



Menart Fair 2024

MENA News

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For its 5th edition, Menart Fair pays tribute to women artists from the Middle East and North Africa. The fair opens at Galerie Joseph, in Paris, on September 20th.

Text by Blaire Dessent

Menart Fair, which is open from September 20 – 22 at Galerie Joseph in the Marais, shows its independent spirit, making a bold choice to only exhibit work by women artists for its 5th edition. “The Arab world abounds in a rich artistic heritage in which women have always played a crucial role, though often unrecognised. From poetry to the visual arts, music and film, women have expressed their vision of the world, their experiences and aspirations, contributing to the diversity

and depth of Arab cultural expression. This year at Menart Fair, we're going to pay tribute to them," writes Laure d'Hauteville, Founder & director of Menart Fair.

The selection committee, made up of Essia Hamdi, Stefania Angarano, Kalim Bechara and Leila Varasteh has selected nearly 100 artists to present work at this year's fair. 29 galleries from 12 countries including Lebanon, France, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Morocco will feature work by women of various ages, mediums, and styles. Two-thirds of the thirty or so galleries taking part this year are newcomers. This choice was made by the fair's selection committee on the basis of the projects received and their artistic quality. This 100% women's edition goes beyond the question of gender to raise visitors' awareness of the richness and importance of the art scene in regions that are often little-known in the West.

As d'Hauteville notes, "An increasing number of Arab women artists are gaining international recognition. They are being exhibited in museums and galleries around the world, and their works are being acquired by institutions and collectors. However, there is still a great deal of work to be done by art market professionals to achieve full financial recognition. In 2023, only 2.5% of artists who sold a work worth more than €1 million were women," according to a study by the Art Basel Association.

Menart will also feature an emerging talent section called Revealing, which is supported by the Friends of Menart association with the goal of raising awareness of new and unusual works by young galleries and artists.

There will be a series of talks throughout the weekend led by artists and art historians, journalists and experts. A number of institutions and organisations involved in the issue of women in the arts, including AWARE, MIA Art Collection and Art Connects Women, will be taking part in the programme of conferences, round tables, meetings, video screenings and visits.

In addition to the fair, Menart will present a unique opportunity to view the reconstruction of the Shâhnâmè of Shah Tahmasp, an 11th century illuminated manuscript written by the Persian poet Ferdowsi. Known as the Book of Kings, it recounts in 50,000 verses and 258 watercolours, the legendary history of the ancient kingdom of Iran from its mythical origins to the Arab conquest in 651 AD to the mid-1500, when it was created. The book was sadly mostly destroyed but for four decades, art historian Dr. Zahra Faridany-Akhaven has been researching the history of the masterpiece and has managed to reconstruct it and shed light on its significance.

The full list of participating galleries is: **Agial Art Gallery**, Beirut, **ART GIRLS Galerie***, Paris, **Artists of Beirut***, Beirut, **Gallery Bawa***, Kuwait, **Bigaignon***, Paris, **Centre Interculturel Leila Alaoui (CILA)***, Fontvieille, **Contemporary Art Platform***, Kuwait, **Galerie Claire Corcia***, Paris, **Comptoir des Mines Galerie***, Marrakesh, **D2Art Gallery***, Dubai, **Écho 119***, Paris, **ERRM Art Gallery***, Riyadh, **Firetti Contemporary***, Dubai, **Kalim Art Space***, Beirut, **Xena Kalouti Designer***, Amman, **Katharina Maria Raab**, Berlin, **Khawla Art Gallery***, Dubai, **Mashrabia Gallery of Contemporary Art***, Cairo, **Myriem Himmich Gallery***, Casablanca, **Picasso Art Gallery***, Cairo, **Polysémie***, Marseille, **Rug Entertainment***, Paris, **Shams Collective***, **Simine Paris**, Paris, **Suite Amazigh***, Paris, **Le Violon Bleu Gallery***, Sidi Bou Said, **W+S Gallery***, Brussels, **Wusum Gallery***, Doha, **ZAAT***, Beirut

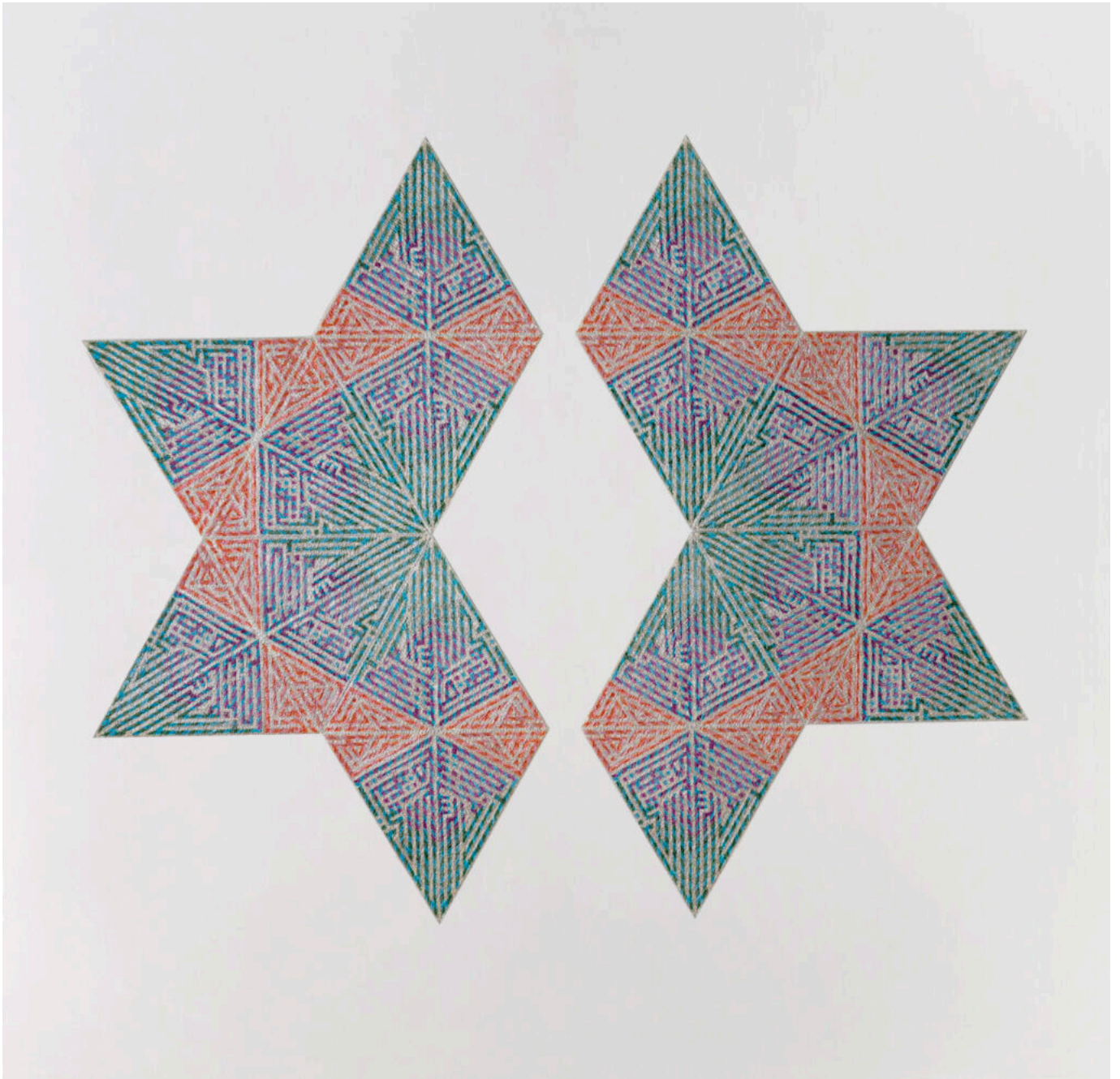
Menart Fair takes place between September 20-22, 2024 at Galerie Joseph, 5 rue Saint Merri, Paris 4eme

<https://menart-fair.com/fr/>

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Lara Zankoul, *The Magic Clam*, 2020, photography, 90x60cm, Courtesy of Art Girls Galerie, Paris



Farah Behbehani, *An Awake Heart is Like a Sky that Pours Light (3)*, 2022, Océ print with diamond dust on watercolour paper, 105x105 cm, Courtesy Contemporary Art Platform



Fatimah Hossaini, Unveiling the Hands of Heritage, 2024, photography, 180x120cm, Courtesy of Art Girls Galerie, Paris



Evgenia Baigaliyeva, Memory, 2023, oil on canvas, 160x200 cm, Courtesy D2 Art Gallery, Dubai



Zineb Mezzour, Shape 4, from the series The Shape of Water, 2023, sculpture in chamotte and porcelaine, Courtesy Myriem Himmich Gallery, Casablanca



Katya Traboulsi, Malikeh, 2023, wall installation, hand painted iron, 140x160cm, Courtesy Comptoir des Mines, Marrakech



Yasmeen Sudairy & Rajaa AlHajj, Imaginary Poles, 2022, painted wood carvings (six double-sided Poles), 30x5cm, Courtesy Gallery Bawa, Kuwait

