

GUGGENHEIM PRESENTS RECENT ART FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA IN THE THIRD EXHIBITION OF THE GUGGENHEIM UBS MAP GLOBAL ART INITIATIVE

***But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise* Opens April 29 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and Travels to the Pera Museum in Istanbul in 2017**

Exhibition: *But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise: Contemporary Art of the Middle East and North Africa*

Venue: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York

Location: Tower 4 and Tower 5 Galleries

Dates: April 29–October 5, 2016

Media Preview: Thursday, April 28, 2016, 10 am–12 pm

(NEW YORK, NY—April 28, 2016)—From April 29 to October 5, 2016, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York presents *But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise: Contemporary Art of the Middle East and North Africa*, the third exhibition of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative. Organized by Sara Raza, Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator, Middle East and North Africa, the exhibition features a wide range of artistic voices and critical concerns from a rapidly evolving region through installation, photography, sculpture, video, and work on paper. Interwoven with questions and ideas about the region’s colonial histories, the exhibition investigates such themes as architecture and geometry, modernism and migration, and the process of unearthing hidden ideas.

As with the two previous exhibitions in the MAP initiative, which focused on contemporary art practice from South and Southeast Asia and Latin America, *But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise* features artworks that have been recently acquired for the Guggenheim’s collection. Under the auspices of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Purchase Fund, the collection has now grown by over 125 works from more than 85 artists and collectives. Curatorial research for the exhibition was developed with an eye toward building on the Guggenheim’s distinguished history of internationalism, as well as fostering new scholarship and conceiving a range of educational initiatives and public programs within the museum and online. On-site and digital programs have served more than 14,000 adults, families, educators, and students worldwide. Following its presentation at the Guggenheim, the exhibition will travel to the Pera Museum in Istanbul in 2017.

Sara Raza said, “The exhibition enables viewers to experience a range of concerns among artists from a variety of access points to showcase the cross-circulation of knowledge. One of them is the migration of ideas and peoples in an age of anxiety, when civil liberties and freedom of movement have come under repeated attack. Another is architecture seen as an ideological tool and in reference to the former colonial powers that shaped the region. The exhibition’s artworks also embed numerous proposals—we might think of them as ‘conceptual contraband’—that contradict the mass media’s highly politicized representation of the Middle East and North Africa. As such, *But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise* highlights the formation of the present while acknowledging the continued influence of the past.”

“This exhibition bristles with challenging ideas and uncompromising artistic strategies, all of which help us to reflect upon a crucial region of today’s world,” said Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation. “It is a superb realization of the ambitions of the MAP initiative in particular and the Guggenheim’s global program in general. We are grateful to our long-term collaborator and supporter UBS, to Sara Raza and our curatorial and education team, and to the artists in this exhibition for helping us rethink and expand the traditional purview of European and North American art museums. By working on the ground in different regions of the world with artists, arts professionals, and audiences, we can open the discussion to multiple histories of art and create a museum that more faithfully represents the world in which we live.”

“Artists rooted in the vibrant cultures of the Middle East and North Africa are currently addressing some of today’s most critical issues, and doing so from within a region at the center of sweeping global change,” said Jürg Zeltner, CEO, UBS Wealth Management. “The Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative provides an exceptional opportunity to encounter the crucial ideas and insights of some of the best of these artists, and to engage in the kind of international dialogue that contributes to positive change. At UBS, our support for this exhibition, and for the MAP initiative as a whole, parallels our holistic approach to business relationships. We take pride in enabling our clients, employees, and the public to participate in the provocative and exciting creative community of the arts, much as we facilitate our clients’ informed involvement in the complex global economy.”

Exhibition Overview

But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise features 18 works—many of them large-scale, mixed media installations—by 17 artists. The exhibition, installed on two levels of the museum’s Tower Galleries, draws its title from an artwork by Rokni Haerizadeh, which in turn is quoted from German philosopher Walter Benjamin in a noted essay from 1940. Haerizadeh’s *But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise* (2010) is a suite of works on paper based on images appropriated from mainstream news sources. By overlaying these photographs of collective gatherings with gesso, ink, and watercolor, the artist employs fable to transform human protagonists into part-animal hybrids while rendering a grotesque view of downward descending contemporary events promulgated by the mass media.

Other works that implicitly challenge existing representations of the Middle East and North Africa include *Latent Images, Diary of a Photographer, 177 Days of Performances* (2015) by Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, an installation of 354 books, displayed on 177 metal shelves, that purport to contain

written descriptions of pictures taken by a fictional photographer, Abdallah Farah, during the Lebanese Civil War to illustrate the fine line between the process of mythmaking and the “real.”

Among the works that touch on the urgent subject of the migration of people and ideas is *Flying Carpets* (2011) by Nadia Kaabi-Linke, a stainless steel structure installed overhead that casts shadows in the gallery that evoke the outlines of the carpets on which undocumented migrants from North Africa and Asia display the goods they sell to tourists in Venice.

Architecture figures as a key element in the formation of modernism in the region and is prevalent in several works including *Untitled (Ghardaïa)* (2009) by Kader Attia, a scale model in couscous of the Algerian World Heritage Site of Ghardaïa, the traditional buildings of which influenced the modernism of Le Corbusier; *Building* (2009) by Susan Hefuna, a suite of nine drawings that suggest both cartographic diagrams and sketches of architectural elements such as the *mashrabiya* or traditional latticed window; *Plan for Greater Baghdad* (2015) by Ala Younis, a large installation of archival materials and architectural models of the gymnasium designed for Baghdad in 1957 by Le Corbusier and inaugurated in 1980 as the Saddam Hussein Gymnasium. By contrast, Abbas Akhavan’s *Study for a Monument* (2013–16), a series of bronze casts of plants native to the Tigris-Euphrates river system that are placed on the floor atop white sheets, suggests a range of alternative ideas around the culture and dissemination of public monuments.

A hybridized view of past and present is presented by Ergin Çavuşoğlu’s work *Crystal & Flame* (2010), which draws on literary texts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to meditate on social norms and moral codes through the depiction of three outwardly disparate but ultimately complimentary narratives that probe systems of value and polarity in contemporary society. Similarly, Ahmed Mater’s *Disarm* (2013) and *Disarm 1–10* (2013), present video and photographs taken by the artist from the cockpit of a Saudi military helicopter scouting for unauthorized pilgrims approaching Mecca, thereby highlighting an urban landscape undergoing rapid structural and social change.

To showcase the breadth of videos acquired, two will be rotated halfway through the installation: *A Brief History of Collapses* (2012) by Mariam Ghani, a two-channel video installation that contrasts the eighteenth-century Fridericianum in Kassel, Germany (now restored from the damage it suffered in World War II) with the Dar ul-Aman Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan (built in 1929 and now a ruin), will be on view through July 6, along with Çavuşoğlu’s *Crystal & Flame*. Zineb Sedira’s *Gardiennes d’images* (2010), a multichannel video that explores the archive of Algerian-French photographer Mohammed Kouaci (1922–1996), who was active during the Algerian war of independence, and the reminiscences of his widow who is interviewed by the artist, will be on view from July 8 through the close of the exhibition. *Evaders* (2009), a two-channel video installation by Ori Gersht, which chronicles the 1940 flight into exile and subsequent death of Walter Benjamin, returns to the pertinent subject of migration and will also be on view beginning on July 8.

Artists represented in the exhibition are:

- Abbas Akhavan (b. 1977, Tehran; lives and works in Toronto)
- Kader Attia (b. 1970, Paris; lives and works in Berlin)

- Ergin Çavuşoğlu (b. 1968, Targovishte, Bulgaria; lives and works in London)
- Ali Cherri (b. 1976, Beirut; live and works in Beirut and Paris)
- Ori Gersht (b. 1967, Tel Aviv; lives and works in London)
- Mariam Ghani (b. 1978, New York; lives and works in New York)
- Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige (b. 1969, Beirut, Lebanon; live and work in Beirut and Paris)
- Rokni Haerizadeh (b. 1978, Tehran; lives and works in Dubai)
- Susan Hefuna (b. 1962, Berlin; lives and works in Düsseldorf)
- Iman Issa (b. 1979, Cairo; lives and works in New York)
- Nadia Kaabi-Linke (b. 1978, Tunis; lives and works in Berlin)
- Mohammed Kazem (b. 1969, Dubai; lives and works in Dubai)
- Hassan Khan (b. 1975, London; lives and works in Cairo)
- Ahmed Mater (b. 1979, Tabuk, Saudi Arabia; lives and works in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia)
- Zineb Sedira (b. 1963, Paris; lives and works in London)
- Ala Younis (b. 1974, Kuwait; lives and works in Amman, Jordan)

Additional acquisitions for the Guggenheim UBS MAP collection include work by artists Lida Abdul (b. 1973, Kabul; lives and works in Los Angeles and Kabul), Emily Jacir (b. 1972, Bethlehem, lives and works in Rome, Italy and Ramallah, Palestine) and Gülsün Karamustafa (b. 1946, Ankara, Turkey; lives and works in Istanbul.)

But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise: Contemporary Art of the Middle East and North Africa is organized by Sara Raza, Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator, Middle East and North Africa. Joan Young, Director of Curatorial Affairs, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, provides curatorial oversight for the MAP initiative with Amara Antilla, Assistant Curator.

Public and Education Programs

But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise is accompanied by a range of public, educational, and online programs. Highlights include a summer launch of performative debriefings by research group Public Movement that reexamine art histories throughout the exhibition, as well as a residency with Beirut-based artist and musician Raed Yassin, who will create a soundtrack inspired by the exhibition's themes to be released in late July; a four-week film series, *Hello Guggenheim*, co-presented with Bidoun Projects from May 6 to 30; an Open House for Educators on May 16; artist talks featuring Ahmed Mater and Ala Younis on April 30 and Ori Gersht and Zineb Sedira on July 12; Sunday gallery conversations with multidisciplinary educators and scholars; gallery tours in Arabic and French on select Saturdays; a special two-part Mind's Eye workshop for people who are blind or have low vision led by artist Susan Hefuna on August 1 and 10; an academic symposium in September; a technology and new media arts-based summer camp for 8- to 11-year olds from June 13 to 17, and a summer drawing series for families on July 17, 24, and 31, and drop-in family and school programs throughout the run of the exhibition. Education resources include a Family Activity Guide and Teacher's Resource Guide, and a multimedia app featuring both commentary by the curator and exhibition artists, and verbal descriptions authored by Guggenheim educators. For more information, visit guggenheim.org/calendar.

About MAP

The Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative is a distinctive program that creates direct access to contemporary art and education on a global scale. Through in-depth collaboration with artists, curators, and cultural organizations from South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa, MAP has expanded the Guggenheim's collection with more than 125 new works, and has built physical and digital experiences that bring art and ideas to life.

The first MAP exhibition, *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, was organized by June Yap and presented at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center and NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore following its New York debut in 2013. The second exhibition, *Under the Same Sun: Art from Latin America Today (Bajo un mismo sol: Arte de América Latina hoy)*, is organized by Pablo León de la Barra and was on view at Museo Jumex in Mexico City through February 7, 2016, after being presented in New York; it will be presented at the South London Gallery from June 10 through September 4, 2016.

The MAP Fact Sheet outlines MAP accomplishments and project highlights. Information about the artists, curators, and exhibitions is available on guggenheim.org/MAP.

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. The Guggenheim network that began in the 1970s when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was joined by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, has since expanded to include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (opened 1997), and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (currently in development). Looking to the future, the Guggenheim Foundation continues to forge international collaborations that take contemporary art, architecture, and design beyond the walls of the museum. The Foundation is also committed to fostering research, exhibitions, and collections in the field of global art through such programs as the Asian Art Initiative (founded in 2006), the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative (founded in 2013), and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative (founded in 2013). More information about the Foundation can be found at guggenheim.org.

About UBS and Contemporary Art

UBS's long and substantial record of patronage in contemporary art actively enables clients and audiences to participate in the international conversation about art and the global art market through the firm's contemporary art platform. In addition to the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, UBS's extensive roster of contemporary art initiatives and programs currently includes: the UBS Art Collection, one of the world's largest and most important corporate collections of contemporary art and the firm's long-term support for the premier international Art Basel shows in Basel, Miami Beach, and Hong Kong, for which UBS serves as global Lead Partner. These activities are complemented by a number of regional partnerships with fine art institutions including the Fondation Beyeler in Switzerland, Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan, the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. UBS also

provides its clients with insight into the contemporary art world through the free art news app Planet Art, collaborations with the Swiss Institute; and the online resource Artsy; as well as through services offered by the UBS Art Competence Center and the UBS Arts Forum. For more information about UBS's commitment to contemporary art, visit ubs.com/art.

Additional Materials

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Translations of the media release in Arabic, Farsi, French, Hebrew, and Turkish will be available at guggenheim.org/pressreleases.

#1438/MAP23

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