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15
Oct
2024

MENART Fair: An Ode to Arab Women's Creativity in the Heart of Paris

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Amid the labyrinthine streets of the Marais, the Galerie Joseph Saint-Merri transformed into an ephemeral temple, vibrant with the colors and voices of women artists from the Middle East and North Africa. An immersive experience in an unexpectedly rich universe, where each work opened a window onto multiple realities, personal stories, and reinterpreted traditions. This fifth edition of the MENART Fair was more than just an exhibition. It was an ode to feminine creativity, an act of resistance against the invisibility of these artists, and a celebration of their talent and singularity. By choosing to highlight female voices, often marginalized or unknown, the fair proved that it is possible to reinvent the codes, open new perspectives, and rethink our relationship to art and otherness. Story of an animated Saturday afternoon.

The Setting of the Marais: A Perfect Alliance Between History and Modernity



Galerie Joseph Saint-Merri, an architectural gem nestled in the heart of Paris, provided MENART Fair with a setting as prestigious as it was intimate. The space, bathed in natural light, seemed to breathe with the artworks, magnifying them and allowing them to fully exist. The bright white walls stood discreetly, like blank pages ready to welcome the stories each artist had to tell. This historic venue in the Marais, a Parisian district full of contrasts, proved to be an ideal backdrop for this fifth edition. The blend of classical architecture and modernity that characterizes Galerie Joseph allowed the artworks to engage in dialogue not only with each other but also with the surrounding space. The gallery came to life, every corner becoming an invitation to contemplation and escape.



Lebanese exhibitors: ambassadors of a thriving artistic scene

The four Lebanese exhibitors and artists captivated the audience, each carrying within them a part of that vibrant, complex, and ever-changing Lebanon, despite the country's increasingly unstable context. Agial Art Gallery, Artists of Beirut, Kalim Art Space, and ZAAT, with their selection of poetic and bold works, unveiled intimate stories and reflections on the duality of identity, belonging, memory, and exile. The galleries' commitment to promoting Lebanese art was palpable, offering a fascinating dialogue between the works and the viewer. I noted that the selection of pieces, oscillating between abstraction and figuration, provided a unique perspective on the influences of the diverse cultures that traverse Lebanon and its diaspora.

Celebrating women's creation: MENART Fair's bold commitment

A hundred female artists were spotlighted under the guidance of a selection committee composed of Essia Hamdi, Stefania Angarano, Kalim Bechara, and Leila Varasteh. By dedicating this edition to women artists, MENART Fair made a bold and necessary gamble. Offering a platform to these often-silenced voices is to shed light on long-forgotten narratives—stories of resilience, courage, and beauty. As Laure d'Hauteville, the fair's founder, emphasized, "*It is time for the art market to implement concrete initiatives for the recognition and representation of women artists.*" The works presented invited viewers to be surprised, to feel, and to understand the many facets of femininity within these constantly evolving societies. Whether through monumental installations, exquisitely fine paintings, or poignant photographs, each artist successfully reinvented the codes of contemporary creation.





A thriving atmosphere: MENART Fair, a point of convergence

One of the most striking aspects of this edition was the incredible energy that permeated Galerie Joseph. Visitors crowded the aisles and staircases, eager for discovery and dialogue. The artworks seemed to come to life under the gaze of art lovers, collectors, and critics, creating an almost palpable excitement. This was not just a contemporary art fair, but a true space for dialogue, sharing, and encounter. The young mediators played a crucial role in fostering this atmosphere of conviviality and openness. Their enthusiasm and subject knowledge created bridges between the works and the public, making art accessible without ever diminishing its essence. MENART Fair thus succeeded in creating an event both refined and popular, at the intersection of artistic elitism and the democratization of culture.