

Group Exhibition at Lawrie Shabibi Explores the Loss of Heritage in the Modern Middle East

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The latest group exhibition by Dubai's Lawrie Shabibi gallery takes as its topic the loss of heritage currently occurring on a mass scale in the Middle East and beyond.

"But Still Tomorrow Builds Into My Face" will comprise work of eight artists from across Europe, America, and the Middle East. From the 2011 uprisings in Nadia Kaabi-Linke's home city of Tunis to buildings destroyed by ISIS and recreated by Shahpour Pouyan and duo Persijn Broersen & Margit Lukács, most works in the exhibition respond to recent historic events in which cultural heritage was erased or threatened to be erased.

Pouyan brings a sculpture of an 11th century Shi'ite mausoleum into the gallery space. Although he had never visited it, Pouyan had an image of the landmark on his desk. Finding that it had been demolished by the militant group, he built this work, at once a recreation and a memorial to the monument.

Broersen and Lukács' work too acts as a memorial to a destroyed building. Theirs, an animation based on the 18th century illustrations of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra, Syria, was made before a number of its ruins were wrecked by ISIS, giving an already ghostly work further weight.

While Dutch artists Broersen and Lukács focus work on the history of a monument far from the pair's European base, Palestinian artist Yazan Khalili's work relates to conflict far closer to home. In his photography series "The Day we Saw Nothing in Front of Us," 2015, he takes images of Palestinian occupied territories in which he has scratched out nearby Israeli settlements.

Taus Makhacheva's work also sees the artist grappling with the erasure of their identity in their home country in "Tightrope," 2015. A Dagestan native, Makhacheva has made a video in which a high-wire walker crosses a canyon while holding various works of art by Dagestani artists, highlighting the balancing act the artist sees between history and forgetting of her culture in the post-Soviet era.

In "But Still Tomorrow Builds Into My Face," these artworks will be joined by screenprints from Daniele Genadry showing the same Lebanese town over 10 years, and a work which looks at geo-political history in Syria through the transfer of plant samples out of the country for safekeeping by [Pia Rönicke](#).

"But Still Tomorrow Builds Into My Face" runs through May 19 at Lawrie Shabibi