



## LAHD GALLERY

IT WAS FOUNDED IN 2005 IN RIYADH WITH THE ORIGINAL PREMISE TO PROMOTE WORK BY WOMEN ARTISTS IN THE GULF. WHILE THIS IS STILL VERY MUCH AT THE CORE OF ITS PRACTICE, LAHD GALLERY HAS SINCE EXPANDED TO PRESENT CONTEMPORARY ART BY EMERGING AND ESTABLISHED ARTISTS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA AND SOUTH ASIA.

Five years after it opened its doors in the Saudi capital, Lahd opened a sister branch in London. "It was time for the world to have access to our artists and just having the gallery in Riyadh posed a challenge for our international

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THE GALLERIES



All images courtesy Lahd Gallery, Riyadh/London.

clients," says gallery director Princess Nauf Al-Bandar Al-Saud, who graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Molecular Genetics from King's College London and is pursuing a doctoral degree in Clinical Medicine at Imperial College in the UK.

In the name of increasing the visibility and awareness of art from the MENASA regions, Lahd collaborates with cultural institutions, foundations and art practitioners. As the gallery continues to focus on female artists, it also provides mentorship programmes for younger, aspiring ones. "Lahd Gallery was first founded by a woman for women," asserts Princess Nauf. "Intimidated by the lack of support that women artists received in the Gulf, we decided to promote these emerging talents regardless of the challenges we face." Initially in Riyadh, Lahd Gallery representatives found artists by actively searching for talent. "Visiting their studios and

discussing their art was fundamental to building a relationship and gaining the artists' trust. Promoting emerging artists in the Gulf was unheard of, especially for women artists," says Princess Nauf. "Fast-forward eight years later and we receive about 10 portfolios a week from emerging artists all over the MENASA regions. Saudi art is, like its industry, booming and there is a lot of talent in this part of the world."

While Lahd promotes Contemporary art at its spaces and participates in international fairs, its e-gallery portal allows visitors to buy art online. Among the artists featured in the gallery are Turkish Asli Erel, Syrian Suhair Sibai, Moroccan Wadia Boutaba and Saudi Anan Al-Olayan. "We give emerging artists the confidence to embrace their talents and welcome those who have something to say and who are unafraid to question societal norms," says Princess Nauf.

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