini region and specialises in Arabic, Islamic and calligraphic art and also present other artists from around the world including Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and China. The gallery aims to connect the local talents with the Bahraini community³³.

TAIB Art Gallery

The Gallery at TAIB Tower was opened in 2005 and organises exhibitions with works by emerging and established Bahraini artists, as well as with artists from the Gulf region.

Abbas Al-Mosawi Gallery

The gallery based in the Al Aali Mall presents the artworks of the famous Bahraini artist Abbas Al-Mosawi.

Artlounge

Launched in 2008 by German artist Marion Labani, this online-based art gallery aims to support local artists by showcasing exhibitions and events- such as fund raiser charities, in different venues. Dependant on sponsorships, it organises exhibitions around Bahrain and intends to bring together the local artists and the Bahraini public.

³³ 'Naqsh Gallery: Calling all artists', Rima Al-Mukhtar, 28th May 2014, <http://www.arabnews.com/news/577841>

Busaad Art Gallery

The Busaad Art was established by the artist Ebrahim Mohamed Busaad. Based in the renovated 1930s house of his grandfather, it is dedicated to the works by the Bahraini artist Ebrahim Busaad. It intends to develop the understanding and appreciation of art and contribute to the Kingdom's culture.

Ella Art Gallery

The Ella Art Gallery was created by the artist Ella Prakash in 2004 and presents the artist's own paintings. The gallery also deals in fine and abstract art and offers services such as customised paintings for interior designers, hotels and companies.

Hend Gallery

This gallery was opened by the sculptor artist Ali Al Mahmeed, who is one of the founding members of the Bahrain Arts Society. It showcases his sculptures and paintings.

Nadine Gallery

Opened by the artist Nadine Al Shaikh, the fine art gallery provides a platform for local and international artists. The gallery further encourages artistic expression with art workshops and photography classes. The Nadine Gallery organises yearly the Bahraini Female Artists exhibition which include local artists who created special artworks on a given theme.

Bahrain Arts Society

Initiated by Shaikh Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Bahrain Arts Society was established in 1983 following the request of 34 Bahraini artists to the government of Bahrain. This non-profit organisation aims to support local artists, to contribute and promote cultural and fine art development in Bahrain and its region. The Bahrain Arts Society holds regular exhibitions as well as workshops, lectures and cultural events. Its members feature selected artists from the Bahain region. In 2014, the Bahrain Arts Society had 71 members, according to the website.

The Curators

Based in Manama, The Curators is an organisation turned to community engagement and aiming to promote and support the Bahraini artists of all disciplines and backgrounds. The association seeks to collect, preserve and offer accessibility to a collection of modern and contemporary art from the talents of Bahrain. It is also dedicated to create educational prospects for emerging and under-recognised artists through exhibitions, arts education and public programs. The Curators exhibit artists at the proper venue while granting access to the right public and eventually market their works.

The Curators believe in the importance of the cultural value of art as well as the creative process.

Key events

Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition

Inaugurated in 1972 under the patronage of Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition has become a landmark cultural event and it is now in its 40th edition. This special year equally coincides with Manama's selection as Capital of Asian Tourism and continues the dynamism observed from its 2012' nomination as Capital of Arab Culture as well its 2013' Capital of Arab Tourism.

In addition, 2014 has been named as the "Year of the Arts", which was officially launched with the 40th Annual Bahrain Fine Arts Exhibition in January 2014 at the Bahrain National Museum. This year, the exhibition will showcase for the first time a selection of works from the Bahrain Arts Society to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

Free of any artistic directions, the Bahraini artists participating are encouraged in their spontaneity so as to ensure the widest range of artistic representation in the exhibition. The artists - both established and rising - gathered come from all over Bahrain, and cover many art styles such as calligraphy, surrealism, abstract and modern, along with more traditional arts and crafts. Several mediums are involved: from photographs to objects, drawings and digital art, as well as collages and other montage. It thus gives a remarkable overview of the cultural trends and evolutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, reviewed and debated yearly.

Manama having been chosen as 2013' Capital of Arab Tourism, it further emphasises the artistic scene to be more dynamic and present on the cultural scene of the Kingdom, encouraging the local talents as well as promoting and inscribe them in the Bahraini culture and history. And with Manama as 2014' Capital of Asian Tourism, art is used as the universal language to bridge the cultural and civilisation diversities. Some of the most important Bahraini artists will see a selection of their works tour around Asia, granting the local art scene more international communication, especially in Asia.

This annual event is important as it allows for the rich contemporary Bahraini art scene to be visible, confirm the diversity in the artistic creations and reveal its talents to the local, regional and eventually international public.

Spring of Culture

Organised every year from March to April by the Economic Development Board, the Ministry of Culture and the Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Centre for Culture and Research, it is in 2014 in its 9th edition. It also collaborates with well-known art spaces of the Bahraini art scene: Al Bareh Art Gallery, Al Riwaq Art Space and La Fontaine Art Centre.

Bahrain's heritage is highlighted with various cultural events and performances encompassing music, theatre, dance, talks and special art exhibitions. In 2014, the famous artists Adbulla Al Muharraqi and Ebrahim Busaad will be included in the exhibitions showcased for the occasion.

Al Riwaq Art Space presents during the Spring of Culture an annual public arts festival, 'Alwan338', with a schedule made out of exhibitions, workshops, screenings and talks all around new artworks made by local, regional and international artists.

Bab Al Bahrain Souq

Initiated by the Ministry of Culture, this souq is organised on the second weekend of every month and offers an artistic diversity: paintings, handicraft, furniture, accessories, graphics, woodworks, prints and photographs.

The venue gives an opportunity to discover the creations of the Kingdom of Bahrain and see the emerging artistic scene. Bab Al Bahrain, a cultural landmark, houses the Bahraini traditional heritage under a historical architecture.

In 2014, for the 'Year of the Arts', Bab Al Bahrain housed the Art Market, showcasing the young local artistic art scene along with live concerts.

Ta'a Al Shabab

Organised by the Ministry of Culture, it aims to involve Bahrain's youth in the culture. The festival held for a month every year is set around various cultural areas such as literature, fine arts, poetry, theatre, music, architecture, and technology. The activities run by volunteers are arranged in workshops, debates, lectures, art exhibitions and musical and theatrical shows.

Venice Architecture Biennale

In 2010, on the occasion of the 12th Venice Architecture Biennale, the Kingdom of Bahrain was participating for the first time and was awarded the golden lion for best national pavilion. The project presented by the Kingdom was 'Reclaim Bahrain', based on the decline of sea culture of the island with installations, photographs and documentary films. The pavilion had been commissioned by the Minister of Culture, Shaikha mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa and the curators were architects Noura Al-Sayed and Dr. Fuad Al-Ansari. It was therefore a successful first attempt giving an opportunity to the Kingdom of Bahrain for a visibility outside the region of the Gulf in terms of its potential creativity.

The Kingdom of Bahrain was back at the Biennale in 2012 for a second participation with 'Background'. 'Background' was a reflection on the differences between the 'real' Bahrain and the images and ideas conveyed by the international media, starting from the first 1950s BBC coverage to the recent uprisings. The same team as 2010's was in charge of curating and designing the pavilion.

For its 2014 participation, the Kingdom will present the project titled 'Fundamentalists and Other Arab Modernisms' curated by George Arbid and Bernard Khoury. The project will consider the last 100 years' evolution in terms of architecture in the Arab World while promoting the necessity to protect the archival architectural heritage of the region. The pavilion takes the opportunity to put forward the efforts of the Arab Center for Architecture for their resourceful elaboration of a database of architectural documents from across the Arab world.

Venice Art Biennale

In 2013, the Kingdom of Bahrain participated for the first time at the Venice Biennale for its 55th edition with 'In A World of Your Own'. Commissioned by the Minister of Culture, Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa and curated by Welissa Enders-Bhatia, it featured three artists: painter Mariam Haji (b.1985, Bahrain), photographer/installation Waheeda Mallulah (b.1978, Bahrain) and photographer/collage Camille Zakharia (b.1962, Lebanese artist based in Bahrain), thus covering photography, collage and drawing. The project emphasised the social norms, the role of women and the position of historical memory.

Positioning on the regional art market

Bahrain has a unique positioning as compared to its neighbours in the Gulf: like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, it benefits from a long history of visual arts and crafts, but, to their difference, it encourages contemporary art as the continuation of this centuries-long tradition of artistic production. For instance, Saudi Arabia (Bahrain's largest neighbour) is currently positioned on Islamic art and is the natural global centre for ancient and modern Islamic artistic production. Nevertheless, the contemporary art scene is relatively underdeveloped as compared to Bahrain, at least, relative to the size of the country. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia has started diversifying its artistic supply, tapping more into the international market, though the current positioning is still mainly centred on local production.

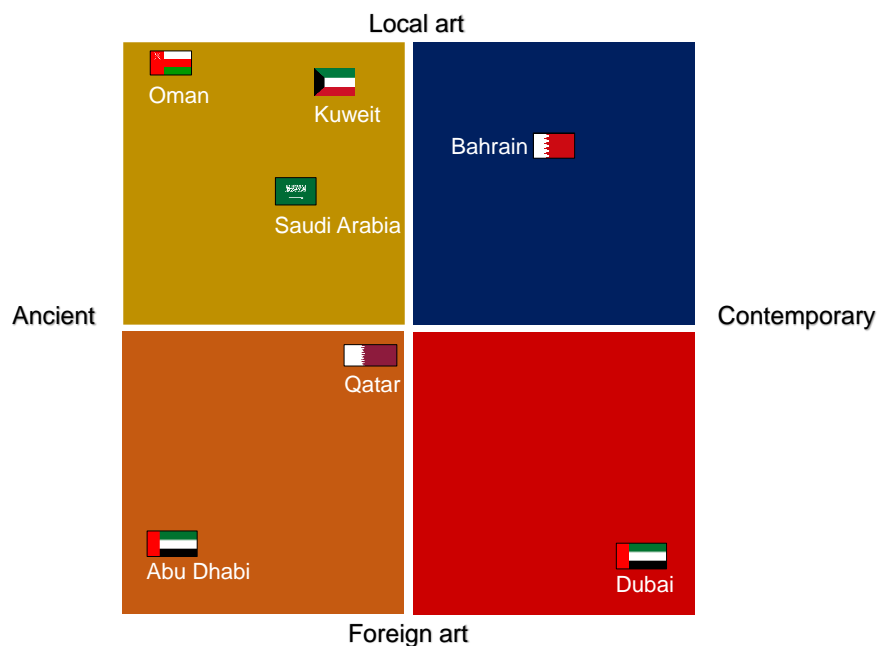


Figure 15. Positioning of Bahrain with respect to other Gulf states

Oman is probably the most conservative country in terms of positioning: its market relies almost exclusively on local art, with a particular focus on old traditions. Its contemporary initiatives are also almost always exclusively focused on the modern interpretation of ancient crafts. This strong positioning is likely to turn Oman into an important player as far as conservation of local culture is concerned.

Qatar, a close economic partner to Bahrain, has decided to embrace a very large spectrum of artistic genres: both contemporary and ancient. However, to cope with the low supply of local artistic production, the authorities have imported massively

from foreign countries, diluting the local culture into a global one. It is still unclear how the country will manage to keep a balanced equilibrium between ancient and contemporary art, and between foreign and local art.

In the U.A.E., Abu Dhabi has become the fer-de-lance of Western culture with Le Louvre Abu Dhabi, technically a French antenna in the Middle-East. A surprising fact is the fee paid by the Emirate to associate with Le Louvre, Paris: \$525 millions, whereas a further \$740 millions will be spent in favour of the French government for consulting services and art loans. Abu Dhabi is resolutely turning to European art to fill its European museums.

On the other hand, Dubai plays the card of foreign contemporary art with a dynamic contemporary art market, home to the famous international art fair: Art Dubai. A global fair for this global hub makes perfect sense: it is a logical positioning for Dubai whose contact with visual arts is fairly recent as far as art history is concerned.

We find that Bahrain has a unique card to play in its category: it is obvious that it has all the potential, and already the proper positioning, to become a very large artistic hub for contemporary art by regional artists.

In terms of pricing of the available stock by International Artists, it appears that Bahrain has much less price dispersion than its regional peers, but it also has a smaller price range than Qatar or the UAE. Top artists in Bahrain do not easily cross the 10,000 BHD mark, whereas top Emirati artists fetch easily 25,000 BHD for a painting. Qatar is somewhat similar to Bahrain, but still has a higher median price for its International Artists (13,200 BHD in Qatar Vs 3,000 BHD in Bahrain).

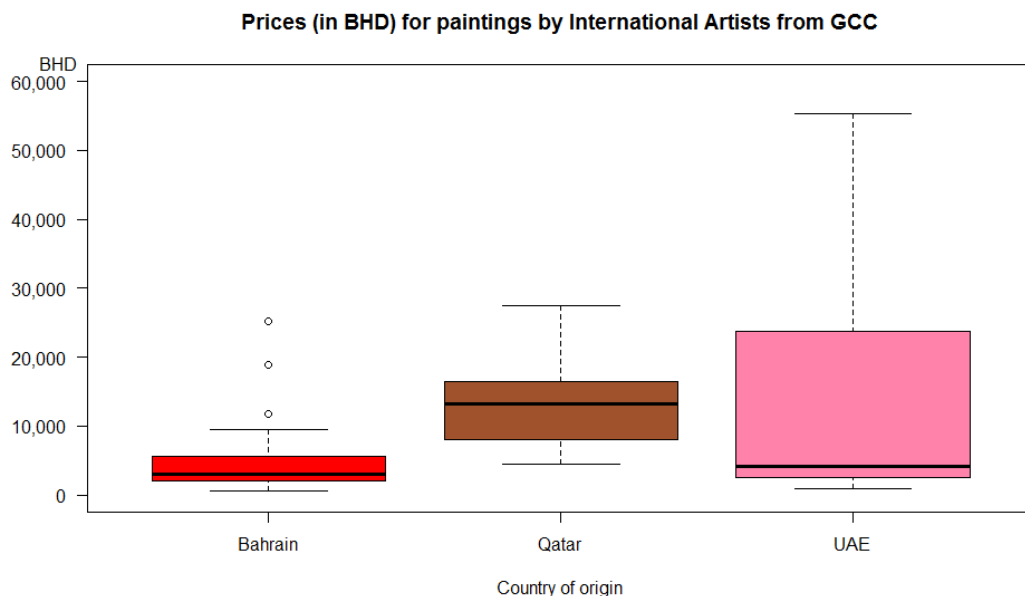


Figure 16. Distribution of prices of international artists per country of origin.

Positioning on the international market

The Kingdom of Bahrain has been showing some initiatives to export and promote its artistic scene outside of the Gulf region.

One of the most notable international events it has been participating to is the Venice Architecture Biennale. It first took part in 2010 for the 12th edition of the Biennale with the project 'Reclaim Bahrain' denouncing the decline of the sea culture with installations, photographs and documentary films. The pavilion had been commissioned by the Minister of Culture, Shaikha mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, illustrating the encouragement of the government in its art scene. The curators involved in the project were architects Noura Al-Sayed and Dr. Fuad An-Ansari. This first participation revealed to be a success as the golden lion was awarded to the Kingdom of Bahrain for its national pavilion.

In 2012, the Kingdom of Bahrain was back for the new edition of the Biennale with the project 'Background' reflecting on the biased images conveyed by the media about the Kingdom and the reality of Bahrain, going back to the first 1950s BBC coverage to the 2011 events and cancellation of Grand Prix.

Another Venice major event is the Venice Art Biennale. The Kingdom of Bahrain participated to it in 2013 for the first time. For the 55th edition, Bahrain was represented by the project 'In A World of Your Own' curated by Welissa Enders-Bhatia and featuring the painter Mariam Haji (Bahrain), photographer/installation Waheeda Mallullah (Bahrain) and photographer/collage Camille Zakharia (Lebanese artist based in Bahrain), covering photography, collage and drawing. The project was again commissioned by the Minister of Culture, Shaikha mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa.

Such events offer great visibility and serious promotion of the Bahrain artistic scene, which remains unfortunately not as well-known as it could be outside of the Gulf region. However, thanks to the great publicity made around such international gatherings, along with potential prizes to be won, Bahrain can only expect from their involvement positive feedbacks and a growing influential positioning against the other Gulf countries.

Bahrain's promotion of its art scene appears rather active in Europe as it was seen with Venice. This is further observed in London: in 2013, the exhibition *In The Open: Contemporary Art from Bahrain* was organised as part of the London's Shubbak Festival of Contemporary Arab Culture. The exhibition included contemporary emerging and established Bahraini artists such as Asia Fuse, Camille Zakharia, Ghada Khunji, Hasan Hujairi, Jenine Sharabi, Mohammed Al Mahdi and Waheeda Malullah. It was the first Bahraini contemporary art exhibition in the United Kingdom. The exhibition was granted funding from the Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom. The

Bahraini curator based in London Latifa Al-Khalifa was the initiator of this great event which was presented at Edge of Arabia in Battersea. *In The Open* is a stepping stone which the Bahrain contemporary art scene should build from in its strategy elaboration to promote its artists. No Bahraini artists were noticed within the list of artists represented by the art gallery Edge of Arabia. Edge of Arabia is specialised in the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) and has gained international acknowledgment as 'a platform for dialogue and exchange between the Middle East and the Western world'³⁴. A strategic move would be to place Bahraini contemporary artists on the Western art market, selecting the most notable and potential talents for such art organisations.

Other European positioning to be mentioned is the collaboration with the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, France. In 1999, an exhibition showcasing the contemporary artists from Bahrain, titled *Les Artistes Contemporains du Bahrein*, was organised in Paris.

The Institut du Monde Arabe also structured a touring exhibition, *25 and de Créativité*, in 2013 to celebrate its 25th anniversary. This important exhibition included works by artists from the Arabic world, including Bahrain being represented by Waheeda Malullah. The exhibition also went to Abu Dhabi at the Emirates Palace on the occasion of the Abu Dhabi Festival in 2013. It then continued in Saudi Arabia at the Naila Art Gallery of Riyadh and ended its tour in Bahrain at the National Museum in Manama.

It is highly significant for the future of the Bahraini of the contemporary art scene to take part in exhibitions showcasing other Arabic artists as it grants legitimacy and inscription of the Bahrain on the international art market.

The Russian Art Academy in Moscow housed an exhibition, *Contemporary Bahraini Art Exhibition: New Horizons*, in 2013. The exhibition retraced the beginnings of Bahrain' art from the 1970s with four leading artists considered as pioneers: Balqees Fakhro, Ablulrahim Sharif, Khalil Al Hashemi, Ahmed Baqer and Rashid Al Khalifa bin Khalifa. The works were coming from the National Museum of Bahrain collection as well as from the artists' collections. A broad view of the contemporary art scene was thus highlighted for the Western public.

From these exhibitions, the contemporary Bahraini artists appear to have a growing presence on the market and positioning outside of its frontiers and Gulf region. However, its ancient heritage does not seem to benefit from such attention, while it could further generate more attention and interest from the international public.

The Kingdom of Bahrain benefits from a history going back to circa 2200 BCE, as well as a real historical continuity, which cannot be said of the other Gulf countries.

Since the 1950s, archaeological excavations have been conducted on the site of Qal'at al-Bahrain (the Bahrain Fort) where the burial mounds of the ancient

³⁴ Edge of Arabia, <http://edgeofarabia.com/about>

civilisation of Dilmun have been brought to the open air. The artefacts found are exhibited in a dedicated section of the Bahrain National Museum.

Since 2005, Qal'at al-Bahrain has been given the protected status of UNESCO World Heritage, as well as Pearling (testimony of the island's economy) since 2012. Furthermore, the tentative list of sites in waiting to be added to the UNESCO World Heritage List includes five more Bahraini historical sites: Hamad Town Tumuli Moundfield, Barbar Temple, Saar Heritage Park and Hawar Islands Reserve - all submitted in 2001, and the Burial Ensembles of Dilmun and Tylos submitted in 2008.

Comparing with its neighbour Gulf countries, the Kingdom of Bahrain presents numerous ancient treasures attesting of its far away past. For instance, the United Arab Emirates has one property inscribed, the Cultural Sites of Al Ain, since 2011 and submitted seven other properties on the tentative list in 2012 and 2014. Similarly, Qatar only has one site registered, the Al Zubarah Archaeological Site, since 2013 and the tentative list recorded one submission in 2008, the Khor Al-Adaid natural Reserve.

Therefore, the Kingdom of Bahrain presents a not negligible historical heritage. A suggestive strategic policy to further develop its visibility toward the international art market, covering ancient and contemporary art, would be to invest in exhibitions, such as touring exhibitions, in collaboration with established art institutions like the Metropolitan Museum in New York or the Louvre in Paris in regard to the Dilmun civilisation. As for the contemporary art scene, it would be recommended to continue the existing collaborations with London, Paris and Moscow art institutions through a similar financial benefit and promotion approach from the Government of Bahrain. The Ministry of Culture having demonstrated its strong willingness to protect and promote its cultural heritage, more initiatives should thus only be a logical path to pursue.

Market microstructure

A puzzling issue with the Bahraini art market is the relatively low level of prices, even for well experimented artists. A deeper study of the microstructure allows to understand the rationale behind this local discrepancy. First, a striking fact is that Bahrain's art market microstructure is characterized by a small amount of intermediaries as compared to the rest of the art world, at least relative to its size. Indeed, we enumerate only a handful of diversified, private art galleries representing several Bahraini contemporary artists:

- Albareh Gallery, Manama
- Bashar Art Gallery
- TAIB Art Gallery
- Naqsh Gallery
- Nadine Gallery

This compares to the amount of public and non-profit organizations devoted to contemporary art

- Bin Matar House, Muharraq
- Centre for Photographic Arts (CPA), Jamsheer House
- Al Riwaq Art Space
- The Art Centre & The Cultural Hall
- Isa Cultural Centre
- Bahrain National Museum
- The Curators

Another interesting phenomenon that is fairly common in the Gulf, is the presence of artists' galleries. Most professional artists have a private gallery home to exhibit their art and sell it, directly by-passing the galleries network. Some artists have even public spaces devoted to their selling art, such as:

- Abbas Al-Mosawi Gallery
- Busaad Art Gallery
- Ella Art Gallery
- Hend Gallery

The following table summarizes the situation in Bahrain Vs a "standard" contemporary art market microstructure:

	"Standard" contemporary art market	Contemporary art market in Bahrain
Supply	Galleries control their artists' supply	Artists' supply is not controlled
Distribution channels	Artists sell through galleries	Artists sell directly to collectors
Bargaining power	Artists depend on galleries to exhibit	Artists do not depend on galleries to exhibit
Contracts	Galleries have exclusivity agreements with artists	Galleries don't prevent artists from going to competition
Incentives	Artists are directly penalized by market for by-passing intermediaries	Artists are indirectly encouraged to by-pass intermediaries
Recognition	Access to public space is a sign of success in the art market	Artists have an easy access to public spaces independent on their success in the market
Government intervention	Museums and public displays censor expression and are independent from galleries	Museums and public displays offer freedom of expression for all artists but this creates direct competition to private galleries
Local competition	Local private galleries compete to attract local artists	Local private galleries compete to attract foreign artists

Table 1. Comparison between "Standard" microstructure and Bahrain microstructure

Supply management

In general, artists produce a lot of artworks, and produce all the time. The artistic process does not fit with a rigorous approach to managing supply. Indeed, artists produce independently on existing demand: the psychological urge to create overwhelms artists. In a standard market, it is the gallery's role to manage supply, by bringing a quantity on the market that best fits market conditions and demand. If an artist overproduces as far as his demand is concerned, the gallery makes sure to select the right amount of artworks for exhibition, and the right amount of exhibitions per year. The stock surplus is kept at the artist's workshop, or at the gallery's warehouse, hidden from collectors. In Bahrain, because artists can by-pass galleries, the management of supply is almost inexistent, and the market dynamics depend on the creative process of each artist. In addition to volatility in prices due to uncertain supply/demand levels, discrimination between artists who produce a lot and artists who produce less is more flagrant in pricing. As an exception, a few savvy artists with international experience understand (explicitly or intuitively) these mechanisms and adopt strategies to maximize their prices and optimize their sales, but many other artists of similar quality do not control the supply and flood their collectors with artworks, pressuring their own prices without realizing it. An additional psychological component is the satisfaction for the artist to show his work to an interested public. This psychological reward is normally constrained by galleries that frustrate the artist by limiting his exposure on the short term, but maximizing his visibility over the longer run.

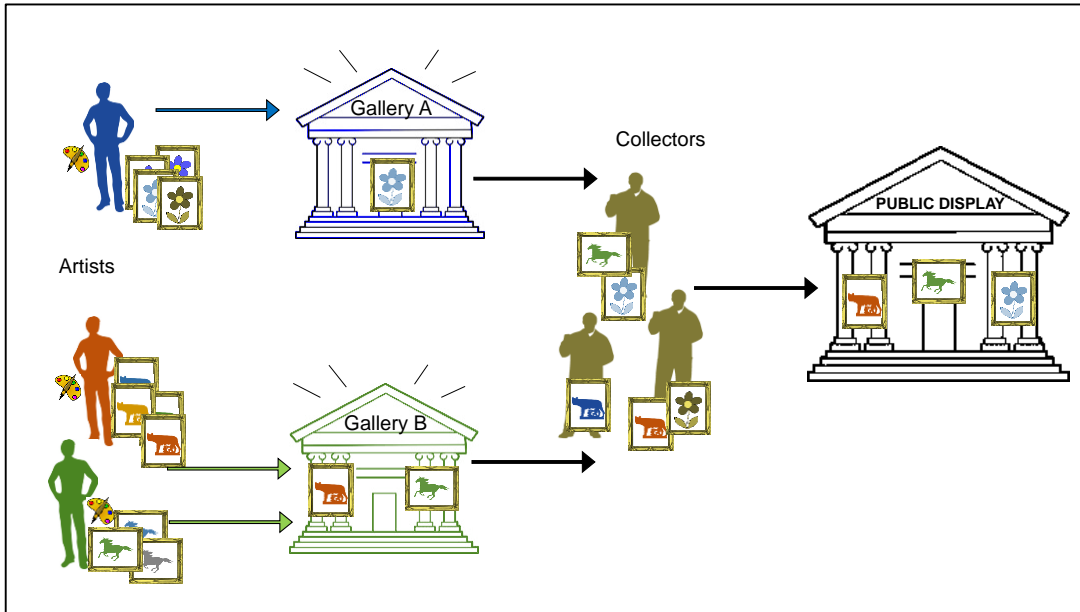


Figure 17. Standard microstructure in the Contemporary Art Market

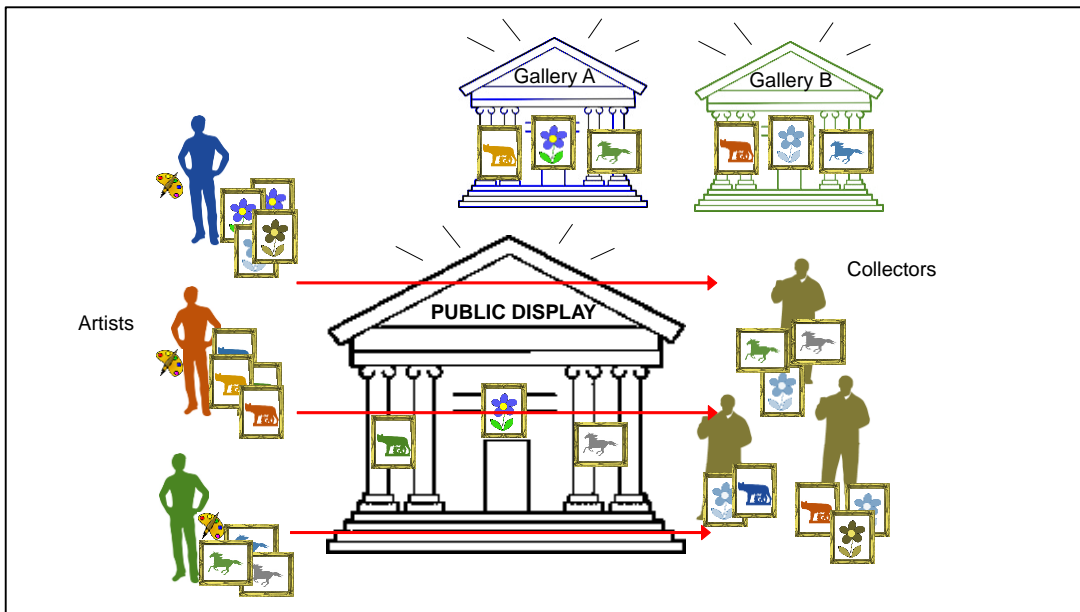


Figure 18. Microstructure in the Bahraini Contemporary Art Market

Distribution channels

In a standard distribution channel, galleries exhibit artists, and collectors contact galleries and dealers to acquire the works. In Bahrain, artists sell directly to collectors, making the gallery literally useless as a pure intermediary. However, we understand that a gentleman agreement may be in place between artists and galleries, so that prices at the artist's atelier and at the gallery are similar, despite a 40% to 50% commission on gallery sales. Another consequence of a direct distribution channel from artists to collectors is that pure intermediaries, such as private art dealers or auction houses have more or less disappeared from the economic environment.

The main reasons why collectors can connect directly to artists are:

1. Bahrain is a small country where connections are very tight and players in the art market are very well acquainted with each other, would it be through family, friends or business relations.
2. The relatively small number of local collectors means they are also highly visible and known, artists can also contact them directly to keep them informed of new production and styles they are creating.
3. Local artists rapidly gain local visibility thanks to the numerous public exhibitions they can relatively easily access. Artists casually distribute their contact numbers and business cards to potential buyers during these public exhibitions, a move that would be judged shocking in many other countries. Public organizations are generally non-profit, and artists are free to by-pass the venue's owner without fear of commercial retaliations by private galleries.

Auction houses of contemporary Bahraini art are totally inexistent in Bahrain. This is also because new production is always available directly from the artist, and, in some cases, older production can be acquired from the artist as well. The artist himself sometimes acts as broker between two buyers. Also, demand for contemporary art is generally weak. For these two reasons, pure intermediaries, a necessary element of the distribution channel in the art world, cannot survive the market environment.

Bargaining power

In a standard market, galleries have a slight bargaining edge over artists: first, they do not communicate the names of collectors and buyers to the artist so he does not have a complete information over his potential market. Second, because galleries in a standard market generally form a competitive network, but a relatively small group at the local level, they tend to behave in an oligopolistic fashion, so that generally speaking, they do not "steal" artists from each other. As a consequence, galleries have an increased bargaining power on individual artists as these ones won't easily find another exhibition venue, at least locally. Finally, because galleries that discover artists invest massively in their success, these artists feel compelled to stay faithful to people who invested in them at an early stage. A mutual relation of trust is established.

In Bahrain, the situation is different from this standard case: because public venues are widely available and very much opened to exhibitions, artists always have the

possibility to boycott galleries by using public space. The bargaining power is fully in hands of the artists in the market: as soon as they benefit from an access to a public space and/or have gained national recognition, they are in a position to choose which private gallery they can use as additional exhibition venue, as well as the possibility to rapidly gain knowledge of potential collectors. As galleries suffer from heavy competition, they cannot help but sharing the same local artists on their line-ups.

As a consequence, local galleries bolster their bargaining power by inviting more foreign artists than local artists, on whom they have a bigger control. The situation in Bahrain is an interesting setup where local galleries have little incentive to defend local artists so they prefer to defend foreign artists at the local level. As a further consequence, local galleries do not defend local artists at the international level neither, which in turn harms Bahrain visibility on the global market scene.

Surprisingly, Bahraini artists, when exhibiting abroad, come back to the normal situation where foreign galleries have a higher bargaining power over them, so that their supply and marketing becomes under control when they leave Bahraini soil.

Contracts

Exclusivity agreements are an important component of the art world in general, since the investment required to defend an artist can be spoiled if another player (such as a competitor) free-rides the marketing efforts of a gallery. In Bahrain's case, artists do not sign exclusivity agreement because of their higher bargaining power.

Incentives

A major issues for artists globally is finding a commercial venue to exhibit their art: without exhibitions, they cannot achieve recognition and cannot sell their artworks. The main role of an art gallery is to endorse an artist and offer a venue for selected artists to exhibit their art. As such, the incentive for artists to cooperate with a gallery is the promise of getting free promotion, access to the gallery's network to sell the art and access to an open space to hang the pieces of art for delimited periods of time, as well as possibly a warehouse and commercial management of the stock during periods without exhibitions. In turn, the artist stays faithful to the gallery he is working with and agrees to share the profit with the gallery. The market as a whole understands this mutual relationship. Violating this equilibrium is perceived as a betrayal harmful to an artist's reputation.

In Bahrain, the artist has no incentive whatsoever to stay faithful to an art gallery: endorsement, free promotion, access to network and space to hang the pieces of art are provided for free by public organizations and charities. Out of exhibition periods, artists handle their stock themselves. In turn, galleries are reluctant to massively invest to promote local artists as they are unlikely to harvest the results of their commercial efforts and initial investments.

Recognition

Exhibition in a public space such as a museum is normally the cherry on the cake of a successful commercial career. It is fairly normal that commercial success and an established career as professional artist be a pre-requisite to a national exhibition. In Bahrain, it seems exhibition at prestigious venues such as the National Museum are accessible very early in an artist's career. National recognition comes often before commercial success, and, in many cases, is even used as a driver for commercial success. Nevertheless, though à priori positive for an individual artist, such publicity actually creates a mismatch between the actual state of development for the artist on the global art scene and the image he projects. Two negative effects can follow: first, the museum may lose credibility by taking unnecessary risks that are traditionally taken by contemporary art galleries, second, the positioning of the artist may be drastically impacted in the short-term, creating small bubbles in the market and distorting price dynamics without any fundamental reason.

Government intervention

Government in Bahrain is one of the few government in the world to offer full freedom to entrepreneurs in the creative industries. Professional artists and amateurs alike are all encouraged by the Ministry of Culture to produce. All artists are stimulated by the government, regardless of their social origin: art lessons are provided almost for free and most artists have access to convenient facilities to exhibit their art, would it be through government bodies or government sponsored charities. The government sponsors murals where artists have basically a carte blanche to do whatever they please, such as the mosaic of works by professional Bahrainis outside the Art Centre, though numerous public spots in the capital are also submitted to the free creative process of artists. Street Art is a large artistic scene in the capital, and it could not be so without explicit government support. For example, a large "Giraffe" mural by the very controversial artist "Asia Fuse" is publicly displayed by the private gallery Albareh, without fear of censorship.

SPOTLIGHT ON: ASIA FUSE

Born in 1988, Asia Fuse, also known as Aysha Almoayyed, is a female artist born in Bahrain, but raised between Bahrain and London. She currently lives and works in London. After an undergraduate degree in marketing from the Bentley University in Waltham, USA, she got accepted in Goldsmith, the University of London. Having been harassed in the street on her way back from her work, Asia Fuse turned this traumatic experience into something positive, her art. To canalize her frustration, she created a complete personal collection of drawings inspired by the inequality existing between genders in Bahrain. Her work is a combination of her interests and her curiosity developed over the years. Her creatures have animal and human features to express the sexual characteristic flaws from both. Inspired by the sexual comments she heard, she uses the unattractive animal figures to support her idea of the flaws in the Arab culture. In addition to being a visual artist, she is also the co-founder of The Dirty Tease T-shirt Co, a company created in 2011, and in which her obsession giraffes was turned into a complete line of t-shirt only inspired by *Gigi the giraffe*, designed and illustrated by the artist herself. Considered as a multidisciplinary artist, Asia Fuse turned her art into a controversial social depiction of the Arab society, and conceives her art as a way for her public to continue to discover something new through her work.

As compared to larger countries like France or the U.S.A., the government in Bahrain offers considerable freedom to artists. The case of “Tour 13” in France, where government proceeded with the destruction of a building home to a large showcase of street art, is unlikely to happen in Bahrain whose government carefully protects artistic production. Furthermore, the Ministry of Culture actively promotes the arts in the capital, in order to bring the general public’s attention to the importance of culture.

From a pure economic perspective, Bahrain is a very attractive place to do business in the arts: government does not legislate on the art market and transactions, there is no censorship policy whatsoever on the production, trade and exchange of art materials. Both artists and galleries are completely free as far as exhibitions and trades are concerned. Such economic freedom is a precious jewel the government rightly cherishes, and that is fully appreciated by all actors in the market place. Furthermore, the government does not censor entrepreneurship as long as it does not relate to outright blasphemy, pornography, or money laundering, which helps maintaining the art market a healthy economic centre free of criminal activities.

Local competition

An art gallery basic and primary role is to provide walls for exhibitions, for a given artist to exhibit his art, and for the public to come and see it. As such, the main cost for a gallery is the opportunity cost related to its real estate. For an art gallery to be sustainable, its business must be at least as profitable as the equivalent rental fee it could get by renting the place to another business, or even, running another business in the same location, such as a coffee shop for instance.

As far as revenues are concerned, galleries get paid depending on the success of the artists they exhibit, which is directly related to

1. The quality of artworks
2. The clients’ network of the gallery

So, in a nutshell, the competitive landscape of the contemporary art market relies on two factors: diminishing the opportunity cost of real estate on the one hand, and maximizing artworks’ quality and prices on the other hand. In practice, the two factors are not independent since a large, prestigious place that is naturally more expensive to run, will attract better artists and more clients.

In Bahrain, galleries suffer from heavy competition on both legs: the government, in a policy initially devoted to openness for the arts and creation, unintentionally competes with local galleries on real estate: by offering exhibition venues for prestigious local artists in large and prestigious public spaces, they unwillingly hamper contemporary art galleries efforts to manage their main cost: real estate. Art galleries literally compete with state-sponsored national museums that have no opportunity cost at all since they have been designed as non-for-profit exhibition centres. For an artist, between exhibiting at a large public space and a smaller private gallery, the choice is quickly made, especially if he still has the possibility to sell directly to interested buyers, and avoid paying a commission on sales.

The other key competitive advantage of galleries (i.e., gathering a unique value proposal of high-quality artworks) is also directly undermined by the fact that they lose their bargaining power over artists who are not faithful to a particular gallery as long as they exhibit in public spaces and at home.

To counter this unintentional competition by the government and artists, local galleries turn to various survival strategies:

- Diversifying the activity to diminish the real estate opportunity cost by being also a coffee shop for intellectuals and artists, or a printing business, a library, etc.
- Rely on local or foreign government subsidies to run side-projects in the premises (library, art centres, etc.)
- Diminishing the real estate opportunity cost by renting the strict minimum to exhibit the works
- Competing to defend foreign artists rather than local ones
- Exhibiting local artists whose prices are high thanks to their international exposure and visibility
- Differentiating from museums by explicitly participating to the artistic process, for instance, by offering spaces for murals, artist residencies, etc., creating new dynamics away from the traditional exhibition role of galleries.
- Differentiating from museums by focusing on relatively cheap art fitted for decoration, moving more into the business of interior design

Competition is not only fierce for galleries. Because supply is managed by artists who sell directly their production, collectors can more easily substitute one artist for another. This potential substitution effect creates pressure on prices since artists compete between each other in an environment dominated by a large local supply as compared to the relatively small demand for local art. Since prices stay relatively low and that galleries are not needed for artists to enter the market, new entrants can easily offer their supply at attractive prices, further pushing pressure on government to offer venues for the increasing number of incoming artists who are trained almost for free.

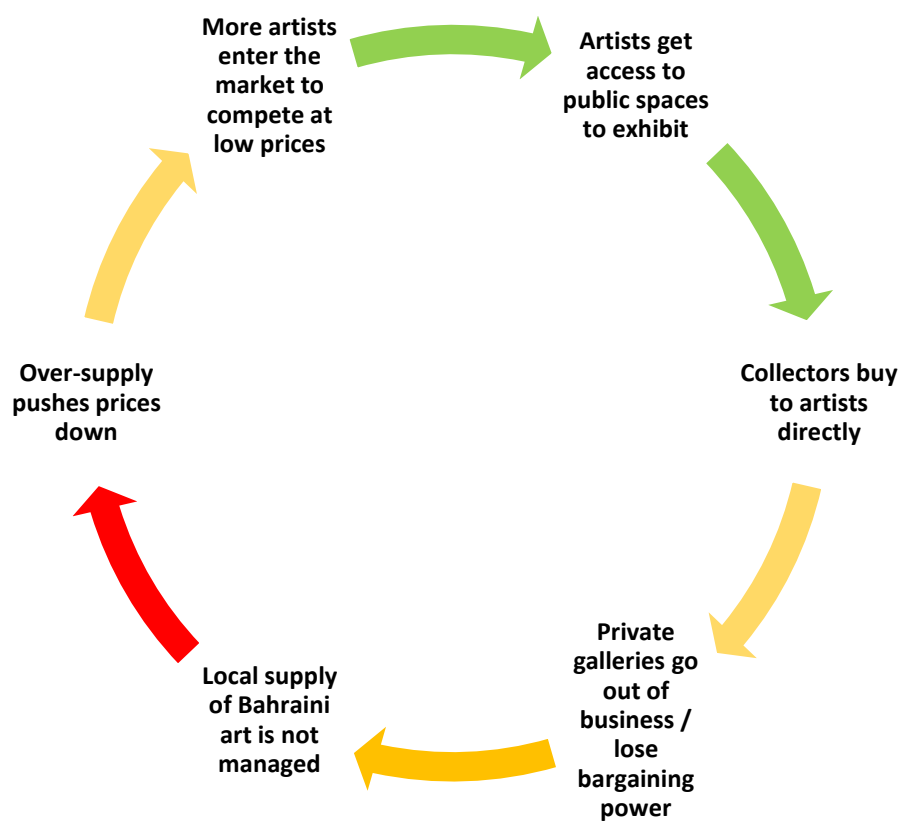


Figure 19. The cycle of impact of artists' access to public space as indirect competition with local art galleries

Keys to unlocking potential

Bahrain has embraced contemporary art as the continuity of its millennia long history with the arts and crafts, something truly unique in the region. It is obvious that Bahrain's government is doing a lot to promote fine arts in general. The Bahrain Pavilion at the Venice Biennale is an extraordinary example of the commitment the country has in defending its artists internationally. The prestigious museums, art centres, public spaces and public-sponsored events are as many signs the Ministry of Culture is doing what it takes to get a vibrant artistic scene.

The economic openness is another significant strength that contributes to a successful and living art market. Artists freely enter the market, produce and sell their production without any constraint, in a frictionless economic world. The same is true for galleries and dealers.

Nevertheless, government intervention in the promotion of local art has indirectly pushed local galleries to diversify their activity towards foreign artists. The small local demand for contemporary local art is another issue at hand given the large supply stimulated by the government openness to artists. As a consequence of this large supply and low demand, prices suffer from a negative bias as compared to artists in the Gulf region, which harms Bahrain's visibility on the global scale. Indeed, to circumvent this issue, local galleries significantly favour foreign artists. International Bahraini artists find their way to foreign countries via foreign galleries rather than local ones exhibiting abroad, as it is standard in the global art market.

Leaving this vicious cycle while keeping all the benefits of a free economy and a vibrant government-sponsored art scene is a challenge. Nevertheless, all elements for a solution already exists in Bahrain. We offer four keys for unlocking the potential in Bahrain.

1. Control of supply through privately organized bodies

The Bahrain Art Society is a major body for established artists. Though a non-profit organization, it could act as an informal economic association for local artists, and could put in place formal strategies to optimize prices, train artists in their relationships with collectors and negotiate optimal, mutually beneficial agreements with private galleries, at the local and international level so as to maintain prices and mitigate artists' competition. Other organizations such as The Curators can play a similar role in the market for younger artists, helping them optimize their commercial strategies.

2. Restrictions on young artists exhibited by public spaces before their commercial success

Government-controlled public spaces such as museums should refrain from promoting young artists before their commercial success, at least locally. This is simply because it creates direct competition to private galleries, since best artists

directly target national recognition through government bodies rather than the traditional commercial pathway. They immediately shortcut private galleries or undermine their legitimacy in the market, further motivating these players to look exclusivity over foreign talents rather than local ones. Also, promoting local artists at national level, regardless of their objective qualities, may create price bubbles in the market that fail to serve artists' long term interests.

3. Purge of oversupply

As government sponsors freedom of expression and artistic creation, while also favouring artists over galleries in terms of exhibitions and visibility, it manages to bring a clear visibility on the arts in Bahrain, but unwillingly creates a situation where a large supply does not meet enough local demand. To compensate this effect while keeping the vivid dynamism brought by government sponsorship, local museums could follow an aggressive acquisition policy of recognized, established artists, to purge and compensate the supply in the market. Subsequent price increases may in fact contribute to stimulating the demand since as art can behave as a Veblen good.

4. Focusing on consumption rather than production

Many efforts sponsored by the government are devoted to production: art classes, exhibition centres, art education, etc. Private galleries and charities should focus more on stimulating local consumption through advertisement and marketing. Art in Bahrain is still not a largely consumed good whereas other luxury products have easily found their way into everyday life, such as luxury cars, furniture design, haute-couture and accessories: sunglasses and watches and other types of jewellery that benefit from massive marketing support from private companies. Only a handful of artists are widely recognized. This is for instance the case of Abbas Al Mosawi whose distinctive style is extremely popular in Bahrain and whose art is directly available at a store in Al Aali Shopping Complex, a very central, much visited location in Bahrain. Fortunately, the Minister of Culture is ready to support this direction: in her own words, Sheikha Mai Bint Mohammed Al Khalifa affirms: "*I'm trying as much as possible to send messages to the people of Bahrain and visitors, in order to increase interest in art, whether in terms of architecture, music, printing or other areas of culture and the arts in general.*"³⁵

³⁵ Interview with Al Monitor, February 2014, *Bahrain's culture minister works to encourage Arab artists*: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/culture/2014/02/bahrain-culture-minister-arab-art-interview.html>

Upside potential as an investment

The case for Bahraini art as investment is absolutely straightforward. Regardless of local dynamics, Bahrain contemporary art is poised to offer an attractive return to investors. In our base scenario, foreign actors will play the arbitrage opportunity between international Bahraini artists and other artists in GCC. We expect the discrepancy in average prices to fade within the next five years, given both the initiatives by the Ministry of Culture to promote Bahraini contemporary art abroad, and the similitudes in quality and styles between Bahraini art and its neighbours like Qatar and the Emirates.

Country	Median price for International Artists	Top 10% International Artists, lower bound	Price differential with Bahrain (median international artists)	Price differential with Bahrain (top 10% international artists)
Bahrain	3,000 BHD	9,100 BHD		
UAE	4,100 BHD	53,700 BHD	+37%	+490%
Qatar	13,200 BHD	19,800 BHD	+340%	+118%

Table 2. Price levels in three countries.

Acquisition of an artwork by well selected international Bahraini artists could lead to a return anywhere between 118% and 490% over the coming years, in the simple scenario where their prices converge to the regional norm for their level of quality.

Thanks to its unique positioning and very long history as central hub for arts, Bahrain has otherwise a significant competitive advantage to see contemporary Bahraini artists thrive in the global market. Indeed, the long historical tradition of Bahrain as an art centre should play significantly in its favour, at least compared to regional peers, so that, if any differential can be expected between Bahrain and other Gulf countries, it should be in favour of Bahrain that exhibits a longer and richer art history. Coordination of artists as far as supply is concerned can also be a significant trigger for price increase, on top of the expected natural convergence in prices in the region.

Perspective and future developments

Bahrain's contemporary art market is the most exciting and promising art scene in the Gulf. All ingredients are gathered to provide the market with an extraordinary boost. First, it is absolutely clear that government is keen to develop the local market and pursue Bahrain's very long tradition of protecting and promoting freedom for the arts and creative industries. An economically frictionless environment is a great setting for a thriving cultural economy.

For art collectors, the arbitrage opportunities led by current market discrepancies are soon to disappear, so it is clear that Bahrain offers a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" as far as art investment is concerned. Indeed, the first market development to be expected is a rally in prices of established artists whose prices should gain between 100% and 400% to match price levels or regional peers. We believe it would take a maximum of 5 years for the average price spread between Bahrain and other countries to be close to zero.

Second market development already started by the government is a further internationalization of Bahraini arts. Promotion of Bahrain's contemporary art as the logical continuity of a long history gives a lot of credits to contemporary artists as compared to other actors in the region.

Internationalization will also be the key to bring artists into a traditional market microstructure, as far as their relationships with galleries are concerned, offering more bargaining power to galleries and eventually increasing liquidity during exhibition thanks to a better management of supply.

This combination of increased regional and international demand for Bahraini fine arts may literally decuple the market's size for Bahraini artists. In the competition for the actual art hub for Middle-Eastern Contemporary Art, Bahrain starts with 1000 years' worth of cultural wealth, a significant competitive advantage as compared to regional peers.

Our base case scenario ("Expected level") is made of the following assumptions:

- Disappearance of the spread in prices between Bahrain and regional peers (Qatar, UAE) for International Artists
- Internationalization of artists will push best practices into the Kingdom, bringing liquidity to normal level (target of 15% unsold artworks at private exhibitions on average for International Artists Vs 40% of unsold artworks in art galleries in 2014)
- 20% yearly growth of the amount of International Artists following government promotion of established Local Artists abroad.

The “Lower bound” scenario assumes no growth in International Artists, whereas the “Higher bound” assumes a price differential of 50% in favour of Bahrain as compared to regional peers and a 25% growth in the amount of International Artists.

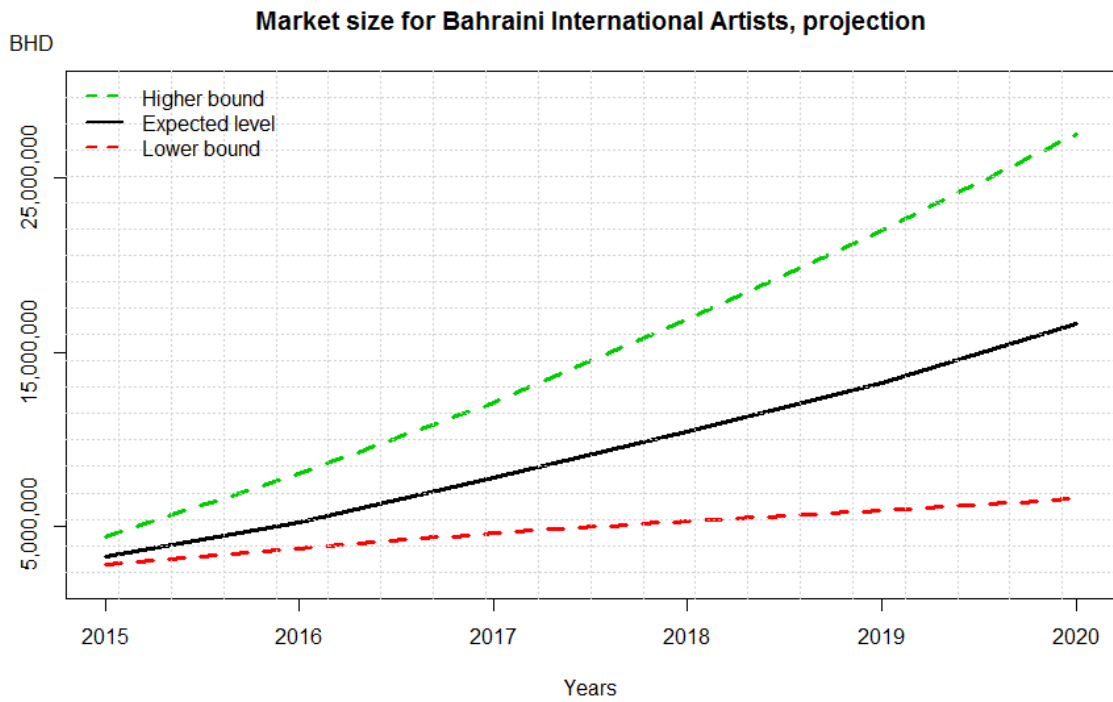


Figure 20. Projection of market size for Bahraini International Artists, in BHD

Artists and fair valuation of Bahraini art

Artist	Category	Medium	Typical price range
Abbas Al Mosawi	International Artist	painting	[1000 - 3000] BHD
Abdulla Al-Muharraqi	International Artist	painting	[15000 - 30000] BHD
Abdulrahim Sharif	International Artist	painting	[15000 - 30000] BHD
Balqees Fakhro	International Artist	painting	[3000 - 5000] BHD
Camille Zakharia	International Artist	photograph	[1000 - 2000] BHD
Fajer Al-Khalifa	International Artist	painting	[3000 - 5000] BHD
Fuad Albinfalah	International Artist	sculpture	[1500 - 2500] BHD
Ghada Khunji	International Artist	photograph	[500 - 1000] BHD
Hala Al Khalifa	International Artist	painting	[1000 - 3000] BHD
Ibraheem Busaad	International Artist	painting	[1000 - 2000] BHD
Jaffer AlOraibi	International Artist	painting	[4000 - 6000] BHD
Jamal Abdul Rahim	International Artist	painting/sculpture	[5000 - 7000] BHD
Khalil Al Hashemi	International Artist	sculpture	
Mariam Haji	International Artist	photograph	[250 - 750] BHD
Mohamed Kanoo	International Artist	painting	[5000 - 8000] BHD
Mohammed Almahdi	International Artist	painting	[1500 - 2500] BHD
Shaikh Rashid Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	International Artist	painting	[20000 - 35000] BHD
Waheeda Malallah	International Artist	photograph	[1000 - 2000] BHD
A. Jabbar Ghadban	Local Artist		
Abbas Al Mahroos	Local Artist		
Abbas Yousif	Local Artist	painting	[1000 - 3000] BHD
Abdelshaheed Khamdan	Local Artist		
Abdul Monem Al Busta	Local Artist		
Abdulelah Al Arab	Local Artist		
Abdul-Kareem Al Bosta	Local Artist		
Abdulla Yousif	Local Artist		
Abdulrahman Al Durazi	Local Artist		
Abeer Alkhalifa	Local Artist		
Adel Al Abbasi	Local Artist		

Adel Al Thawadi	Local Artist	painting	[400 - 500] BHD
Adnan Al Ahmed	Local Artist		
Ahmad Al Ubaydli	Local Artist		
Ahmed Al Sayed	Local Artist	painting	[150 - 200] BHD
Ahmed Anan	Local Artist		
Ahmed Baqer	Local Artist		
Ahmed Ghuloom	Local Artist		
Ahmed Husain Al'Oraify	Local Artist		
Aisha Hafez	Local Artist		
Ali Alkoofi	Local Artist		
Ali Al Mahmeed	Local Artist		
Ali Habib Al Koofy	Local Artist		
Ali Hussain Mirza	Local Artist	painting	[600 - 1000] BHD
Ali Jaber Suhrab	Local Artist		
Ali Khamis	Local Artist		
Ali Mubarak	Local Artist		
Amani AlTawash	Local Artist		
Amina Al Abbasi	Local Artist		
Ammar Al Mahmood	Local Artist		
Ammar Hammad	Local Artist		
Aqeel Al Durazi	Local Artist		
Areej Bin Rajab	Local Artist		
Asghar Ismail	Local Artist		
Asia Fuse	Local Artist		
Asqar Ismael Akbar	Local Artist		
Ayman Haji	Local Artist	painting	[2000 - 2500] BHD
Ayman Jaafar	Local Artist		
Aziza Salman	Local Artist		
Badee Bubshait	Local Artist		
Buthaina Fakhro	Local Artist		
Dalal Nasser Al Khuzai	Local Artist		
Dana Al Hassan	Local Artist		
Deyanna Al Shaikh	Local Artist		
Ebrahim Ahmed	Local Artist		
Ella Prakash	Local Artist		
Eman Aseri	Local Artist		
Faiqa Al Hassan	Local Artist		
Faisal Samra	Local Artist		
Fareed Buqais	Local Artist	painting	[600 - 800] BHD
Fatima Al Jamea	Local Artist		

Fatima Ali Isa Sarhan	Local Artist		
Fatima Saharan	Local Artist		
Fawaz Al Olaiwat	Local Artist	painting	[300 - 500] BHD
Feryal Isshaq Al Bastaki	Local Artist		
Foad Al Ben Falah	Local Artist		
Fouad Kamal	Local Artist		
Ghada Hasan Al Kouzaie	Local Artist		
Ghassan Mohsen	Local Artist		
Hadeer Al Bagali	Local Artist	painting	[1000 - 3000] BHD
Haider Rafiey	Local Artist	painting	[400 - 600] BHD
Haitham Abdullah Ahmad	Local Artist		
Hamed Al Busta	Local Artist		
Hassan Sarhan	Local Artist		
Herz Al Banki	Local Artist		[300 - 500] BHD
Huda Al Shaikh	Local Artist		
Hussain Ali	Local Artist		
Hussain Fateel	Local Artist		
Hussain Isa Al Durazi	Local Artist		
Ishaq Al Kohaji	Local Artist		
Jaffar Al Halwachi	Local Artist		
Jawad Mohamed Hassan	Local Artist		
Jeffly Gabriela Molina	Local Artist		
Jiyad Hassan Jawad	Local Artist		
Kady Mattar	Local Artist		
Khalid Aitahmazi	Local Artist		
Khalid Farhan	Local Artist		
Khalifa Shaheen	Local Artist		
Leena Al Ayobi	Local Artist		
Leon D	Local Artist		
Lubna Al Ameen	Local Artist		
Mahdi Abdulla Al Banay	Local Artist		
Mahmoud Al Mulla	Local Artist		
Mariam Saleh Al Mahoozi	Local Artist	painting	[900 - 1300] BHD
Mariam Abdulla Fakhro	Local Artist		
Mariam Al Khalifa	Local Artist		
Mariam Al Shekar	Local Artist		
Mariam Ali Fakhro	Local Artist	painting	[2500 - 2500] BHD



Mariam Al Sindhi	Local Artist		
Marwa Al Khalifa	Local Artist		
Mariam Sultani	Local Artist		
Mashaël Fairooz	Local Artist		
May Mufeez	Local Artist		
Mayasa Al Sowaidi	Local Artist		
Maysa Al Thawadi	Local Artist		
Mercedes de Garay	Local Artist		
Mohammed Saleh Al Mogahwy	Local Artist		
Mohammed Sharkawi	Local Artist		
Mohammed Al Janahi	Local Artist		
Mohmood Taha	Local Artist		
Mohsen Al Tatoon	Local Artist		
Mohsin Ghareeb	Local Artist		
Mohsin Mubarak	Local Artist		
Moosa Al Dimistani	Local Artist	photograph	[200 - 300] BHD
Muneera Al Jalahma	Local Artist		
Nabeela Al Khair	Local Artist		
Nada Al Moosa	Local Artist		
Nada Al Aradi	Local Artist		
Nadine Al Shaikh	Local Artist		
Naghma Mohseni	Local Artist		
Najah Saeed Al Madani	Local Artist		
Nasser Al Yousif	Local Artist		
Nawaf Al Mulla	Local Artist		
Nawal Kamal	Local Artist		
Noah Siwar	Local Artist		
Omar Al Rashid	Local Artist		
Perryhan Al Ashmawi	Local Artist	drawing / painting	[500 - 700] BHD
Pouran Al Sharif	Local Artist		
Rasha Sabt	Local Artist		
Rashid Al Oraifi	Local Artist		
Reem Abdulkarim Mureed	Local Artist		
Reem Al Awadhi	Local Artist		
Reem Al Orrayed	Local Artist	calligraphy	[150 - 200] BHD
Reem Nass	Local Artist		
Rida Abedeen	Local Artist		
Rula Abu Jaber	Local Artist		

Sayed Marhoon	Local Artist		
Sahar Sadr	Local Artist		
Saleh Al Mahoozi	Local Artist	painting	[500 - 800] BHD
Salman Al Taitoon	Local Artist		
Salwa Al Qaed	Local Artist		
Samia Engineer	Local Artist		
Samiha Rajab	Local Artist		
Samiya Abdulrazzaq Injenir	Local Artist		
Sarah Al Aradi	Local Artist		
Sarah Swar	Local Artist		
Sayed Hassan Al Sari	Local Artist		
Seema Baqi	Local Artist		
Shafiqa Al Hermi	Local Artist		
Shaikha Al Doseri	Local Artist		
Suhaila Al Saffar	Local Artist		
Thajiba Najeeb	Local Artist	painting	[300 - 400] BHD
Wadad Al Baker	Local Artist		
Wassan Al Sawad	Local Artist	painting	[250 - 450] BHD
Zahera Al Sayed Mohammed	Local Artist		
Zakeya Zada	Local Artist		
Zuhair Al Sayed	Local Artist		
Kawther Al Mahoozi	Local Artist	painting	[500 - 700] BHD
Aadel Ali Mohammed	Market Potential		
Abdul Elah Al Busta	Market Potential		
Abdulaziz Al Jassim	Market Potential		
Abdulahadi Al Majid	Market Potential		
Abdulkarim Al Arrayedh	Market Potential		
Abdulla Al Haiki	Market Potential		
Abdulla Isa Ali	Market Potential		
Abdullah Al Fardan	Market Potential		
Abdullah Al Manami	Market Potential	drawing	[30 - 60] BHD
Abdulrahman Al Dowaji	Market Potential		
Abdulrasool Al Ghayeb	Market Potential		
Abrar Yahya	Market Potential		
Afaf Mohammed Al Rasheed	Market Potential		
Ahmed Abdul-Reda	Market Potential		
Ahmed Al Sayegh	Market Potential		
Ahmed Al Ahmed	Market Potential		



Ahmed Al Bastaki	Market Potential		
Ahmed Al Sahlawi	Market Potential		
Ahmed Emam	Market Potential		
Ahmed Reyadh	Market Potential	photograph	
Alaa Al Asfoor	Market Potential		
Alaa Taradah	Market Potential	drawing / painting	
Ali Al Bazaz	Market Potential	painting	
Ali Al Fardan	Market Potential	painting	[200 - 300] BHD
Ali Al Jazeri	Market Potential		
Ali Al Mohammed	Market Potential		
Ali Al Qameesh	Market Potential		
Ali Al Sabah	Market Potential	photograph	[40 - 40] BHD
Ali Hakim	Market Potential		
Ali Majeed Alzain	Market Potential		
Ali Majid Faisal	Market Potential		
Ali Mohammed Alhaiky	Market Potential		
Alya S.Kamel	Market Potential	photograph	
Amal Salman	Market Potential		
Amal Yusuf	Market Potential		
Ameera Ali Abbas	Market Potential		
Aqeela Yaqoob Jumaa	Market Potential	drawing / painting	
Atheer Al Ansari	Market Potential		[60 - 100] BHD
Azhar Nooh	Market Potential		
Badr Abdul-Jabbar Ali	Market Potential		
Badr Albadri	Market Potential		
Batool Mahmood Ali-Haddad	Market Potential		
Batool S.Redha	Market Potential		
Batool Taher	Market Potential		
Dawiya	Market Potential		
Dr. Wedad AlBanna	Market Potential		[400 - 400] BHD
Duaa Almadeeh	Market Potential		
Ebrahim Abdullah	Market Potential	photograph	
Ebrahim Jaffar	Market Potential		
Ebrahim Khalifa	Market Potential		[400 - 400] BHD
Ebrahim Sharif	Market Potential		
Ehsan Gurbal	Market Potential		
Eman Abdul Al Ameer	Market Potential	painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Fadhel Almutaghawi	Market Potential	photograph	
Faissal Ali	Market Potential		

Fatima Al Arady	Market Potential		
Fatima Albaqali	Market Potential		
Fatima Asad	Market Potential		
Fatima Jaffer	Market Potential		
Fatima Kamal	Market Potential	painting	[150 - 150] BHD
Fatima Mohmood Al Haddad	Market Potential		
Fatima Murad	Market Potential		[100 - 100] BHD
Fatima Shareef	Market Potential	photograph	[200 - 400] BHD
Feryal Juma	Market Potential		
Ghadeer Mahdi Al Watani	Market Potential	painting	
Ghufran Ali	Market Potential		
Haitham Al Haddad	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Hajar Al Anfooz	Market Potential		
Hamad Mohammed	Market Potential		
Hameed Al Makhloq	Market Potential	photograph	[400 - 700] BHD
Hassan Abdullah Askafi	Market Potential		
Hassan Al Sari	Market Potential	painting	[400 - 500] BHD
Hassan Ashoor	Market Potential		
Hassanein Sharaf	Market Potential		[100 - 300] BHD
Hawra Ali Yousif Al Fardan	Market Potential	drawing	
Hawra Al Fardan	Market Potential		[30 - 60] BHD
Hawra Jaffer Hussain	Market Potential		
Haya Alghanem	Market Potential		
Heba Ali	Market Potential	painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Hisham Sharif	Market Potential		
Huda Hasan Abdulkareem Ghanem	Market Potential		
Hussain Alsabab	Market Potential		[40 - 40] BHD
Hussain Alsaeed	Market Potential		
Hussain Al Sammak	Market Potential	painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Hussain Alshakoori	Market Potential		
Hussain Badr Abdul-Jabbar	Market Potential		
Hussain Bader Al Badri	Market Potential		
Hussain Darwish	Market Potential		
Hussain Issa Yusuf Yaqoob	Market Potential	painting	
Hussain Milad	Market Potential	painting	[700 - 1000] BHD
Hussain Sayed Ali Qarooni	Market Potential		



Hussain Sultan	Market Potential		
Isa Al Shajar	Market Potential	painting	[300 - 300] BHD
Isa Ebrahim	Market Potential		
Ismael Nairooz	Market Potential	painting	[300 - 400] BHD
Jalal Al Orayed	Market Potential		
Jassim Al Maqabi	Market Potential		
Jawaher Jamal Rustam	Market Potential		
Jumana Ali Jassim	Market Potential		
Kaltham Isa	Market Potential		
Kamal Abdullah	Market Potential		
Karimah Taha	Market Potential		
Kawther Adel	Market Potential	drawing	
Kawther Al Asfoor	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Kawther Al Jamri	Market Potential		
Kawther Mohammed Redha Khamis	Market Potential		
Kawther Reyadh Al Salmabadi	Market Potential		
Khadija Jassim	Market Potential		
Khalid Ebrahim Abdulkareem	Market Potential		
Khalifa Showaitor	Market Potential		
Khayria Abbas Baljeek	Market Potential		
Layla Abdulla Al Rosani	Market Potential		
Layla Al Baluchi	Market Potential		
Leena Rajab	Market Potential		
Madina Ali	Market Potential		
Mahmood Haider	Market Potential	painting	[250 - 250] BHD
Manal Abdullah Al Hujairi	Market Potential		
Manal Al Asmawi	Market Potential		
Mariam Al Noaimi	Market Potential		
Marwa Al Hamrani	Market Potential		[30 - 50] BHD
Marwa Al Qanea	Market Potential		
Maryam Abdulaziz Naser Abdulla	Market Potential		
Maryam Faeq Zubari	Market Potential		
Maryam Jassim Ashoor	Market Potential		
Maryam Mohammed Redha Gharghi	Market Potential		
Mazen Najeeb Ghurbal	Market Potential	painting	[20 - 40] BHD

Mohammed Abdulrahman Al Abbasi	Market Potential		
Mohammed Ali Al Baharna	Market Potential		
Mohammed Al Sa'dani	Market Potential		
Mohammed Bahrain	Market Potential		
Mohammed Hassan Abduldwahab	Market Potential		
Mohammed Jaffer	Market Potential		
Mohammed Mahdi Qindeel	Market Potential	painting	[150 - 150] BHD
Mohammed Redha Radhi	Market Potential		[60 - 100] BHD
Mohsen Al Mobarak	Market Potential		
Mona Abdul Hussain Al Radhi	Market Potential	painting	
Moosal Al Ahmed	Market Potential		
Mosa Al Demistani	Market Potential	painting	
Mouath Al Khateeb	Market Potential		
Muna Al Rody	Market Potential		
Muneera Al Subaee	Market Potential		
Mustafa Al Halwachi	Market Potential		[400 - 600] BHD
Mustafa Marhoon	Market Potential		
Nada Salman	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[50 - 100] BHD
Naeema Najaf	Market Potential		
Naji Masoud	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[50 - 100] BHD
Naji Swar	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[50 - 100] BHD
Nawaf Ghazi Almalood	Market Potential		
Nawal Naser	Market Potential	drawing	[50 - 100] BHD
Nouf Arefaei	Market Potential	painting	[200 - 300] BHD
Nooh Swar	Market Potential		
Noor Matar	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Noor Shubbar	Market Potential		
Noora Isa	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[50 - 100] BHD
Raba Al Durazi	Market Potential		[200 - 400] BHD
Rabab Al Hamran	Market Potential	drawing	[30 - 60] BHD
Rahma Mirza Hassan	Market Potential		
Rajaa Hujairi	Market Potential	photograph	[100 - 200] BHD
Rana Ali Hamed	Market Potential	drawing	
Rashid Dhaif	Market Potential		
Reem Abdulrahman Janahi	Market Potential		
Reyad Abdulla	Market Potential		
S.Baqer Imad	Market Potential		[30 - 60] BHD

S.Hadi Taleb Jawad Al Qarooni	Market Potential		
Sadiq Ameen	Market Potential		
Sayed Dhahi	Market Potential	photograph	[100 - 200] BHD
Salwa Al Moayad	Market Potential		
Samar Al Askafi	Market Potential	painting	[50 - 100] BHD
Samya Jaffar	Market Potential	painting	
Sawsan Yousif	Market Potential	painting	[30 - 60] BHD
Sayed Hussain Al Qarooni	Market Potential		
Sayed Saleh Ahmed Ali Saleh	Market Potential		
Shaimaa Murad	Market Potential	painting	[500 - 1000] BHD
Shuqair Al Durazi	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[200 - 300] BHD
Tahani Darwish	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Tasneem Al Ejmi	Market Potential	painting	
Tasneen A.Baset	Market Potential		
Um Salman	Market Potential		
Walaa Al Madeeh	Market Potential		
Waleed Al Abbas	Market Potential	photograph	[200 - 400] BHD
Wedad Al Baker	Market Potential		
Yahya Maher Al Ammadi	Market Potential		[30 - 60] BHD
Yaser Al Hammed	Market Potential		
Yasser Al Daihi	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Yasser Dhaif	Market Potential	painting	[400 - 600] BHD
Yousif Al Banna	Market Potential	sculpture	
Yusra Ahmed	Market Potential	painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Zahra Al Ameer	Market Potential		
Zahra Al Hamran	Market Potential	painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Zahra Isa	Market Potential		
Zahraa Kadhum	Market Potential		
Zainab Al Afia	Market Potential	drawing	[100 - 200] BHD
Zainab Al Haddad	Market Potential		
Zainab Ali Taqi	Market Potential	drawing	[100 - 200] BHD
Zainab Al Kadhem	Market Potential		
Zainab Al Mahdi	Market Potential		
Zainab Mohammed	Market Potential		
Zainab Mohmood Ali Al Haddad	Market Potential		
Zainab Redha Hamad	Market Potential		
Zainab Saleem	Market Potential		
Zainab Tareef	Market Potential		

Zainab Yusuf	Market Potential		
Abrar Ismaeel Abdulhameed	Market Potential		[100 - 200] BHD
Afaf Al Sayed	Market Potential		[300 - 400] BHD
Alaa Isa Tarrada	Market Potential		[60 - 100] BHD
Ali Al Farram	Market Potential		[100 - 200] BHD
Dana Abbas Alsekari	Market Potential	painting	[30 - 50] BHD
Dhawiya Ibrahim Youssef	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Eman Mohammed Ali	Market Potential	painting	[400 - 700] BHD
Fadhel Saleh Qamber	Market Potential	drawing	[20 - 40] BHD
Fatima Al Haddad	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Hamad Bin Dina	Market Potential		[60 - 100] BHD
Ibrahim Ismaeel Abdulhameed	Market Potential		[30 - 50] BHD
Ibrahim Jafar	Market Potential		[60 - 100] BHD
Ismaeel Marzooq	Market Potential		
Kaltham Khalil	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Khairiya Baljeek	Market Potential		[100 - 200] BHD
Maryam Al Salim	Market Potential		
Mohammed Abdulnabi Ali Barhain	Market Potential	painting	[300 - 400] BHD
Moosa Ali Abdulla	Market Potential	painting	[300 - 400] BHD
Muna Abdulhussein	Market Potential		
Nadya Ali Al Mohandes	Market Potential	painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Naseem Abdulbasit Al Ijmy	Market Potential		
Nouf Al Rifaiy	Market Potential		[400 - 600] BHD
Rabab Mohammed	Market Potential		[30 - 60] BHD
Rahma Meerza	Market Potential	painting	[30 - 60] BHD
Rawan Maki	Market Potential	painting	[30 - 60] BHD
S.Hasanein Sharaf	Market Potential		[150 - 150] BHD
Sally Lockmann	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Wedad Al Banna	Market Potential	painting	[300 - 400] BHD
zahra Ahmed Ali Al Hamed	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[60 - 100] BHD
Zahra Amini	Market Potential	painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Zahra Mohammed Marzooq	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[20 - 50] BHD
Abdulla Al Satrawi	Market Potential	photograph	
Ali Al Haiky	Market Potential		
Ali Alzain	Market Potential	photograph	
Bader Al Badry	Market Potential	painting	

Batool Taha Mubarak	Market Potential	painting	
Faisal Baqer Ali	Market Potential	photograph	
Fatima Sayed Nasser Sharaf	Market Potential	painting	[200 - 400] BHD
Feryal Mohd	Market Potential	photograph	
Hussain Al Durazi	Market Potential	photograph	
Khalid Al Abbas	Market Potential		
Mahmood Mahdi Soroor	Market Potential	painting	
Mariam Mohammed Al Qurqi	Market Potential	drawing / painting	
Rabab Ali	Market Potential	drawing	
Reem Alorayedh	Market Potential		
Sawsan Al Wardi	Market Potential	drawing / painting	[100 - 200] BHD
Sawsan Mohammed	Market Potential	drawing	[30 - 60] BHD
Sayed Baqer Emad	Market Potential	drawing	
Sayed Hassanain Sharaf	Market Potential		[100 - 200] BHD
Sayed Sadiq Ameen	Market Potential	drawing	[100 - 200] BHD
Sayed Sadiq Jaafar	Market Potential		[60 - 100] BHD
Sharaf Ali Hussain	Market Potential	drawing	
Zahra Ahmed Kadhem	Market Potential	photograph	
Ahmed Al Sahlawi	Market Potential	drawing	
Fatima Hussain Al Aradi	Market Potential		
Manar Hujairi	Market Potential		
Mohammed Hasan Sultan	Market Potential		

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