

5 Contemporary Artists to Check Out at Jeddah's 21,39

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10 Jan

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Written By Amina Kaabi

Although the date of the fair still hasn't been announced yet, excitement has started building for Jeddah's hotly anticipated 21,39 art fair.

Organized by the Saudi Art Council, the non-profit art initiative has now become a renowned date on the global art calendar, with gallerists, collectors and artists gathering from across the region. And with the Saudi Art Council having just announced their list of participating artists – this year's looks particularly exciting.

We selected five of our favourite contemporary artists to check out during the fair.

Ajlan Gharem,

Saudi Arabian artist, and co-founder of Gharem Studio, Ajlan Gharem has always been fascinated by his native country. Always curious about culture, the artist looks to his local environment for inspiration. His work particularly focuses on the power balance between citizens and the nation state—but most of all, the youth's ability to make change. His installation, 'Paradise Has Many Gates' garnered the artist international recognition.

Nasser Alshemimry

Better known by his pseudonym DesertFish, Nasser Alshemirmry joins the list as the only sound artist. The creative has made a name for himself in the kingdom working with renowned artists to create sounds for various visual projects. Now the artist has immersed himself into creating his own sounds to shed light on the less-popular medium of sound art in the region.

Muhannad Shono

From video and gaming to comic illustrations and installations, Muhannad Shono has done it all. The artist uses various mediums to reflect on his multi-cultural upbringing.

Ali Cha'aban

Kuwaiti-born Lebanese artist, Ali Cha'aban has made a name for himself across the Middle East for his pop-culture inspired art, having exhibited in galleries all across the region pieces rooted in his observations of Arab culture and tradition.

Khalid Zahid

Saudi artist Khalid Zahid, like Ali Cha'aban, also puts focus on culture through his art. The London-born artist experiments with various mediums and uses his work as a means to comment on various social issues.

Zahid and Cha'aban often collaborate, being best known for their pieces 'The Holy Decibel' and 'This Space is Temporary'.

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