



Sama Alshaibi, *Hornest's Nest*, 2019, Albumen print on somerset satin white 100% rag, 53.3 x 35.5 cm

## ABU DHABI ART FAIR

### *Collective booth - The Trajectory*

19 - 26 November 2020

Ayyam Gallery is pleased to announce its participating in Abu Dhabi Art's virtual 2020 edition. *The Trajectory*, is a collective representation featuring works by Rula Halawani, Sadik Kwaish Alfraji, Safwan Dahoul, and Sama Alshaibi.

## About the booth

The works chosen for this edition of Abu Dhabi Art express identity's continuity through strong ties with the past. Sama and Rula integrate old photographs and photographic techniques in their new projects, which hone on identity, and displacement.

In 'For You Mother', Rula uses archival photographs of Palestinian families and collages them on landscape photographs she's taken; meanwhile, in 'Carry Over', Sama critiques the way orientalist photographers depicted the Middle Eastern woman by mimicking their patterns and techniques.

Safwan and Sadik, on the other hand, have worked through identity's longevity their whole careers through their own narrative and protagonists.

## About the artists

Embarking on a different path than that of his contemporaries and predecessors, Kais Salman's work has Sadik Kwaish Alfraji explores what he describes as 'the problem of existence' through drawings, paintings, video animations, art books, graphic art, and installations. The shadowy protagonist who often appears in Alfraji's multimedia works represents a black void, a filter that allows him to explore the intricacies of life. By rendering his solitary character as a charcoal-coloured silhouette and minimising the formal properties of his compositions, Alfraji captures the expressed movements and subtle inflections of the body in psychologically laden environments. The artist often records his own narrative in black and white scenes of this recurring figure, particularly the loss, fragmentation, and lapses in time that underline exile.

Situated within natural environments, Sama Alshaibi's multimedia work explores spaces of conflict and the power struggles that arise in the aftermath of war and exile. Alshaibi is particularly interested in how such clashes occur between citizens and the state, creating vexing crises that impact the physical and psychic realms of the individual as resources and land, mobility, political agency, and self-affirmation are compromised. Through performance, video, photography, and installation, Alshaibi positions her own body as an allegorical site that makes the byproducts of war visible.

With a career spanning over three decades, Safwan Dahoul is now a household name both regionally and internationally. As one of the foremost painters in the Arab world, the artist has repeatedly demonstrated how contemporary modes of figuration can describe the psychic terrain of a region that is in constant flux. Throughout his career, Dahoul has managed to include varying artistic styles while still keeping to his core identity and style. Dahoul is mostly known for his beautiful melancholic and monochromatic works that present influences from the Cubist style of Picasso ranging to Assyrian and Pharaonic art.

As a native of occupied East Jerusalem, Rula Halawani began her artistic career by registering the difficulties of living under a protracted political conflict. Halawani's early works capture the many aspects of this reality, from the tedious moments of attempting to perform daily tasks under the restrictions of military occupation to the cyclical onset of violent siege that transforms Palestinian neighbourhoods, towns, and cities into overnight war zones.

## About Ayyam Gallery

Founded in 2006, Ayyam Gallery is a leading arts organization that manages the careers of diverse established and emerging artists. Blue-chip art space in Dubai, a series of collaborative projects in the United States, Europe, Africa, and Asia, and a multinational non-profit arts program have furthered the gallery's mandate of expanding the parameters of international art. With its widely respected multilingual publishing division and a custodianship program that manages the estates of pioneering artists, Ayyam Gallery has also contributed to recent efforts that document underrepresented facets of global art history.