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Highlights From Art Dubai 2014

MARCH 24, 2014



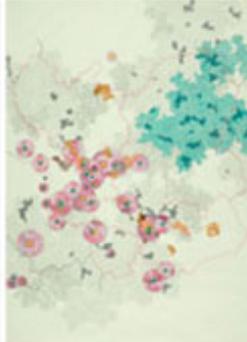
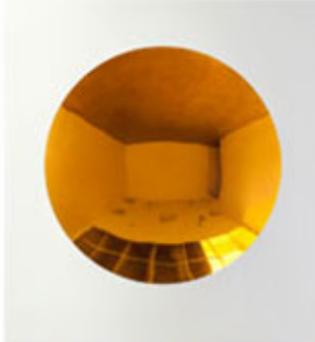
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From

Art

Dubai

2014)



(http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/files/2014/03/20140324_ArtDubaiFairReport1.jpg)

Shirin Neshat's "Bahram (Villains)," from The Book of Kings series (2012), Anish Kapoor's "Untitled" (2012), Tiffany Chung's "Communes, IE and ET Organisms" (2010), Rasheed Araeen's "Burgundy Dark" (1971), Giorgi Khaniashvili's "Portrait" (2014), Adam Henein's "Cheese Seller" (1956), Adam Henein's "Waiting for Water," (1955), Popiashvilia Gvaberidze's "Window Project Marker" (2014), Zahoor ul Akhlaq's "Untitled" (1982), Ardeshir Mohasses's "Untitled" (1997)

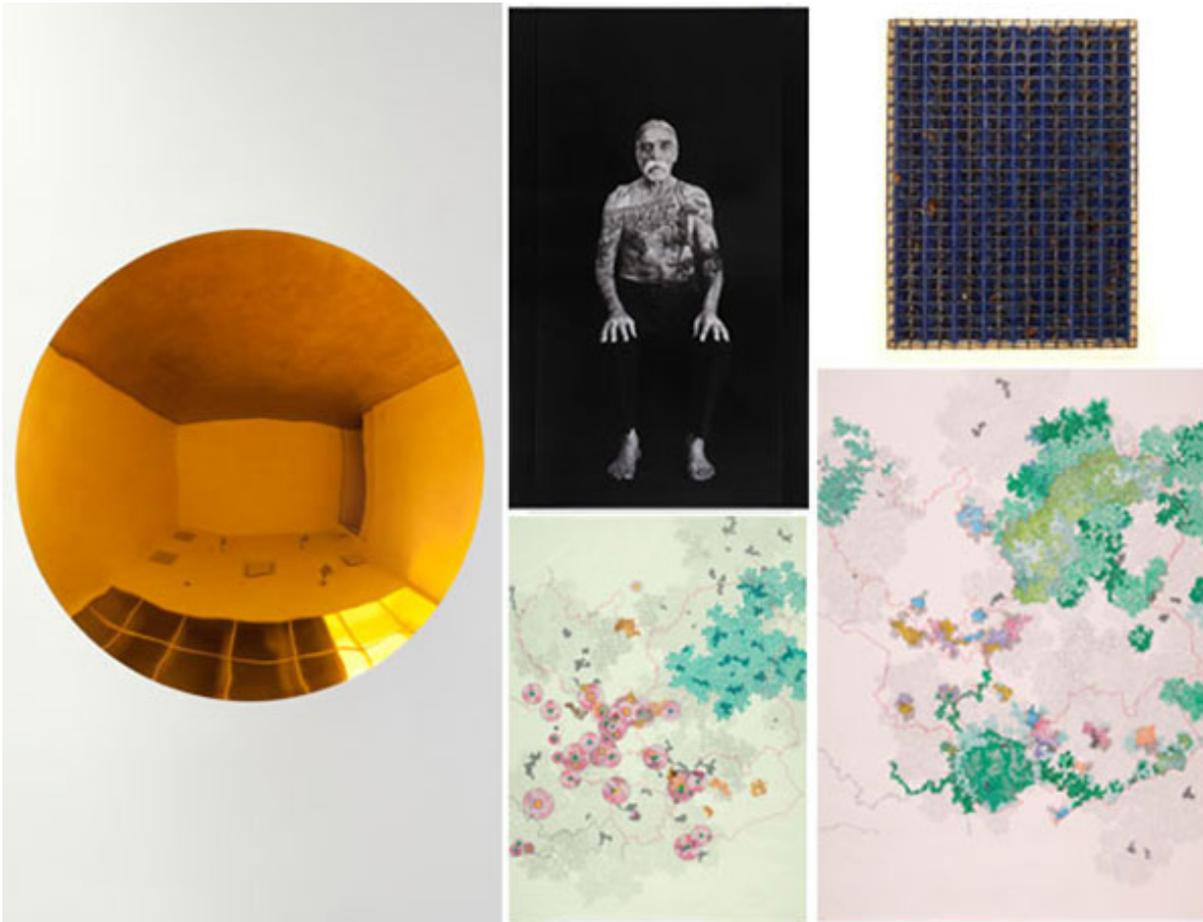
DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Art Dubai, which just completed its eight edition, running March 19-22, appears to be faring better than ever. The same might be said for its home in the Persian Gulf, the Emirati state that hosts the most important art fair in the Middle East each year. Dubai's current building boom reflects the city's booming economy — and yet, many of the works for sale at the fair are priced under \$100,000. The availability of several price points makes Art Dubai a destination for both very important collectors, like Dubai's own ruler **Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum** and Libyan Princess **Alia Al Senussi**, and for more modest art collectors looking to expand their collections with exceptional and well-priced pieces. In sum, there was a total of \$40-\$45 million worth of art for sale at this year's fair. Though Art Dubai cuts an idiosyncratic figure among the ranks of prestigious art fairs — there are 85 galleries here, compared with 203 at this month's Armory Show in New York — the tightly edited selection of exhibitors proved to be one of the fair's many positive attributes.

“Over the years, Art Dubai has become known as a fair of discovery,” said fair director **Antonia Carver** at a March 17 press conference. That may well be the case — the focus here is decidedly regional: the Madinat Jumeirah's exhibition halls are filled with work from contemporary Middle Eastern, North African, and South East Asian artists, many of whom are relatively unknown and unavailable at other major fairs. Largely unknown, too, are the artists of the Caucasus and Central Asia shown in the fair's Marker section. The curatorial debut of the art collective **Slavs and Tatars**, Marker was the most comprehensive representation of the region at any fair to date. This year also marked the debut of Art Dubai's Modern section, devoted exclusively to modern art from the MENASA region. With 11 galleries each showing work by one or two modern masters from the region, Modern proved to be but one of the highlights from Art Dubai 2014.

Contemporary

This year's Contemporary section featured 70 galleries, with Western dealers bringing pieces by Middle Eastern artists to the fair, and non-Western galleries hailing from the world over to offer work by contemporary artists both established and emerging. New York's Gladstone Gallery offered portraits by **Shirin Neshat** from the 2012 “Book of Kings” series, priced

between \$50,000 and \$110,000. Gladstone also selected **Anish Kapoor** from its venerable roster, displaying his latest Untitled reflective concave dish sculpture from 2014. Also from New York, Tyler Rollins Fine Art brought paintings by **Sopheap Pich** and recent map illustrations by **Tiffany Chung**; among its display were two such maps made specifically for Art Dubai 2014, both of which sold for an undisclosed sum. "It's going really well," said gallery manager **Hisakiku Abe**, a sentiment repeated many times over in the fair's other booths.



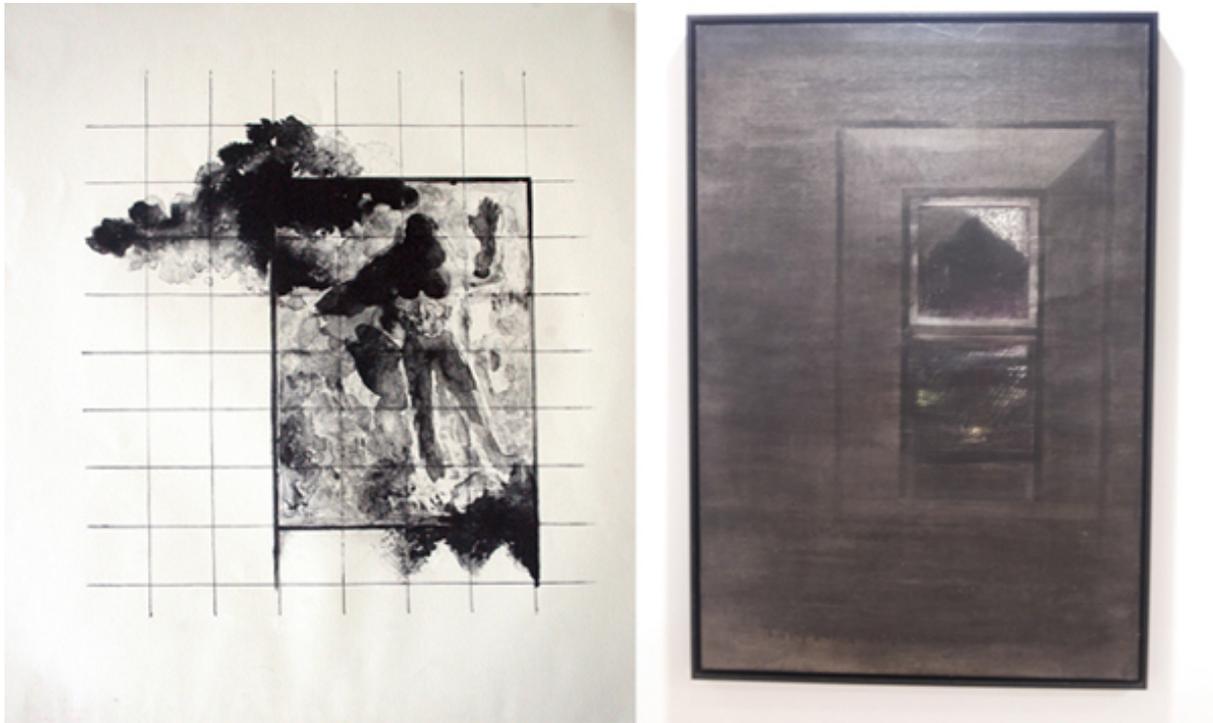
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Anish Kapoor's "Untitled" (2012), Shirin Neshat's "Bahram (Villains)," from The Book of Kings series (2012), Sopheap Pich's "Blue on Blue and Reds" (2013), Tiffany Chung's "Communes, Nature and ET Organisms" (2010) and "Communes, IE and ET Organisms" (2010)

Modern

Modern debuted with both impressive art and steady sales, with each booth presenting a solo or two-person show by the likes of **Rasheed Araeen** represented by Grosvenor Gallery in London, **Hamed Abdalla** and **Adamn Henein** represented by Karim Francis in Cairo, and **M.F. Husain** represented by Aicon Gallery in New York. The section's most impressive display featured Iranian-American artist **Ardeshir Mohasses**, represented by Shirin Gallery in Tehran and New York. His collages, made in 1987 and 1988 from illustrations discarded a decade earlier, are akin to Iranian Dada — and unlike any other pieces available at the fair. Elsewhere

in the Modern section, Karachi-based Artchowk Gallery brought outstanding work from **Zahoor Ul Ahkla**. Many of his painting are based on the image of a grid, such as the standout piece, "Homage to the Nobel Prize," from 1983, which sold for \$15,000-\$25,000 at the fair. Dubai-based gallery Lawrie Shabib, which represented **Nabil Nahas**, brought his early abstract geometric paintings from the 1970s to the fair. Untitled from 1976 and Untitled 2 from 1978 both sold, the former to a private collector and the latter to a London-based institution. With two more canvases reserved, the gallery's results at the fair mirrored the successful sales of the other participants in the inaugural Modern section.



(http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/files/2014/03/20140324_ArtDubai2.jpg)

(l-r) Zahoor ul Akhlaq's "Homage to the Nobel Prize" 1983 and "Untitled" 1991. Courtesy ArtChowk

Marker

Marker, Art Dubai's program of curated art spaces and galleries, is the non-commercial section of the fair, devoted to the exhibition of artwork from a region related historically or culturally to the Middle East and the Islamic world. This year's edition of the Marker section, devoted to the Caucasus and Central Asia, follows on previous iterations of Marker focused on West African art and Indonesian art. Compared to these previous editions, the Caucasus and Central Asia are relatively unknown in terms of location and artistic output — which led the artists Slavs and Tatars, who curated the section, to adopt a "regime of portraiture," according to group member **Payam Sharifi**. Slavs and Tatars selected five arts organizations to represent the region: the Popiashvili Gvaberidze Windows Project, a public artspace and

commercial gallery from Tbilisi, Georgia; Yarat! Contemporary Art Organization, an NGO from Baku, Azerbaijan; ArtEast, an NGO from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; the North Caucasus branch of the National Center for Contemporary Arts (NCCA), a state institution devoted to the promotion of contemporary art in Vladikavkaz, Russia; and Asia Art +, a foundation based in Almaty, Kazakhstan that supports the development of contemporary art in the region and operates Astral Nomads, an online archive of Kazakh contemporary art.

True to its designation as a “regime of portraiture,” Marker’s participants displayed work that focused on representation, a departure from the abstraction seen elsewhere in the Contemporary galleries. Popiashvili Gvaberidze Windows Project included the work of **Giorgi Khaniashvili**, a church icon painter whose 2010 “Venus” wood sculpture presents a female head atop an androgynous body, a statement, according to gallerist **Irena Popiashvili**, criticizing the Georgian Orthodox Church. In the Asia Art + booth, **Sergei Maslov’s** “Baikonur 2” collage from 1990 represented aliens sitting with tribal leaders — merging the futurism of space imagery with traditional Kazakh culture. Whereas the commercial nature of the Contemporary galleries drove dealers to bring work that would sell well at Art Dubai, Marker’s non-commercial focus made for a presentation that highlighted the experimental and critical qualities of contemporary art from the southern and eastern colonies of the former Russian Empire.



http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/files/2014/03/20140324_ArtDubaiMarker2.jpg

(clockwise) Stanislav Kharin's "Poetic Entente or Occupation of the Heart," 2009, Sergey Maslov's "Baikonur 2," 1990, Huseyn Haqverdiyev's "Profile," 2004, Valeriy Ruppel from the series "Do Not Believe Kipling," 2013, Taus Makhacheva's "Landscape," 2013, Sergey Maslov's "The Girl of My Dreams," 1997, and Reza Hezare's "Drawing Collection: In Exile" (detail), 2008

Photo Credit: (Top) – Courtesy Gladstone Gallery, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, Grosvenor Gallery, Popiashvili Gvaberidze, Karim Francis, Art Dubai 2014, and Ardeshir Mohasses Trust / (Middle) – Courtesy Gladstone Gallery and Tyler Rollins Fine Art / (Bottom) – Courtesy of North Caucasus Branch of the National Centre for Contemporary Art, Asia Art+, Boku MOMA, Voyager Gallery, and YAY Gallery



[\(http://www.artinfo.com/blog/est-03-shape/?u=http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/2014/03/24/auction-houses-recruit-lobbyists-jay-z-beefs-with-drake-and-more/\)](http://www.artinfo.com/blog/est-03-shape/?u=http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/2014/03/24/auction-houses-recruit-lobbyists-jay-z-beefs-with-drake-and-more/)
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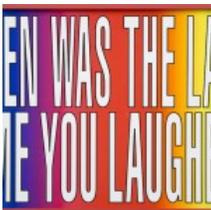
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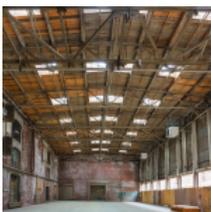
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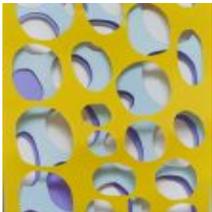
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