



Chittrovanu Mazumdar and Mithu Sen. She is encouraged by the strong presence of eight Indian galleries at this year's fair that helps to prove Dubai's position within a wider regional market.

Strong representation is also felt from Istanbul this year, with three spaces participating. This is alongside stalwart Art Dubai supporters Agial from Beirut returning alongside Athr Gallery from Jeddah and Albareh Gallery from Bahrain. Tehran is a new addition to the extended VIP programme (along with Baku, Beirut and Kuwait City) and is present at the fair through galleries Dastan's Basement and Ag Galerie. Further noteworthy new spaces are Gallery One and Zawyeh Gallery, both from Ramallah. The later will display *Measures of Uncertainty* by Jawad Al Malhi, an important series of large-scale paintings of the people he observes from his balcony which overlooks the Shufhat Refugee Camp in East Jerusalem, a place where the artist himself was born and is today home to over 60,000 people. "Public spaces are filled with the relationships of temporary clusters of people," muses the artist, "watching and waiting." An intense study on the current human condition, it is truly terrifying that over time a sense of community has completely broken down.

Art Dubai Modern brings together presentations of artists from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia from the Twentieth Century. These include seminal sculptures by Adam Henein (Karim Francis Gallery, Cairo), abstract paintings by Samia Halaby and Moustafa Fathi (Ayyam Gallery, Dubai) and Pakistani masters Abdur Rahman Chughtai and Syed Sadequain (Grosvenor Gallery, London). The fair can also be a place for new discoveries of older practitioners. Two examples of this are Malihah Afnan at Lawrie Shabibi, Dubai and Mounirah Mosly at Hafez Gallery, Jeddah. Both are female artists, Afnan's practice was fundamentally dictated by the many upheavals she undertook during her life and the wars she experienced. Of Persian extraction, she was born in Palestine and lived in Beirut, Kuwait, the US, Paris and London where she died earlier this year. Her modest canvases are infused with memory and traces of tactile experience, mark



Yasmina Reggad, Curator of Art Dubai Projects, 2016.

Above: Lydia Ourahmane. *Land of the Sun*, 2015. Courtesy of the Artist.

"WE WANT TO STEP OUT OF THE BOX AND BE MORE VISIBLE. HAVING A BOOTH AT ART DUBAI IS PART OF THE PROCESS"

Malini Gulrajani

making, archeology and script. Mosly, on the other hand, only left her native Saudi Arabia to study in the US. Her colourful paintings on wood and burlap are a celebration of life.

In its third year, Marker will highlight a new generation of independent, artist-run spaces in the Philippines, curated by Manila based artist and curator Ringo Bunoan. Inspired by Robert Chabet (1937-2013), dubbed the father of Filipino conceptual art, the exhibition features a major installation of Chabet's and continues his ethos of giving younger artists a platform. Incredibly, it will be the first showcase of Filipino art at any art fair. Given Dubai is home to one of the biggest Filipino expatriate communities in the Middle East, many of whom work in the creative industry, it seems fitting. Work is experimental and exciting, places such as 98B COLLABoratory encourages artists to engage with the public and feels like the next Delfina, with active programming including talks, residencies and publishing outlets. The showcase will consider issues such as community, place, intervention, collaboration, labour and alternative economies. As usual there is a spill over onto gallery stands with

new participant Silverlens presenting a solo project by the winner of the 2015 Hugo Boss Asia Art Award, Maria Taniguchi. Her ongoing series of large 'brick' paintings present a grid pattern broken into different surface configurations—her attempt at organising space in the context of the densely populated urban environment of Manila.

Almost by coincidence, a second regional focus seen this year is that of North Africa and the Magreb. GVCC from Casablanca and Gypsum from Cairo are participating and two of the Abraaj Group Art Prize shortlisted artists are from Egypt: Dina Danish from Cairo and Mahmoud Khaled from Alexandria. The international artist in the Artist-in-Residence programme is Lydia Ourahmane, a recent graduate of Goldsmiths, London originally from Algeria. Her investigative practice focuses on contemporary political and social situations. Yasmina Reggad is the appointed curator of the Art Dubai Projects 2016, programme curator at aria (artist residency in algeria). She is also curating a solo exhibition at Isabelle Van Den Eyde Gallery in Dubai this March. Reggad was involved in the selection of artists which includes Algerian Massinissa Selmani who focuses his practice on print media; Egyptian performance

specialist Doa Aly and the collective Nile Sunset Annex (NSA) from Cairo. NSA is, in Reggad's words, the new Townhouse: the space that can give artists their first solo exhibition and support them. For Art Dubai they are presenting a hybrid publication. "My idea was not to engage so much in a site-specific way with the building as has been done in previous years but instead engage with the very special audience at Art Dubai," says Reggad. "How to provoke, interfere, interrupt and disrupt an audience that has a short attention span, that is what we are developing," says Nav Haq, who curator for the 2016 Abraaj Group Art Prize. His task is slightly different: to both present an exhibition at the fair while also helping the winners produce an ambitious new artwork that will form part of a collection. He does, however, also appreciate the need to exchange ideas.

Reggad's method of working with the eight artists returns to the initial mission of a residency: to encourage collaboration. A dialogue between the more established international (such as Sreshtha Rit Premnath from Bangalore living in New York who has participated in Art Statements section at Art Basel and Semani who has shown at the Lyon and Venice Biennials) and the young UAE artists, she is propagating Pablo del Val's philosophy of becoming global through the local. By reflecting current moods and attitudes, Art Dubai maintains its relevance and allure. ■
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Below: The exterior of 98B, exhibiting at the Marker section, 2015. Courtesy of 98B. Right: Malihah Afnan. *Silent Witness*, 1979. Courtesy of the Artist and Lawrie Shabibi, Dubai.

