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DUBAI: Morocco's Loft Art Gallery will make its debut at Art Basel Paris from Oct. 18-20, becoming the first Moroccan gallery to take part in the prominent fair.

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Yasmine Berrada, co-founder of the gallery, spoke to Arab News ahead of the fair, calling the opportunity a “real milestone.”

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Yasmine Berrada is co-founder of the gallery. (Supplied)

She said: “We have been working towards this for years. Since we started, we wanted to exhibit internationally.

“We want to travel with our artists, to collaborate with museums, with institutions, and so on.



Houthis?

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Mohamed Melehi, Burri B, 1958,
Mixed media on burlap, 80 x 64
cm. (Courtesy of Loft Art Gallery)

“The gallery now has a certain standing and is exhibiting alongside galleries considered to the biggest worldwide,” she added.

The gallery will showcase seven works by renowned Moroccan modernist and Casablanca Art School founder Mohamed Melehi (1936–2020), including three pieces that have never been exhibited before.



Mohamed Melehi, Untitled, 1996,
Cellulosique sur bois, 110 x 95 cm.
(Courtesy of Loft Art Gallery)

“We are participating with works from the famous artist Melehi, with whom we worked for 12 or 13 years until he passed. For us, it is a celebration of this great collaboration, all the success we achieved

with him, and everything
we accomplished
together as an artist and
gallery,” the gallerist
said.

Melehi’s radical
geometric experiments
and his iconic wave
motif were pivotal in
shaping the aesthetic of
post-independence
Morocco.



Mohamed Melehi, Untitled, 2012,
Mixed media on canvas, 120 x 115
cm. (Courtesy of Loft Art Gallery)

The artist, who was born
in the port town of
Asilah before he studied
at the Ecole des Beaux-
Arts in Tetouan, spread
his wings in New York
before returning to
Morocco in the 1960s.

The gallery’s
presentation of Melehi’s
works taps into a
growing global
fascination with
Moroccan art, with

notable figures like pop artist Hassan Hajjaj being commissioned by the likes of Vogue US and The Royal Commission for AlUla in Saudi Arabia.



Mohamed Melehi, Untitled, 1960, Mixed media on canvas, 90 x 180 cm. (Courtesy of Loft Art Gallery)

Berrada also highlighted the increasing interest in Moroccan art, saying: “I can see it when we exhibit outside Morocco, like in France or London. People also often say, ‘Oh, we’re coming to Marrakesh next year or next month, and we want to visit your gallery’.”



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