

Rashed Al Shashai (Saudi Arabia, b. 1977)

Saudi artist Rashed Al Shashai utilises found objects and appropriated imagery as conceptual means of identifying the signs of the everyday, creating what he describes as a 'semantic field' through which philosophical questions, primarily the purpose of human existence and the functions of society, can be explored. With playful forms, Al Shashai seeks to engage viewers with the signifiers of the mundane in order to facilitate a consideration of what might otherwise create tension, such as the omnipresence of media, a global descent into superficiality, and the growing epidemic of apathy that has come to define modern life.

Born in Al Baha, Saudi Arabia in 1977, Rashed Al Shashai holds a Master of Visual Arts degree and is a prominent figure of the contemporary Saudi art scene. As a conceptual artist and arts educator, Al Shashai has been influential to a new generation of Saudi talent while also nurturing local artistic practices as a founding member of the Saudi Arabia Fine Arts society and the Art Education Society. In 2009, he established the Tasami Centre for Visual Arts, an independent space that supports cutting-edge art in the Kingdom, and was the organization's director until 2014.

Al Shashai has widely exhibited in the Arab Gulf and abroad at such venues and events as The Bates College Museum of Art, Maine, USA (2016); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2016); Low Gallery, San Diego (2016); The Armory Show, New York (2015); JOAU Tunis (2015); Hewart Art Gallery, Riyadh (2015); Hafez Gallery, Jeddah (2015); the Annual Exhibition of Emirates Fines Arts Society, Sharjah Art Museum (2012); and the Ostraka International Forum, Sharm Al Sheikh. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including First Prize from the Media Art Show, Riyadh (2011).