



ZIAD AL NAJJAR
Under Your Eyes
Solo Exhibition

Tabari Artspace, DIFC Dubai
12 - 27 January 2022

Tabari Artspace is delighted to announce *Under Your Eyes*, the solo exhibition of Emirati visual artist Ziad Al Najjar.

Ziad Al Najjar's two and three-dimensional artworks push the boundaries of process, materiality, and visual perception.

For Under Your Eyes Al Najjar has produced a new body of work over 18-months that comprises silkscreen prints and works on canvas. Establishing an interplay between organic and inorganic forms Al Najjar infuses his symbolically dense work with icons and influences from the natural world and his everyday encounters. The artist considers the connectedness between the natural, constructed and spiritual realms and how they relate to his lived experience in the contemporary moment. For this body of work subject matter as far-reaching as historic 13th - 17th century Islamic depictions that the artist has encountered at the Art Institute of Chicago, Persian miniatures, as well as natural elements, have informed Al Najjar's abstract compositions.





The artist's intuitive output raises questions about the very character of image-making, reconstituting ideas about representation and even the canvas upon which he works. Al Najjar is guided by the process rather than the vision of an end result. Breaking from established conventions, Al Najjar works on an unstretched canvas, focusing on its material properties and releasing it from its flatness. Through his art, Al Najjar reimagines the canvas as a tapestry.

Movements from pointillism to abstraction, op-art and constructivism have impacted Al Najjar's production; the influence of Joseph Albers and Moholy Nagy is palpable. Al Najjar's palette is as fundamental to his process as his conceptual thinking. The artist is preoccupied with human emotional connection to colour. He approaches his canvas with soft, diluted acrylic paint - often tones absorbed from the earth and sky - which he patiently layers. For Al Najjar, pattern-making establishes an environment. Dense layers of colour are animated through a meticulous approach to mark-making. Al Najjar sweeps the canvas with vivid oil pastel, his forms embody the simultaneous precision and fluidity of patterns formed in nature, they meander and mutate. Manipulating depth and tone Al Najjar investigates optical creation and illusively engages with the illusionary.

The youngest artist in the gallery's roster, Ziad is still completing his BFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Tabari Artspace commits a portion of its annual programming to providing visibility and an international audience for cutting-edge emerging regional talent.

-ENDS-

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Images: <https://tabariartspace.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/>

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About Ziad Al Najjar
B. 2001

Emirati visual artist Ziad Al Najjar's exploratory approach to two and three-dimensional art aims to upturn fixed notions surrounding process, materiality, and visual perception.

Establishing an interplay between organic and inorganic forms Al Najjar infuses his symbolically dense work with icons and influence from the natural world. The artist considers the connectedness between the natural, constructed and spiritual realms and how they relate to his lived experience in the contemporary moment. The Islamic miniatures made familiar to him during his childhood regularly appear as motifs within his practice. Scenes of battle, the banal and spiritual practices are often poetically depicted in orchards or gardens. Al Najjar summons this world into his art infusing it with his recent experiences of flora, fauna, or soft shapes that resemble cells under a microfine glass. Delicate and sensual organic forms - some representational some abstract - ungrate across the artist's canvas. Translation and tension - between past and present, structure and wildness - are central to this work.

Breaking from established conventions Al Najjar works upon an unstretched canvas, placing his focus on its material properties and so releasing it from its flatness. Through his art, Al Najjar reimagines the canvas as a tapestry. Movements from pointillism to abstraction, op-art and constructivism have impacted Al Najjar's production; the influence of Joseph Albers and Moholy Nagy is palpable. Al Najjar's palette is as fundamental to his process as his conceptual thinking. The artist is preoccupied with human emotional connection to colour. He approaches his canvas with soft, diluted acrylic paint - often tones absorbed from the earth and sky - which he patiently layers. For Al Najjar, pattern-making establishes an environment. Dense layers of colour are animated through a meticulous approach to mark making. Al Najjar sweeps the canvas with vivid oil pastel, his forms embody the simultaneous precision and fluidity of patterns formed in nature, they meander and mutate. Manipulating depth and tone Al Najjar investigates optical creation and illusively engages with the illusionary.

About Tabari Artspace

A Bridge Between Worlds

For the last two decades, Tabari Artspace gallery has played a central role in connecting international audiences to the modern and contemporary artists of the MENA region and its diaspora. Advanced by an all-women team, Tabari Artspace foregrounds marginalised perspectives and lesser-known narratives in contemporary art.

Programming

Tabari Artspace has chartered the evolution of MENA art from the early 2000s towards the emerging artists of today. Our represented artists are conceptually engaged with issues pertinent to the human condition and are united through fine art quality and hand touch.

The cultural ecosystem in the UAE has been central to the Tabari Artspace trajectory. The gallery is committed to contributing to the region's cultural vision through the identification and advancement of artistic talent residing in and reflecting upon the GCC.

Community

Community engagement and wider social access to MENA art are at the core of Tabari Artspace's missions.

The gallery has fostered relationships between artists and art appreciators, establishing a dynamic community that crosses generations. Physical programming is supplemented by digital counterparts, talks, publishing, workshops, and community events. The Tabari Artspace international residency programme encourages the artists of the region to expand their practice amid new contexts.

THANK YOU

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