

emotional responses in Art Dubai's visitors," commented Mohammed Hanz, co-founder of Athr Gallery.

“As one of Saudi Arabia’s leading contemporary art galleries, we are committed to showcasing emerging and established artists who push the boundaries of artistic expression and represent the kaleidoscope of perspectives, view points and realities that reflect the Middle East. There is great room for debate and we are pleased to be able to offer a unique point of view through our consecutive 4th year of participation at Art Dubai” said Hamza Serafi, co-founder of Athr Gallery.

During Art Dubai 2012, Athr Gallery will feature the work of the following artists: Acclaimed multimedia artist **Ayman Yossri Daydban** will be presenting Ihramat, a concept born out of a defining tradition and custom adopted during the holy Hajj pilgrimage, wherein he questions the ultimate promise of a social ideal and uses authentic ihramat, the customary white cloth worn by pilgrims, in multiple variations. In line with the same theme, Daydban also offers the striking Kunna Jamee’an Ikhwa, a still from the movie Malcolm X, when he is performing the Hajj, to convey a moment of enlightenment and pure understanding. Highly respected by collectors and fellow artists, Daydban has enjoyed solo and group exhibitions in Europe and across the Middle East since 1992.

**Sami Al Turki**'s eclectic and varied photography style is a reflection of his diverse cultural upbringing and the confused occidental vs. oriental atmosphere of Dubai. Through his Charity boxes series, Turki explores how “good causes” come and go as easily as fashion trends, leaving the people who were made dependent on our charity more desperate than ever. At age 28, Sami is fast emerging as an astute social commentator through his reflective, insightful and brutally honest manifestations of reality and its consequences.

**Rashed Al Shashai**is a very active member of the Saudi art scene and has made significant contributions to the contemporary art movement. Through his New Prayer Rug, he makes a bold statement on the influx of oil wealth that has led some to superficiality and forgetting to appreciate God's numerous gifts and ironically, the gift of oil itself.

A monumental sculptor and ardent observer of the human condition,**Saddek Wasil** turns his attention to the age-old human condition of love in Romeo and Juliet, from the series 'Celebrated Sweethearts',which depicts lovers from the beginning of time, presenting the amorous legends of Nizami's Shirin and Khosrow and Arabian poetry's Antar and Abba.

Riyadh-based artist **Maha Malluh** examines the emblematic cultural symbols of Saudi Arabia's civilization. In The Road to Mecca, Malluh's photographs involve a technique whereby she captures images that she contrives, without the use of a camera. By positioning different objects in a kind of studied chaos, and by sometimes altering their original size, she creates a kind of theatre and depicts the juxtaposition between travel in the past and travel today. Additionally, in the mixed media exhibit “Food for Thought 7000”Malluh utilizes cassette tapes of religious lectures recorded and distributed during the 80's, which are set out in 30-year old bread baking trays,offering a startling social commentary on howthe thinking and mindset of an entire generation has been affected.

In The Green Dome and Al-Mabkhara, **Ibrahim Abumsmar** recreates everyday objects with the intention of questioning the essence of their identity. His sculptures probe perceived reality and succeed in impacting our lives on a subconscious and emotional level.

Calligraphy is an ancient form of expression that is closely associated with the depiction of religious texts and in Kul (meaning ‘all’ or ‘everything’), **Nasser Al Salem** explores thecomplex, all-encompassing meaning and implication of infinity.

**Jowhara AlSaud**'s Knots series are inspired by the traditional mashrabiya, tooled wooden screens that separate the private and public spaces in Islamic Architecture. The works are about many things; they revel in the ‘in between’; photography and drawing, public and private space, representation and abstraction, and obscuring and revealing. Whether they transcend or trespass, these are about the lines we draw, and the spaces in between.

**Raouf Rifai**'s critical reflection of society, both Darawichand Circus of Life, mirror the cruel circumstances of society. In Darawich, the artist reflects the mirror image of himself and his society with all the history and socio-politics that the figure embodies, while Circus of Life depicts the entertainment that the Middle East has become, with its animals, macho men and real-life clowns in all their variations –the sad, the weak, and the cowardly.

Art Dubai visitors can find Athr Gallery in Booth A1 at Johara ballroom/the Arena at Madinat Jumeirah from March 21-24, 2012.

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