

ZOOM ON...

Fade Away by JEFFAR KHALDI

As a Palestinian, it's hard not to combine personal history with the tragic events that unfold each day in the Middle East. Politics and history are part of people's DNA. They can kick and scoff at the idea but a life devoid of any references to the events that have unfolded in the past 100 years or so in the region is nearly impossible. So when artist Jeffar Khaldi presents, for his fourth solo show at the Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde in Dubai, an exhibition focused



on family portraits, you can be pretty sure political references are not far off. Through his masterful and colourful paintings, reminiscent at times of German Expressionism, Khaldi gives a very personal view on history. Here, he pays tribute to his family's life in 1960s Lebanon. The sense of nostalgia, of time passed, but also of the interruptions and fractures, are made potent with faded colours that are reminiscent of old family photographs which

the sun has dulled over time. Born in Lebanon in 1964, Khaldi – who has exhibited at Saatchi's inaugural show on Middle Eastern art, and more recently at Qatar's Museum of Modern Art – has been living in Dubai since the late nineties. His paintings have been scooped up by major collectors in the region, and another more political series of paintings, showing Arab heads of state daydreaming about anything but the matter at hand exhibited in Sharjah, is also worth a visit. This is definitely an artist who will leave his mark. Fade Away is on until February 18th at Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde. www.ivde.net

Top 3 expos

Dubai

The grand matriarch of Iranian artists, Monir Sharoudy Farmanfarmaian has graces the Third Line's main gallery, as well as its satellite project space, for a grand new show combining ancient traditional craft and avant-garde artistic concepts to create tantalizing geometric 3D sculptures. Squares, circles and triangles are shaped using a classical Persian mirror mosaic technique, a style that has become Farmanfarmaian's trademark over the years. This time, the focus is on the infinite kaleidoscopic possibilities of arranging these shapes and their never ending potential.

Kaleidoscope is on until February 24th. www.thethirdline.com

Beirut

Young gallery owner Lea Sednaoui is holding a group exhibition this season for Rasha Kahil, Alfred Tarazi and Hiba Kalache, three promising young Lebanese artists. Titled In the Trenches, Sednaoui is quick to point out the reference is not so much about war but the struggles artists face when creating their work. "Kahil finds ways to deal with the desire to show off one's body and the concurrent need for privacy, Kalache tries to overcome the limitations of her chosen technique, and Tarazi, true to his work, deals with the memory of the war that many of us have either forgotten, ignored or are too young to have known."

In the Trenches is on until March 26. www.therunninghorseart.com



London

The Rose Issa Projects is holding a fantastic show by prominent Turkish artist Selma Gürbüz at the revered Leighton House, with a smaller collection on display at its own gallery space. For her first solo show in London, Gürbüz has conjured up expressive, almost naïve like paintings of animals and djinns that swirl across land and sea. The rich and dark images of Shadows of Myself bridge the mythical connotations of Gürbüz's hometown Istanbul. There's a bit of shadow theatre and silhouette painting in her art, which makes her images all the more captivating. Don't miss the beautiful monograph published to accompany this exciting exhibition.

Shadows of Myself is on from February 23rd until April 9th. www.roseissa.com

The talented and baroque French fashion designer Christian Lacroix is curating a stunning show at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris devoted to 'Oriental women' from Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Syria. The show opens with an incredible find: a dress for a young girl dating back to the 13th century, unearthed in Lebanon and on loan from Beirut's Archaeological Museum. In total, more than 150 costumes and traditional ornaments celebrate the region's beautiful textile and embroidery heritage. This is a tradition that seems to be going through a renaissance, with several international exhibitions and a handful of new titles on the topic. L'Orient des Femmes by Christian Lacroix is on from February 8th until May 15th. www.quaibrantly.fr