

Newsletter

Art Dubai 2015



Joana Vasconcelos

Born in Paris in 1971. Lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal.

Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos's expansive and diverse practise is founded on the appropriation of everyday objects to which she ascribes unexpected associations. Her starkly miscellaneous creations may be viewed as post-modernist manifestations of densely-populated, consumption-satiated human societies. At the same time, the unexpected combinations of subject matter and form in her works imbue them with strong metonymical potential, opening up new associations between medium and content. Vasconcelos continues to develop these preoccupations in media including painting, sculpture, and increasingly large-scale installations.

A recent development in her practice has been the fusion of ceramic and textile materials, of which the recent work **Cheshire Cat** is an archetypal example. The decorative animal figure is encased with vibrantly –coloured crochet, in a combination of delicate manual craft and industrial process. The title of this chromatically rich piece suggests the light-hearted whimsy of a children's story, focalized through a newly absurdist material construction. A further level of connotation lies in the use of Azores lace, a traditional product of Portugal which has been appropriated by the global textile industry.

Vasconcelos recently produced the celebrated Trafaria Praia project for the Pavilion of Portugal at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). Her works have been shown in solo exhibitions at numerous prestigious institutions in recent years, including the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (Tel Aviv, Israel, 2013), the Palácio Nacional da Ajuda (Lisbon, Portugal, 2013), the Chateau de Versailles (Paris, France, 2012) and the Museu Coleção Berardo (Lisbon, Portugal, 2010). She has participated in an international range of group of exhibitions at venues including the Kulturhuset Stadsteatern (Stockholm, Sweden, 2014), FRAC Bourgogne (Dijon, France, 2013), the Palazzo Grassi/ François Pinault Foundation (Venice, Italy, 2011), and the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington DC, USA, 2011). Her work is included in the Pinault Collection (Paris and Venice), and is also collected by the Museu Coleção Berardo (Lisbon, Portugal), the Fondation Louis Vuitton (Paris, France) and the Amorepacific Museum of Art (Seoul, South Korea), amongst many others.



Title: Cheshire Cat

Date: 2014

Medium: Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro
faience painted with ceramic glaze,
Azores crocheted lace

Size: 50 x 20 x 41 cm

Ala Ebtekar

Born in 1978 in Berkeley, California, USA. Lives and works in California.

An American artist of Iranian descent, Ala Ebtekar's works give voice to the compelling contemporary legacy of ancient Persian culture. Through painting, drawing, and installation, Ebtekar's practice incorporates influences from philosophy, scientific illustration, court painting and contemporary Iranian popular culture, to explore the junctures that exist between history and myth. After graduating with an MFA from Stanford, Ekbetar travelled to Tehran, where he studied the mid-20th century qahveh khanehei painting style under Mohammad Farahani - an episode which would have a formative impact on his current artistic preoccupations.

Ebtekar's newest works employ techniques of printing and collage on archival and found texts, to explore the Illuminationist cosmogony of the twelfth-century mystical philosopher Shahabuddin Suhrawardi. Ebtekar conceives of portals toward the Light of Lights, theorized by Suhrawardi as a transcendental space between man and the Universe. He represents these as celestial clusters of light on dark pigment, framed within delicately ornate shapes suggestive of Islamic influence. The works become optical openings through which viewers may experience the mythological narratives of transcendence in immediate, visual form.

Ala Ebtekar has held recent solo shows at the Asian Art Museum (San Francisco, USA, 2013) and Richmond Art Center (Richmond, USA, 2013), and has participated in an extensive range of group exhibitions including at the Orange County Museum of Art (California, USA, 2015), the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (California, USA, 2014), the Maraya Art Centre (Sharjah, UAE, 2013) and the Museum of Contemporary Art at Lorenzstrasse (Germany, 2012). Ebtekar was a resident artist at the Stanford University Paris Studio in 2006, an Imprint Artist in Residence at the San Francisco Center for the Book in 2008, and a resident artist at the 18th Street Arts Center in Santa Monica in 2009 through the Visions from the New California Award. His works are held in collections worldwide including the Whitney Museum (New York, USA), the Orange County Museum of Art (California, USA), the Devi Art Foundation (Haryana, India), the Farjam Collection (Dubai, UAE) and the Deutsche Bank Collection (Frankfurt, Germany).



Title: Journey to the Seventh Planet
Date: 2015
Medium: Archival Inkjet print on found poster
Size: 104 x 68 cm

Mona Saudi

Born in Amman, Jordan, in 1945. Lives and works between Beirut, Lebanon, and Amman, Jordan.

Mona Saudi is a renowned sculptor whose works demonstrate a preoccupation with notions of human life force and maternal creation. Saudi trained in the Sculpture division of the École-des-Beaux-Arts in Paris, and now works predominantly with natural stone from the Middle East including white Carrara marble, black diorite from Syria, and pink limestone from Jordan. Her prolific practice retains an essential focus on the simple shapes inherent within her materials: Saudi defers to the natural form of the stone, which she then manipulates with skilfully-carved interventions.

Woman River is a key example of the strengths of Mona Saudi's technique. Abstaining from direct figurative representation, the piece consists of evocatively curvilinear forms which might be read as abstract gestures towards the outlines of a female figure, or of flowing water. Executed in white Carrara marble, the work embodies a sense of the restraint of the artist's hand, and becomes a minimalistic expression of the material's intrinsic aesthetic power.

Mona Saudi's work has been exhibited in recent solo shows at the Saint John Perse Foundation (Aix-en-Provence, France, 2011) and the AM Quattan Foundation (London, UK, 2010) as well as group shows at institutions including the Institut du Monde Arabe (Paris, France, 2012), and the Sursok Museum (Beirut, Lebanon, 2011). Her work forms part of a great number of major global art collections, including those of the British Museum (London, UK), the Sharjah Art Foundation (Sharjah, UAE), the National Gallery of the Fine Arts (Amman, Jordan), the Museum of Modern Art (Kuwait), and many more.



Title: Woman River
Date: 2003
Medium: Marble
Size: 52.5 x 35 x 7 cm

Susan Hefuna

Born in Egypt in 1962. Lives and works between Cairo, Dusseldorf and NYC.

Susan Hefuna is a German-Egyptian artist whose practice incorporates drawing, sculpture, video and photography, as well as ambitious interactive installations and workshops. A recurring theme in her work is the mashrabiya screen, the wooden or stone lattice-work screen that features in traditional Egyptian architecture. This motif first appeared in Hefuna's drawings in 1990 and in her photographs taken with a pinhole camera.

In Hefuna's current sculptural practice, the mashrabiya screen is re-articulated in silver bronze as a three-dimensional, asymmetrically-wrought form that pushes this recognizable Egyptian motif close to the realms of abstraction. The works' organic linear interconnections suggest a fascination with the nature of intersections: within design, and by extension, within human and cultural interactions – as is echoed in other elements of her practice such as richly intricate meshwork drawings.

Susan Hefuna has exhibited internationally at very many prestigious arts institutions, including recent solo shows at the Osthaus Museum (Hagen, Germany, 2014), the Sharjah Art Foundation (Sharjah, UAE, 2014), the Belvedere Museum (Vienna, Austria, 2010) and the Serpentine Gallery (London, UK, 2008). She has shown in group exhibitions at LACMA (Los Angeles, USA, 2015), the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (North Adams, USA, 2015), the New Museum (New York, USA, 2014), and MoMA New York (USA, 2010). In 1998 Hefuna was awarded the International Award at the Cairo Biennial. In 2013 she was awarded the Contemporary Drawing Prize by the Daniel and Florence Guerlain Foundation. Her work is held in the collections of the British Museum (London, UK), the Louvre (Paris, France), LACMA (Los Angeles, USA) and the Burger Collection (Zurich & Hong Kong), to name but a few.



Title: Structure
Date: 2013
Medium: Silver bronze
Size: 48 x 48 x 38.5 cm

Etel Adnan

Born in 1925 in Beirut, Lebanon. Lives and works in Paris, France.

Etel Adnan's work as a painter, writer and poet has been highly acclaimed within the Middle East and internationally. Having grown up across continents and with a multi-lingual upbringing, her artistic practice explores concerns with cultural and linguistic differences as they affect international political dynamics.

A central element of Adnan's oeuvre comprise of oil on canvas landscapes, which employ an abstract simplification of forms and heightened colour palettes to effect striking visual impact. Adnan has often spoken of her concern for contemporary Middle Eastern political developments, particularly with regards to Beirut, and the burnt ochre and sienna tones of her paintings suggest a conceptual Middle Eastern geography that it is stripped of human presence and, thereby, military conflict.

Recent solo exhibitions of Adnan's work have been held at the Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha, Qatar, 2014) and The Wattis Institute (San Francisco, California, 2013), and she has participated in group shows at the New Britain Museum of American Art (Connecticut, USA, 2012), the Museum of Cycladic Art (Athens, Greece, 2011) and the State Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia, 2007). She also participated in the 2014 Whitney Biennial (New York, USA) and staged a significant retrospective of almost one hundred works at Documenta 13 (Kassel, Germany, 2012). Her work is held in notable international collections such as the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, France), Mathaf Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha, Qatar), the World Bank Collection (Washington, D.C., USA), and the British Museum (London, UK).



(Left)

Title: Untitled

Date: 2014

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 24.5 x 30.2 cm

(Right)

Title: Untitled

Date: 2014

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 24.5 x 30.2 cm

Mickalene Thomas

Born in Camden, New Jersey, in 1971. Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Mickalene Thomas's work turns to questions of beauty, femininity and race, which she constructs as acerbic and elaborate paintings composed of rhinestones, acrylic and enamel. Her work addresses feminist narratives at the level of the medium itself, and she describes her influences as ranging from Impressionist treatments of the female figure to those of contemporary pop culture.

Interior with Purple Silhouette, Lamp, Yellow Couch, and 5.25 Circles was made using personal photographic resources as well as scanned images of the 19 volumes of the 'Practical Encyclopedia of Good Decorating and Home Improvement' - the American bible of house decorating published in 1971. The re-composition of disparate elements recreates the fictional, albeit realistic spaces and situations reminiscent of Pop Art's founding collage 'Just what is it that makes today's homes so Different, So Appealing' by Richard Hamilton.

Mickalene Thomas has held solo exhibitions in recent years at l'Ecole des Beaux Art (Monaco, 2014), the Institute of Contemporary Art (Boston, MA, 2012), the Santa Monica Museum of Art (California, USA, 2012) and the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art (Tokyo, Japan, 2011). She has participated in numerous solo shows internationally, including at the Seattle Museum of Art (Washington, USA, 2014), the New Jersey State Museum (New Jersey, USA, 2014), the Institute for Contemporary Art (Boston, Massachusetts, USA, 2013), and the Chrysler Museum of Art (Virginia, USA, 2012). She also works as a curator and sits on the board of several prestigious New York art museums including the Brooklyn Museum and MoMA PS1. Her work is held in many important visual arts collection, including those of MoMA New York, The Guggenheim Museum New York, the Rubell Family Collection, the Whitney Museum of American Art and many others.



Title: Interior with Purple Silhouette, Lamp, Yellow Couch, and 5.25 Circles

Date: 2014

Medium: Colour photographer and paper collage on archival board

Size: 72.4 x 70.5 cm

Tiffany Chung

Born 1969 in Danang, Vietnam. Lives and works in Saigon, Vietnam.

Tiffany Chung is one of Vietnam's most prominent and internationally active contemporary artists. Based in Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), she is noted for her cartographic drawings, sculptures, videos, photographs, and theatre performances. Her works address spatial and sociopolitical transformations interwoven with the lingering resonances of historical conflict.

Tiffany Chung has held solo exhibitions at Lieu-Commun (Toulouse, France, 2014), dB Dance Box (Kobe, Japan, 2013), MoMA Shanghai (China, 2008) and the Ke Center for Contemporary Arts (Shanghai, China, 2008). Her work has been shown at recent group exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston (Texas, USA, 2014), the Museum Arnhem (Arnhem, The Netherlands, 2014), the AD&A Museum UCSB (Santa Barbara, USA, 2014) and the Orange County Museum of Art (California, USA, 2013) to name only a few. She exhibited in the Sharjah Biennial (Sharjah, UAE, 2013) and will exhibit in the forthcoming 2015 Venice Biennale. Her work has been collected by institutions such as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (California, USA), the Singapore Art Museum, the Sharjah Art Foundation (Sharjah, UAE) and the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (Japan).



Title: Study of dots

Date: 2006

Medium: Collage and oil on paper

Size: 62.5 x 63 cm