

أرضية
COMMON
مشتركة
GROUND

**'Common Ground':
A Group Art Exhibition
26 January – 28 March 2020**

A community exhibition by 13 artists from the United Arab Emirates

Inspired by the Red Palace exhibition in Riyadh from 13 March to 20 April 2019, this group exhibition reflects on the common ground between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, but in a contemporary manner that speaks to the younger generation.

UAE based artists of diverse backgrounds and schools of art and design worked together to create a bond and tell a story about the history of the United Arab Emirates. Emiratis and residents worked side by side, touching on the larger aspects of life such as religion and the economy.

The Red Palace was ordered to be built by King Abdulaziz in 1943 for his son, the Crown Prince Saud. The palace had a pivotal role in the history of Saudi Arabia. It was King Saud's royal residence for many years, where he hosted heads of state and world leaders. In 1953, on King Saud's move to Al Nasriya Palace, it became the headquarters for the Saudi Council of Ministers and then the Board of Grievances, until 1988.

The artists in 'Common Ground' are from different age groups. Each worked on an installation inspired by the themes of the 'Red Palace Exhibition' but which also expressed their own diverse thoughts and experiences of living in the United Arab Emirates, with the subjects as follows:

- To Dust
- 1979
- Labour
- Military
- Economy
- Trust
- The Dinner
- Prayer

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:

1. Ahmad Saeed Al Areef Al Dhaheri
2. Amna Al Memari
3. Ghanem Younes
4. Khalid Al Tamimi
5. Maha Al Hammadi
6. Maryam Al Suwaidi
7. Mattia Gambardella
8. Renad Hussein
9. Roudha Al Shamsi
10. Saoud Al Dhaheri
11. Sarah Al Adayleh
12. Shamsa Al Omaira
13. Wafa Al Qasaimi

RENAD HUSSEIN

Renad Hussein is a Jordanian artist and designer who combines innovation with function, pushing the boundaries of what is possible whilst maintaining products in context. She questions and scrutinises each stage of the design process and believes that good design maximises function with form, encompassing both social and environmental integrity. Hussein was recently chosen as one of the top 20 product designers in the Middle East, by Commercial Interior Design magazine. Her work has been shown at Downtown Design Dubai, Dubai Design Week, Design Days Dubai, Sikka Art Fair and at Warehouse421 in Abu Dhabi. Her work has also appeared in international publications such as Architectural Digest, DesignMENA, Wallpaper and Harper's Bazaar Arabia. She has also been featured on MBC TV and Al Arabiya TV. Hussein has a Bachelor's degree in interior design and architecture studies from the American University of Sharjah (2013) and she took part in the Tanween Design Programme at Tashkeel in Dubai in 2018.

THE WEIGHT OF WORDS, 2019

The idea behind the installation is to highlight the importance of education for the economic growth of a country, in order to balance the economy and achieve sustainable growth.

Studies have shown that education in every sense is one of the fundamental factors of economic development. No country can achieve sustainable economic development without substantial investment in education. Education enriches people's understanding of themselves and their world. It improves quality of life and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society. Education raises people's productivity and creativity and it promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances. In addition, it plays a crucial role in securing economic and social progress and in improving income distribution.

The installation is an interactive bookshelf that allows users to engage both visually and physically. In a never-ending dance between balance and chaos, the installation's aesthetic continuously shifts, reminding us of the constant change throughout time. Every interaction creates a new visual configuration.



RENAD HUSSEIN
THE WEIGHT OF WORDS, 2019
 WOOD, METAL
 50 X 300 X 30 CM

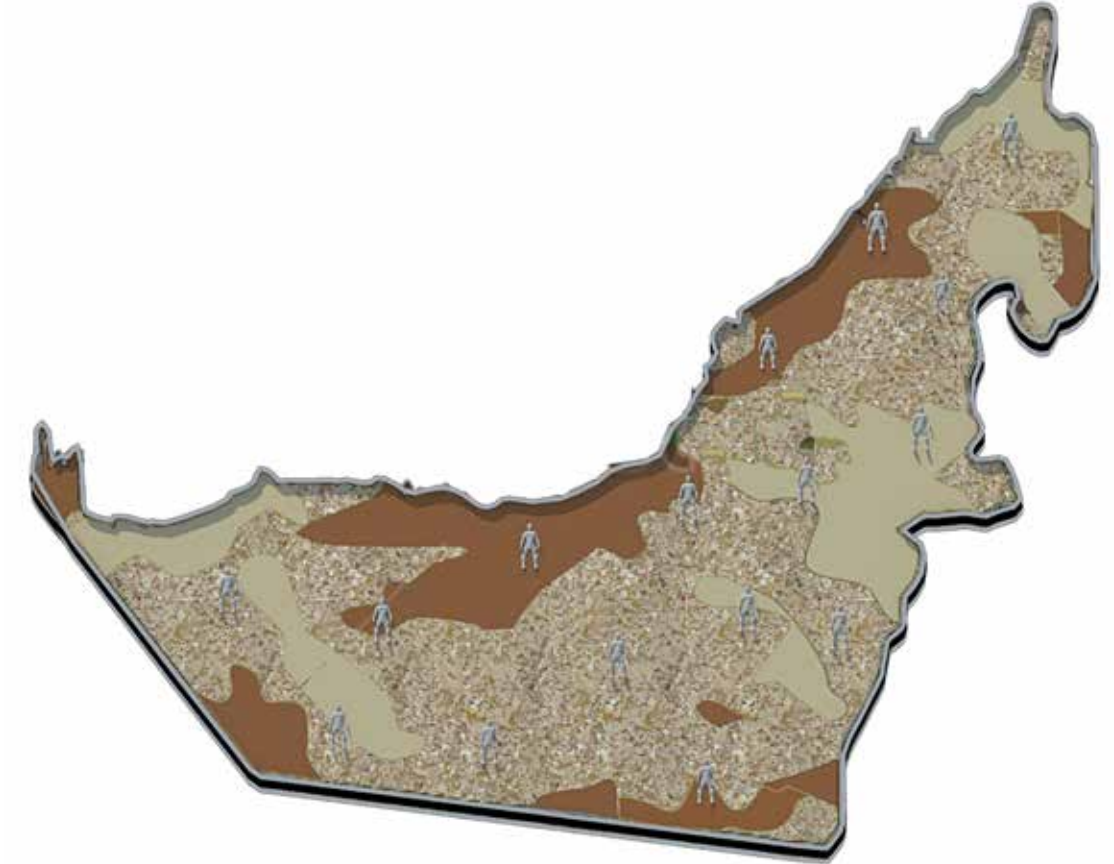
SAOUD AL DHAHERI

Born in Al Ain in 1987, contemporary artist Saoud Al Dhaheri began his journey as a photographer in 2007. He expanded his work to produce several artworks reflecting the internal struggles of millennials, which were exhibited at the Ghaf Art Gallery, Marsam Gallery, ADMAF and the Cultural Foundation.

THE MARTYRS

The most tragic news I received during my year of National Service was the sudden death of our brave soldiers in the battlefield; the news hit hard in every house across the United Arab Emirates. Each family lost a father, a son, a brother. Although we were not related, their loss was also ours. The indescribable ache of hearing the news was as if my ears were bleeding. These two artworks symbolise the impact of the news on us, once we heard the shocking news of their deaths. Their sacrifice will not be in vain and they will live forever in our memory.

The map of the United Arab Emirates is inspired by army camo, stitched with colourful pressed soldier figures and symbolising the souls sacrificed from all over the country. The 3-D ear-shaped object made of clay, around 8.5 x 5 cm, with melted Indian wax coming from the inner ear. There are soldier figures within the melted wax, symbolising the impact of hearing the news



SAOUD AL DHAHERI

THE MARTYRS, 2019

FABRIC, CLAY

200 X 150 CM

Wafa Al Qasaimi

Wafa Al Qasaimi is a poet, a calligraphy-based artist and a multidisciplinary designer. Her poetry and choice of words mines the perpetual interplay between art as a physical object and language as a transparent medium. Her work ranges from site-specific traditional installations to illustrations and painting. For the past 10 years, heritage has been a theme in her work. Al Qasaimi investigates the contrast between contemporary and traditional, reductive and ornamental calligraphy. Collaborating with local artisans, she redesigns and transforms their objects into her own unique artworks. Al Qasaimi also explores how speculative art and design can develop thought appropriate to the geospatial, political, urban and cultural realities of the 21st century. She has presented her work in private and public exhibitions throughout the United Arab Emirates, France, South Korea and Germany. Al Qasaimi was awarded the Arab Women's Award in Art in 2016 and was a winner of the International Emerging Artist Award in 2014 and the King Fahad Award for Poetry and Literature in 2018. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in visual arts from the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises, Zayed University, in 2003.

SOUL SOLITUDE, 2019

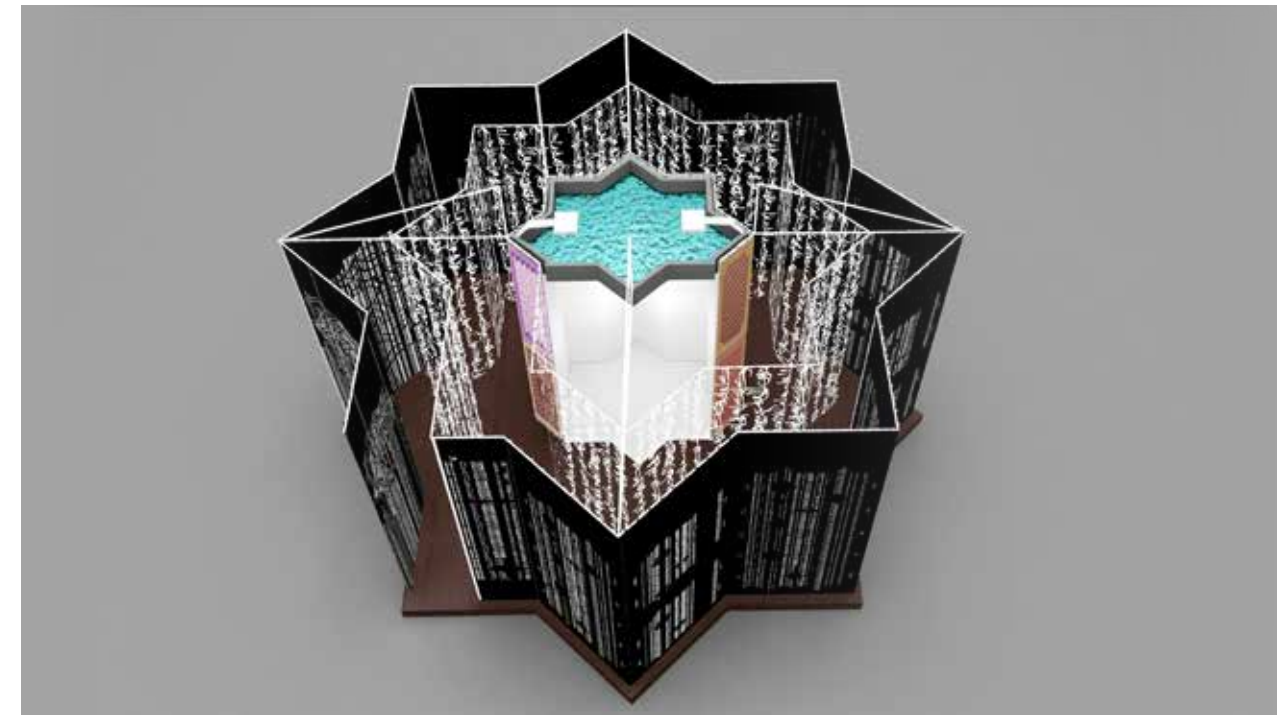
Praying in Islam has many deep meanings. The primary purpose of prayer is to act as a person's communication with Allah. Purification of the heart is the ultimate religious objective of prayer. In my point of view, it takes the human soul on an unseen journey in a short period of time, yet is enough to give him or her some rest from the everyday noisy surrounding world.

Can a soul find peace five times a day?

In this work I question ways in which we view conflict, with regards to spirituality and tranquility. The art installation is a constructive body similar to a maze; using different mediums to express the feelings of the praying spirit and the effect of prayer on one's soul. The installation uses the most famous unit in Islamic ornamentation, that is related to mosque designs, as I discovered in my research and observations.

As soon as you enter the eight-sided polygon room you are immersed into black darkness in the narrow corridor. As you walk, the colours change and the alley is filled with colourful laser-

cut praying mats hung on the walls. When you near the praying area, the colours change to pure white, with an interior of white Islamic ornaments and a white praying mat, and some Islamic calligraphy related to the subject. The ceiling above the small praying area is filled with water and special effects lighting gives a soothing feeling of peace and self-tolerance, along with the mixed sounds of Adhan. The exterior walls of the art installation are covered with special pieces that contain some of my poems, that are related to the subject and can also be sold as individual pieces.



Wafa Al Qasaimi

SOUL SOLITUDE, 2019

ER, WOOD, ACRYLIC, LIGHT, WATER, RUGS

400 X 400 CM

SHAMSA AL OMAIRA

Shamsa Al Omaira is a visual artist born in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. In her work, she conceptually explores philosophy and the mind and it is deeply embedded in her personal experience. Her ideas are expressed through media including painting, photography, printmaking and mixed media installation, as well as found and collected materials. Al Omaira was one of the eight founding members of the 'Lest We Forget' concept and exhibition, curated by creative director Dr. Michele Bambling, as part of the UAE Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2014. She was one of two Emirati artists chosen to be featured in an international book by Richard Noyce, titled *Printmaking Off the Beaten Track*, in 2014. She was also one of the influential Emirati artists profiled in *Art of the Emirates*, published in 2015 at Abu Dhabi Art. Her work has been featured in exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates, including 'The Nishan' at the Bastakiya Art Fair in Dubai and 'UAE Inspiration' at the Art Hub, Abu Dhabi. She curated her first solo exhibition 'Deer in the Headlights' at the Ghaf Art Gallery in Abu Dhabi in June 2012 and exhibited a body of work titled 'Muted Thoughts' at Abu Dhabi Art Fair in 2012. She also participated in 'MAG', a mobile art gallery, which was part of Dubai Art Fair in 2013. Her most recent local exhibition was 'Three Generations', curated by ADMAF, which was held at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi. Internationally, Al Omaira took part in the group show, 'Emerge II: Radiating Ports', at the Museum Diocesano in Venice, Italy, as part of the 2011 Venice Biennale. Her work was also shown at the first Emirati exhibition in London, titled 'Three Generations', at Sotheby's.

ETCHED IN THE MEMORY

A loved one once sat here. This is a thought that replays in the mind of every person who has experienced loss. Their empty places are significant; they fill us to the brim with grief and sorrow, and yet there is love to be felt and visible pride.

This is a commemorative piece to honour our martyrs, a dinner table with eight places, symbolising their infinite presence in our hearts. The number signifies unity, which is grasped in our shared loss. Suspended without its base, the table top floats, to emphasize their intangible presence, felt but not seen. The United Arab Emirates emblem is carved into the underlying corners that carry the table, a metaphor of our patriotism to this nation as the foundation that holds us all together. The Soldier's Oath will be etched on the table top, while empty plates will be

carved into the table, creating a piece that not only reflects their significance but honours their sacrifice and commends their families' perseverance. Through this piece I aspire to stimulate a combination of reactions; the feelings of loss, void and grief parallel the feelings of empathy, hope and pride.



SHAMSA AL OMAIRA
ETCHED IN THE MEMORY, 2019
 WOOD
 180 X 100 CM

MARYAM AL SUWAIDI

Maryam Al Suwaidi, an Emirati interior designer and artist, has a Master's degree from Utah State University in the United States of America. She is the co-founder of Design Talk Studio and also designs furniture. She took part in the Ramadan Art Bazaar in 2013 and Abu Dhabi Art in 2014. Al Suwaidi showcases Islamic art in a creative functional way. She was listed in the Interior Design 2014 Power List by DesignMENA and has been featured in Commercial Interior Design, Bint Al Khaleej, Villa88 and Harper's Bazaar Interiors magazines. In addition, she took part in the 'Emirati Expressions' exhibition with a unique furniture design influenced by Arabic calligraphy and geometric design, and in the 'Emirati Traditional Games' exhibition at the Qattara Arts Centre in Al Ain, in which she presented an interpretation of a traditional swing.

ONE PLATE

The concept of the installation is inspired by the traditional way of dining in the United Arab Emirates. We eat together around one plate, with whomever the person is sitting next to you. The installation displays modern seating with a projector showing a loop video of people eating from one plate, projected on the traditional Sarood. The structure is a modern interpretation of a traditional tent, using ropes and fabrics surrounding the seating area.



MARYAM AL SUWAIDI

ONE PLATE, 2019

MIXED MEDIA, VIDEO

300 X 300 CM

MARYAM AL SUWAIDI

THE SEVEN SANDS OF THE UAE

The concept of the installation is inspired by the seven sands of the Emirates. It reflects diversity and unity in its architectural connectivity and displays the beautiful sand colours of the United Arab Emirates and the modern architecture of the country. This piece shows the United Arab Emirates as a symbol of unity, modern architecture, as well as our desert roots.



MARYAM AL SUWAIDI
THE SEVEN SANDS OF THE UAE, 2019
PLASTIC, SAND, WOOD
400 X 300 CM

GHANEM YOUNES

Ghanem Younes was born and raised in Kuwait before moving to the United Arab Emirates to study architecture. His main passion is connecting art, architecture and technology to communicate human emotions on a spatial level. He does this through advanced computational methodologies coupled with rapid 3-D prototyping to realise such ideals. He was also a member, along with Khalid Al Tamimi, of the team which won the 2016 Christo and Jeanne-Claude Award, with the artwork *The Silk Road*. Younes was the lead architect and designer of the Bean to Bar chocolate store in Kuwait, which was shortlisted among the top five global interior designs of 2018 in *Architizer* magazine. The same project was awarded the MEA Interior Design of the Year Award that year.

KHALID AL TAMIMI

Born and raised in the United Arab Emirates, Khalid Al Tamimi is a Palestinian/Jordanian architect and artist whose love of architecture and the arts developed from a young age. He studied painting, printmaking and pottery at Sharjah Art Institute and received a Bachelor's degree in architecture from the American University of Sharjah in 2016. Al Tamimi was the winner of Dubai Design Week's Urban Commissions 4.0 in 2018 and was among the shortlisted designers for the Van Cleef & Arpels Emergent Designer Prize in 2019. He was also shortlisted for the 10th edition of the Sheikha Manal Young Artist Award. He was a member of the first-prize winning team of the Omrania/CSBE Award and a member of the winning team for the Christo and Jeanne-Claude Award in 2016, for *The Silk Road* installation. He contributed to several art exhibitions, including 'The Arrivals' at Al Serkal House in Sharjah (2010) and the 'Subjects Matter(s)' (2014) art exhibition at Hunar Gallery, Dubai.

SARAH AL ADAYLEH

Sarah Al Adayleh was born and raised in the United Arab Emirates and studied at the American University of Sharjah (AUS). She joined a Design/Build course at AUS to create a shading structure on the campus between the college of architecture and the student centre. With her team, she built a 1:1 scale of part of the structure to show its feasibility. Al Adayleh also painted murals in 2nd December Street, Satwa, Dubai, for the 'Dubai Street Museum' project with the Dubai Media

Office. Global artists were invited to work on this streetscape and to create large-scale take up.

HORIZON

1979 marked an acceleration in the transformation of the United Arab Emirates. With the state visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and the opening of the Dubai World Trade Centre during her visit, the United Arab Emirates demonstrated its vision and ambitions.

As a melting pot of cultures and tolerance, this vision came to life through the setting of strategic goals and milestones. We always look to the horizon for inspiration for the next big achievement, and the World Trade Centre presents this window into the transformation of the United Arab Emirates, by being a beacon of achievement.

Horizon aims to highlight this catalyst in the country's transformation — the World Trade Centre in Dubai — and to celebrate its legacy as an icon of this period. Extracting the architectural elements and studying the building's form, its layers are uncovered and unveil its true inner purpose — to be a hub in moving the country ahead and in achieving what many have perceived as impossible.



**GHANEM YOUNES,
KHALID AL TAMIMI,
SARAH ALADAYLEH**

HORIZON, 2019

6 MM CARDBOARD, STEEL SHEETS, STEEL L-CHANNELS

270 X 180 X 250 CM

GHANEM YOUNES

Ghanem Younes was born and raised in Kuwait before moving to the United Arab Emirates to study architecture. His main passion is connecting art, architecture and technology and in communicating human emotions at a spatial level. He does this through advanced computational methodologies coupled with rapid 3-D prototyping to realise such ideals. He was also a member, along with Khalid Al Tamimi, of the team who won the 2016 Christo and Jeanne-Claude Award, with the artwork *The Silk Road*. Younes was the lead architect and designer of the Bean to Bar chocolate store in Kuwait, which was shortlisted among the top five global interior designs of 2018 in *Architizer* magazine. The same project was awarded the MEA Interior Design of the Year Award that year.

MATTIA GAMBARELLA

Mattia Gambardella is a designer (ARB, AA MA) and a researcher. He graduated from the Polytechnic of Milan and worked in Italy, Norway (at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology — NTNU) and France, before completing his MA degree programme at the Architectural Association in London. He taught at the London Metropolitan University and at University College London's Bartlett School of Architecture, was a Master Unit Lead at the University of Kent and was an Adjunct Professor at the American University in Dubai. Gambardella has served as a guest critic at the Architectural Association, the University of Westminster and the University of East London. His work on Generative Design and Responsive Architecture was presented at the Subtle Technologies Festival in Canada and in Barcelona. He recently received a Design Award at FEIDAD (Far Eastern International Digital Architectural Design) in Taiwan.

ETIHAD

The Emirates' military was founded in 1951, and after the pivotal Union in 1971, the seven emirates were unified under one country. This led to the creation of the unified armed forces, whose primary responsibility is to defend and maintain national security.

The Etihad artwork celebrates the event of the union, with seven pillars to represent the United Arab Emirates alliance. Oriented in such a way as to invite the user to explore the artwork, the pillars show the image of a falcon, the primary symbol of the United Arab Emirates military force.

The anamorphic image allows us to see the symbol only if we look at all the seven pillars together. This artwork is interactive, allowing users to walk across the pillars, and it creates a sense of anticipation and sparks curiosity.



**GHANEM YOUNES,
MATTIA GAMBARELLA**

ETIHAD, 2019

PAINTED MDF

300 X 225 X 225 CM

AMNA AL MEMARI

Amna Al Memari was born and lives in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. She graduated with an MFA in sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design and has a Bachelor's degree in visual arts from the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises, Zayed University. Al Memari was a fellow in the Salama bint Hamdan Emerging Artists Fellowship (SEAF).

IN AN EXCHANGE WITH TIME

My studio practice is characterised by labour-intensive processes that are perplexing yet subtle investigations into the true meaning of the transpersonal. I'm intrigued and moved by the experiential side of being a human. How can I operate from a deeper level while being true to the complexities of the collective? The urge to answer this question shaped my research interests, which include consciousness research, neuro-linguistic programming, cognitive science and kinesthetic awareness.

In this body of work, I am exploring time as a medium of exchange. Intangible, ephemeral and poetic. Formed by an accumulation of moments that shapes where we stand in the axis within the walls of this place. The process is a literal depiction of removing the time element of our experience here, using photographs to both encapsulate and record time, and moving them through the process through which time is erased from their form.



AMNA AL MEMARI
IN AN EXCHANGE WITH TIME, 2019
 DIGITAL DRAWINGS
 30 X 30 CM

AHMAD SAEED AL AREEF AL DHAHERI

Ahmad Saeed Al Areef Al Dhaheri (born in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates, in 1988) is an Emirati multidisciplinary artist. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communication from the College of Arts and Sciences at the American University of Sharjah in 2012. He then pursued a Master's degree in art history and museum management at the Paris-Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, in 2017. Over the past decade, Al Areef Al Dhaheri's multidisciplinary artistic practice has become synonymous with conceptual photography, and he has recently broadened his scope of artistic mediums to include digital art, video installations, photo manipulation, oil on canvas and illustration, specifically ink on paper. He embeds historical symbols through contemporary mediums to represent and convey the significance of past cultures and heritage. Al Dhaheri has exhibited locally and abroad at numerous galleries and museums. Recent exhibitions include: 'Portrait of a Nation', Abu Dhabi Music and Arts Foundation (ADMAF), Abu Dhabi, 2016; 'Portrait of a Nation', ME Collectors Room Berlin/Olbricht Foundation, Berlin, 2017; 'UAE Design Stories: The Next Generation from the Emirates', Milan Design Week, Milan, 2018; 'UAE Design Stories: Objects of the Past: Today', London Design Fair, London, 2018; 'UAE Design Stories', UAE Cultural Week, Galerie Nikki, Paris, 2018; 'UAE Design Stories: Design for Littles: Us, Ours and Others', Dubai Design Week, Dubai, 2018; and 'Beyond: Emerging Artists', Abu Dhabi Art, Abu Dhabi, 2018. Al Areef Al Dhaheri is an employee at the National Archives and, similar to his artwork, his role reflects a desire to safeguard the heritage of the United Arab Emirates and to enable it to flourish.

AL LAMAD

For a very long time, and before the industrial revolution, societies across the United Arab Emirates relied on agriculture, which dictated where they lived and worked.

The falaj irrigation system functioned as the core of those societies. It required a very sophisticated astrological tool called Al Lamad, or Al Alam or the sundial, to keep the economy fairly balanced. The whole economy was based on the operation of this tool.

This artwork will feature this main switch of those societies.



AHMAD SAEED AL AREEF AL DHAHERI

AL LAMAD, 2020

MUD, WOOD, CORAL STONE

200 X 200 X 50 CM

ROUDHA ALSHAMSI

The Roudha Alshamsi Design studio was established in 2017. Alshamsi's strong identity as an artist influences her designs and each is a work of art in the way it is created and presented. In recent years, Alshamsi has also explored furniture design through her artistic approaches, producing 'Art Furniture'. Alshamsi's artistic beginnings influenced her approach to space design. After graduating from Zayed University in 2011, she became more interested in modern, contemporary and futuristic art, as reflected in her later works. Not only does she design contemporary spaces but she also alters spaces to create defined emotional states and to convey articulate design concepts. Alshamsi has been working closely with clients on both residential and commercial projects, ranging from studio spaces to offices, libraries and private villas.

EL ESHA

Dinner is served. When having dinner in the United Arab Emirates, it is all about the different scents associated with it, whether it is the smell of food, bukhooor, coffee, French perfumes or local food, this makes the dinner significant and it resonates in one's mind. Dinner here is a celebration of a beautiful blend of traditional food scents, with an atmosphere of aromas.

Dinner aroma: each stand has a unique ingredient of this dinner aroma, such as zafran [saffron], bukhooor [incense] Arabic oil, coffee, or French and Arabic perfume served in a finjan [cup]. An interactive coloured light is added so that each stand has a unique light colour to visually distinguish between each scent.



ROUDHA ALSHAMSI

EL ESHA, 2019

VARIETY OF AROMAS

30 X 120 CM

EL HR

The story behind the design of the original emblem of the United Arab Emirates is quite extraordinary. Its significance shows the unity and strength of the seven emirates. The falcon, *Falco Peregrinus*, is one of the indigenous birds found in the United Arab Emirates. Emirati Bedouins often refer to it by 'El Hr', meaning 'the free'. It is also significant that it was chosen as it is the only wild bird that does not feed on rotten flesh. This artwork depicts the flying falcon and emphasizes the meaning of freedom behind it. The slow-motion frames of falcon silhouettes depict the beauty of the bird. The silhouettes are different in scale to add more dimension to the artwork, as it portrays a falcon flying from a distance to its final posture.

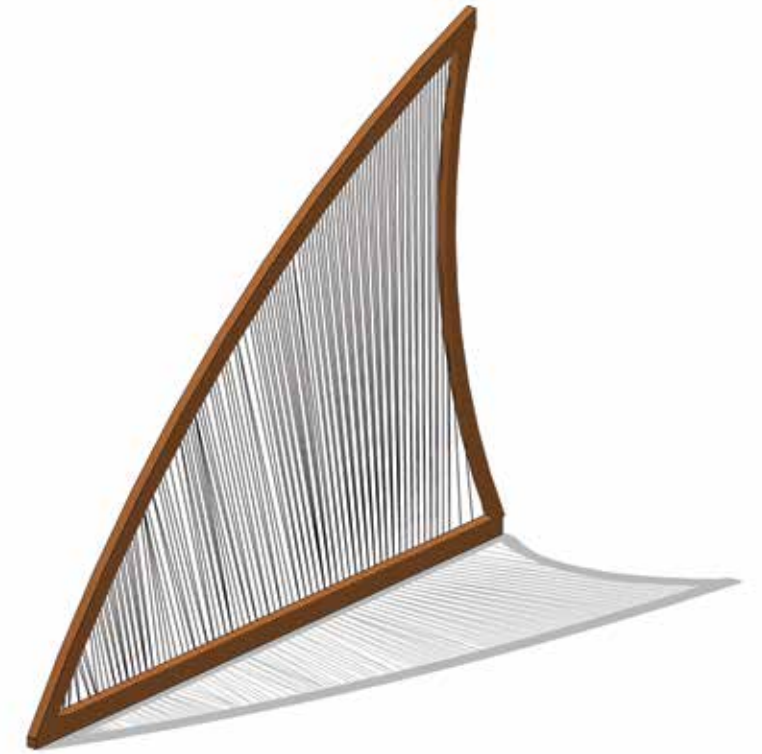
**ROUDHA ALSHAMSI***EL HR, 2019***BRASS, METAL****131.6 X 199.7 CM**

MAHA AL HAMMADI

Maha Al Hammadi is an Emirati aspiring designer who studied interior design at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, graduating with a Bachelor's degree in 2015. She won the Best Design award in the 'Qasr Al Hosn Mosque' competition that same year. Al Hammadi aims to exhibit both in the region and internationally. Currently, her work includes 3-D modelling design and digital perspectives. She is also seeking opportunities to develop her art in different mediums and to create professional work showcasing her country's cultural heritage.

ELBAHAR

The sea has played a critical role in the life and history of the United Arab Emirates. I have taken maritime life to represent the traces of what is left of this field of labour, which is almost a forgotten industry and may soon be gone altogether. It is known that the shipbuilding industry is one of the hardest professions. The maritime life of the United Arab Emirates was characterised by excellence in the ancient traditions of sailing, navigation, shipbuilding, diving, fishing and maritime trade. With this, I would like to revive the memory of those labourers, through this contemporary sculpture.



MAHA AL HAMMADI

ELBAHAR, 2019

WOOD, STRINGS

250 X 200 CM

البنك المركزي العربية المتحدة
المصرف المركزي

خمسة دراهم

بنك نقدي بمصر والقاهرة

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