

ART DUBAI 2025: THE PATH TO A GLOBAL ART COMMUNITY.

Exclusive Interview with the Organisers of the Largest Art Fair in the Middle East. Art Dubai, the Middle East’s largest and most prestigious art fair, continues to shape the global art community by fostering dialogue, supporting underrepresented artists, and exploring cutting-edge themes. As the fair approaches its 2025 edition, it promises to be more expansive than ever, with a strong focus on digital art, immersive installations, and the promotion of artists from previously peripheral regions. To delve deeper into Art Dubai’s vision and its impact on the global art scene, Elen Levitt, art curator of World Arabia Magazine, conducted an exclusive interview with Benedetta Ghione, Executive Director of Art Dubai, and Pablo del Val, Artistic Director. The interview sheds light on the fair’s commitment to bridging the gap between East and West, nurturing new artistic narratives, and reinterpreting traditions in the context of the contemporary art world.

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Gulnur Mukazhanova
SHADOWS OF HOPE #14

Aspan Gallery



Image courtesy of Press Office



Joana Vasconcelos

Baro Galeria



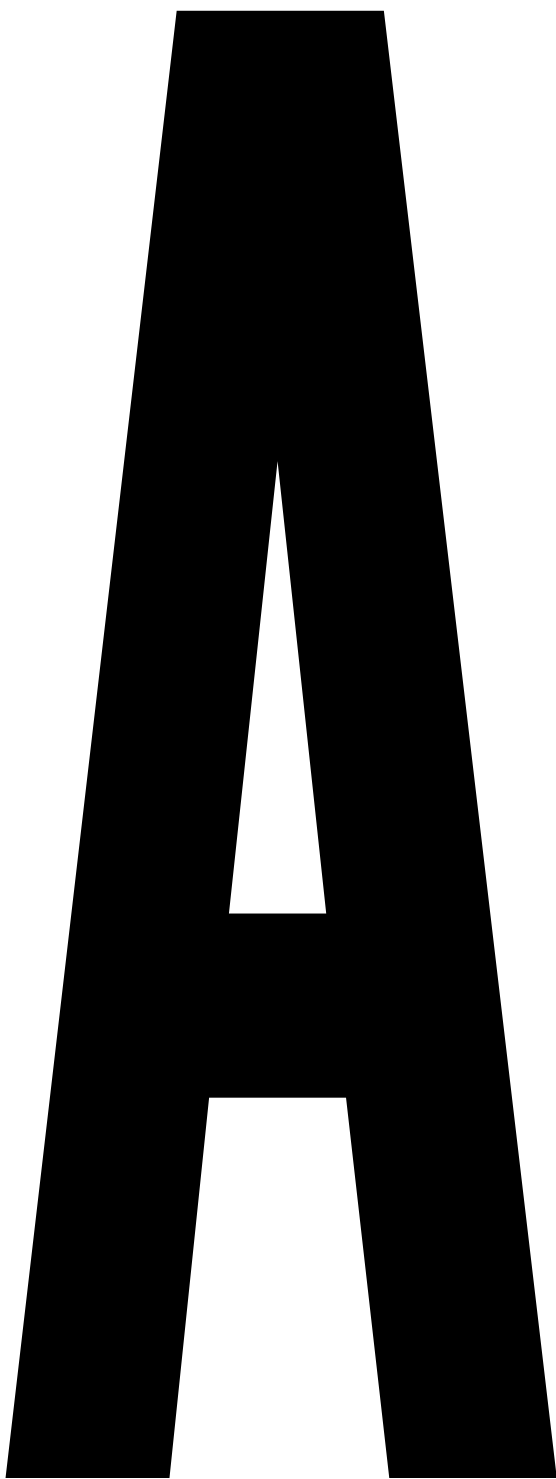
Diana Al-Hadid

Galleri Brandstrup



Mohammed Kazem
DIRECTIONS (MERGING)





Art Dubai has long evolved beyond being just a fair — it is a key platform for dialogue between East and West, a space where new artistic narratives emerge, and traditions are reinterpreted. The 2025 edition promises to be even more expansive, with a strong focus on digital art, immersive installations, and support for artists from regions that have previously remained on the periphery of the global art scene.

Ahead of the fair, Elen Levitt, art curator of World Arabia Magazine (art expert and advisor, collector, founder of ArtLevel company) conducted an exclusive interview for World Arabia with Benedetta Ghione, Executive Director of Art Dubai, and Pablo del Val, Artistic Director, to learn how Art Dubai is shaping the global art community, what new initiatives are being introduced this year, and which themes will take center stage.

ELEN LEVITT: Could you elaborate on the theme of Art Dubai 2025? What is the concept behind this event, and how is it reflected in the fair's program? What key ideas were you aiming to convey to the audience?

BENEDETTA GHIONE: Art Dubai was born in Dubai, and our outlook reflects the multicultural heart of the city. Each year, we support artists and galleries from lesser-represented geographies, offering a platform for creative communities not typically seen at other art fairs. In 2025, across our four gallery sections — Contemporary, Modern, Bawwaba, and Digital — not only are we proud

to present the very best from our home region and city, but also from South Asia and Central Asia, the African continent, and Latin America. Altogether, the fair will feature presentations from over 60 cities across 39 countries.

Bringing people together to experience art is why the live element of Art Dubai is so important. We serve as a convener of people, which creates the community spirit of the fair. We invest significant energy into our in-person talks program, and this year, we have increased the immersive elements of the fair, featuring more commissions, live performances, and innovative digital installations.

ELEN LEVITT: What cultural and social trends are you highlighting in the Art Dubai 2025 program? Is there a particular focus on specific themes or current issues this year?

BENEDETTA GHIONE: Artists naturally reflect their own experiences in their work, shedding light on contemporary social, political, and environmental issues. This includes themes of migration and cultural exchange that are shaping the future. In Bawwaba, we will present ten solo presentations of all new work exhibitions featuring ultra-contemporary artworks created within the past year or conceived specifically for Art Dubai. Acting as a window into contemporary global perspectives, this section explores new forms of coexistence — both among people and with the planet — through



Elen Levitt
Art curator of World Arabia Magazine
(art expert and advisor, collector,
founder of ArtLevel company)

the lens of familiar names like Tomas Saraceno and Kate Newby, alongside emerging artists such as Kaimurai and Jorge Rosano Gamboa.

Digital art is being discussed at length in the art community, and our theme for this year's Digital section, "*After the Technological Sublime*", captures the zeitgeist by emphasising artificial intelligence and other new technologies as tools to address today's challenges and shape contemporary discourse. We are witnessing significant growth in art and digital technologies, with artists expanding our very understanding and definition of contemporary art and culture. At the same time, collectors' interest in this field continues to rise.

ELEN LEVITT: Art Dubai has always been known for supporting artists from underrepresented regions. It also serves as a platform for collaborations between galleries, artists, and collectors. Which

significant partnerships or projects would you highlight this year?

BENEDETTA GHIONE: Art Dubai is more than just a week-long fair; its institutional role is shaped by long-term relationships and commitment to long-term, sustainable impact.

For example, this year, we celebrate 10 years of collaboration with Julius Baer, our lead partner. A key element of this partnership is commissioning public artworks that foster lasting engagement. This year's commission features Emirati artist Mohammed Kazem, whose work *Directions (Merging)* — uses animation and coordinates to create a dynamic, immersive experience that explores shifting geographies and borders.

Returning to Art Dubai 2025, Piaget will present a new exhibition, *Play of Shapes*, celebrating the Maison's creativity, energy, and craftsmanship through a showcase of its jewellery collections. Piaget has also commissioned emerging Kuwaiti artist Alymamah Rashed to create a new work in her distinctive surrealist style.

BMW will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the BMW Art Cars project at Art Dubai. This initiative, which began in 1975, has seen collaborations between BMW and legendary artists such as Alexander Calder, David Hockney, Roy Lichtenstein, and Frank Stella. This year's exhibition will feature a BMW Art Car designed by an internationally renowned artist, to be revealed soon.

ELEN LEVITT: How do you evaluate Art Dubai's role in shaping Dubai's cultural identity on the global art scene? What strategic steps are being taken to strengthen this influence?

BENEDETTA GHIONE: Art Dubai uses the city's strategic location to its advantage — situated within a four-hour flight of one-third of the world's population, it has steadily grown into an annual meeting point for international art collectors. Dubai's cultural scene has evolved significantly, with landmark institutions such as the Museum of the Future and Dubai Opera driving this momentum. This growth is reflected in our exhibitors: this year, 23 Dubai-based galleries are participating, including Efe Gallery, Gallery Isabelle, The Third Line, and MORROW Collective.

Pablo del Val has been leading the artistic direction of Art Dubai since 2015, transforming the fair into one of the most dynamically evolving in the world. He shares his thoughts on how Art Dubai maintains its uniqueness and adapts to the ever-changing art landscape.

ELEN LEVITT: Pablo, you have been the Artistic Director of Art Dubai since 2015. What thoughts guided you while preparing for this edition? What important strategies have been implemented over the past 10 years to strengthen the fair's international reputation?

PABLO DEL VAL: From where we began nearly 20 years ago with 45 galleries to over 120 this year, Art Dubai has evolved to be a major contributor to the regional and global art community.

Our overriding ambition is to continue building a sustainable framework — a space of discovery that represents artistic talent from across the world. In an increasingly challenging world, these artists and galleries play a vital role in telling the stories of migration and cultural exchange that are shaping our shared future.

We were ahead of the curve when we launched our digital gallery section in 2022 — the first international fair to introduce a dedicated platform

for this evolving medium. Art Dubai Digital has since become an integral part of the fair, offering accessible insight into one of today's most talked about and debated art forms.

ELEN LEVITT: Each year, section curators change. What objectives were set for the new curators while preparing for this edition?

PABLO DEL VAL: We invite new curators every year, and the gallery presentations are shaped by their distinct curatorial visions. It's important that our curators have a deep understanding of the geographies relevant to the fair, but we also encourage them to bring something new and exciting — whether it's working with established galleries presenting lesser-known artists or newer galleries showcasing recognised names. We also ask that they bring in artistic voices that will resonate beyond the scope of the week-long fair, fostering conversations that extend into the broader art community — for example, this is evident in the success of our digital section.

Once again, we are welcoming distinguished experts with very different experiences and backgrounds to lead this year's program. Magalí Arriola and Nada Shabout are curating Art Dubai Modern with a focus on untold histories of the Arab diaspora; Gonzalo Herrero Delicado is leading the fourth edition of Art Dubai Digital with a major focus on AI and how artists are working with the technologies that are shaping our future; and Mirjam

and modern sections. From the region, we have first-time exhibitors from Iran (Parallel Circuit), as well as Monada Art Gallery x 10101.art and Iris Projects from the UAE.

ELEN LEVITT: A series of digital installations by artists such as Ouchhh Studio and Jacopo Di Cera expand the dialogue around contemporary art. How do you assess the influence of artificial intelligence on contemporary art and digital formats? What new opportunities and risks does this trend pose for artists, curators, and collectors?

PABLO DEL VAL: AI is the hot topic in the art community at the moment. These aren't just passing trends — they are shaping the way contemporary art is created and understood today, and collectors are responding with growing interest.

The digital installations featured at Art Dubai — including AI-driven works like Ouchhh Studio's MotherEarth — respond to the curatorial framework developed by Gonzalo Herrero Delicado, which explores how emerging digital technologies can evoke both awe and unease. From a digitally controlled kinetic installation to a large-scale kaleidoscope that invites audiences to visualise their dreams using artificial intelligence, these installations will enhance the experiential nature of the fair, inviting further public engagement.

Art Dubai 2025 once again reaffirms its reputation as one of the world's most innovative art fairs. It bridges tradition and experimentation,

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Exclusively for World Arabia, Elen Levitt



Benedetta Ghione
Executive Director
of Art Dubai



Pablo del Val
Artistic Director
of Art Dubai

Varadinis is curating Bawwaba, focusing on ultra-contemporary yet historically significant themes of migration and displacement.

ELEN LEVITT: Which key galleries are participating in Art Dubai for the first time this year? What makes them noteworthy, and how does their participation enrich the overall program?

PABLO DEL VAL: Art Dubai is constantly evolving. New galleries bring fresh perspectives and viewpoints, making us unique within the art fair landscape. This year, we welcome over 30 first-time exhibitors, including 16 in the contemporary section and 10 in Art Dubai Digital.

Among our international exhibitors are galleries from Japan (Mizuma), Thailand (Richard Koh Fine Art), and South Korea (ArtToken-Artcube2R2), as well as established names like Richard Saltoun (UK), who is presenting in both the contemporary

local and global, art and technology — offering audiences new ways to engage with contemporary art. Judging by its ambitious program, Art Dubai doesn't just follow trends — it sets them. In 2025, we have the opportunity to witness the birth of a new chapter in the history of contemporary art.

Art Dubai 2025 is becoming an important global platform that fosters the formation of a global art community. The fair emphasises the diversity of cultural voices, explores relevant themes of migration and digital art, and supports artists from underrepresented regions. In this context, it not only opens doors for dialogue and the exchange of ideas but also strengthens its position as a catalyst for change in the art world, inspiring a new generation of creators and audiences to engage in collaborative creativity and cultural cooperation.



Hector Zamora



Hugh Findletar
**WENDY D LEOPARD
WITH ORANGE DRESS**

Efie Gallery



Matteo Mandelli e Luca Baldocchi
FIORITURE SINTETICHE

Immaterika



Image courtesy of Press Office



BREAKFAST

Carbon Wake



Susumu Kamijo

GREETING BY THE MASTER

Perrotin



Gil Heitor Cortesão

MANHÃ SUBMERSA

CARBON 12

