PARIS AS A STAGE: WHY MENART FAIR MATTERS TO THE ARAB WORLD

Paris as a Stage: Why Menart Fair Matters to the Arab World The 7th edition of Menart Fair — "Where Is Home?" — opens in Paris on 23–25 October 2026. Matahef joins as a media partner.

Every October, Paris Art Week transforms the French capital into the most watched stage in the international art world. For the past seven years, one fair has insisted that the art of the Arab world — its modern masters, its living artists, and its diasporic voices — belongs at the center of that conversation.

Founded in 2021, Menart Fair is the first international fair exclusively dedicated to modern and contemporary art from the Middle East and North Africa. Held at the Joseph-Tureune Gallery in the Marais, it has established itself as both a commercial platform and a cultural statement. The 2025 edition brought together 40 galleries from 18 countries, 117 artists, and more than 7,000 visitors — including nearly 1,800 collectors, institutions, and VIPs. In a global art market dominated by a handful of hubs, Menart Fair offers the MENA region not a platform of patronage, but one of parity.

WHERE IS HOME?

The central question of the 7th edition needs no translation for Arab audiences. It is the question of displacement and return, of exile and inheritance, of identities remade through encounter. Galleries from the Middle East, North Africa, and their diasporas will gather in Paris to offer their answers — approaching home not as a fixed point of origin, but as a center of gravity to be built, again and again.

The Project Room this year is dedicated entirely to the Algerian art scene, and is curated by Wassyla Tamzali — lawyer, writer, founder of Les Ateliers Sauvages in Algiers, and former Director of UNESCO's Women's Rights Program. Her focus is a reminder that the region's least-visible scenes are often its most urgent.

MATAHEF AT MENART FAIR

Matahef is proud to partner with Menart Fair for 2026. Both are built on the conviction that Arab cultural production deserves sustained international attention — and that the institutions, curators, and artists of the MENA region should be shaping the global cultural conversation, not merely observing it from its margins. Matahef will be present in Paris in October, hosting on-site discussions and a round table, and bringing the fair's conversations back to our readers across MENA and beyond. ■



EIGHTY YEARS OF MUSEUMS WITHOUT BORDERS

ICOM MARKS ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY UNDER THE THEME: "MUSEUMS UNITING A DIVIDED WORLD"

Founded in Paris in 1946, in the immediate aftermath of the most destructive conflict in human history, the International Council of Museums was built on a conviction that felt radical at the time and remains urgent today: that museums are not national trophies but shared responsibilities, and that their duty to protect, transmit, and make accessible cultural heritage transcends borders, beliefs, and politics.

Eight decades on, ICOM has grown into the world's largest museum network, bringing together more than 67,000 museum professionals across 137 countries and territories. In 2026, it marks this milestone under the theme Museums Uniting a Divided World, a phrase that reads less like a celebration than a call to action. The Annual Meetings, held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris on 24–25 June, set the tone for a year-long campaign inviting the global museum community to reflect on what eighty years of collective work have achieved—and what still lies ahead.

ICOM international council of museums

Among the meeting's most significant outcomes was the adoption of a revised ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, the result of a multi-year consultation involving ICOM's National and International Committees, Regional Alliances, and affiliated organizations worldwide. The revised Code reinforces museums' role as spaces for dialogue, inclusion, ethical practice and service to society, while addressing contemporary challenges including decolonization, climate responsibility and the responsible use of digital technologies.

For Matahef's readership, the anniversary carries a particular resonance. The questions ICOM was founded to address, how do we protect heritage across crises, share it across cultures, and keep it alive across generations, are not abstract. They are the daily work of every institution and professional featured in this issue. ■