

PRESS RELEASE
4:1 GROUP SHOW AT AQUABITART GALLERY
CURATED BY FRANCES STAFFORD



Summer 2020 // On August 6th the group exhibition „4:1 – 4 artists, 1 location“ opens its doors at the renowned aquabitArt gallery in Berlin Mitte.

Four extraordinary artists with varying backgrounds are connected by one commonality: they either currently live and practice their art in Bahrain, or have worked on projects on the island and created art during that time. Curator Frances Stafford, who also built her career in the country, shows introspective drawings, visionary paintings, collaged photographs as well as paper collages and studies – within the intimate gallery setting in Auguststraße 35, 10119 Berlin. The small but beautiful gallery space in the heart of Berlin will be separated into two main rooms, where the artworks will be presented to the audience until the end of the month.

The artists:

[Ali Dowlatshahi](#) was born in Tehran, Iran in 1976, and moved to Heidelberg, Germany in 1986 following the Iranian revolution. He studied Industrial Design at the University of the Arts (UdK), Berlin until 2005. Since 2003, Dowlatshahi has been working as a freelance designer in Berlin. He specializes in graphics, interiors and furniture and has been designing for numerous international brands, most notably in Bahrain and New York. In 2014 he began working on a series of projects for the Cultural Authority, Bahrain and other private clients in the wider gulf region. Ali Dowlatshahi presents digital colourfields inspired by his travels to Bahrain. Each work comprises of a photograph of Bahrain, overlaid with tinted rectilinear shapes and colours, that partially obscure selected details of each image. The fusion of such elements-structure, transience, tradition and modernity- is often perceived as a statement on the synthesis between Dowlatshahi's Middle Eastern heritage and the austerity of his western upbringing.

Mohamed Alaabar alias [Leon D.](#) is a multidisciplinary visual artist from Bahrain who engages not only with urban and street interventions but also has a studio practice. His work is driven by his interest in understanding both the physical and metaphysical nature of possible/probable realities. He is eager to travel and learn from people, cultures, nature and the beyond to assist in his continuous research and curiosity in a progressive evolving manner. He currently associates himself with the path and knowledge of psychonautics in order to express abundance, bliss and love throughout his work.

Artist and Curator [Yasmin Sharabi](#) (Bahrain/ USA/ Palestine) was born in Greece in 1981. She holds an MA in Art Business from Sotheby's Institute, London (2006) and a BA in Studio Art/Art History, Minor in Psychology, Concordia University, Montreal (2004) where she studied under Canadian painters Marion Wagschal and the late Yves Gaucher. In 2014 and 2016 she was invited to contribute as an artist at the Lamu Art Project, an art residence of Nicholas Logsdail (Lisson Gallery). In 2014, she curated an exhibition with 40 artists from the Gaza Strip, Palestine, a collaborative venture between PADICO (Palestine), the APT (Artist Pension Trust), the UNDP and the Institute Francais (Jerusalem). Sharabi currently lives and works in Bahrain, as a curator and consultant to artist and collector H.E. Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa. Sharabi's work typically explores her heritage through her memories of a specific moment in time. Each image is a replica



of a real scene and drawn from photographs that Sharabi has taken. Nothing is fictionalized. As she draws, she attempts to magnify the features of the snapshot, to measure and analyze each detail and expand them to scale. It is through this process, by way of the gestures, marks and subtle synchronicities, that she is reminded of that particular moment and of the signs, symbols or ironies that existed within it.

[Patrick Molony Harris](#) was born in South Devon England in 1971. He was an art scholar at Marlborough College from 1985-89 and studied Architecture at the Oxford School of Architecture, before finishing a Fine Arts BA Hons degree at Winchester. In 1991 he moved to Spain and then Palma de Mallorca where he now shares an art studio, Harris Atelier, with his brother. They made a double handed transatlantic crossing in 1997 and are also known for producing the world largest Sail Painting in 2011. Harris has also managed two sail painting projects in Bahrain for the Ministry of Culture (now the Bahrain Authority for Art and Culture) where he trained artists to paint on sails that were then sailed and displayed at the Annual Fine Art Exhibition. The Prime Minister of Bahrain attended both events.

About the curator:

[Frances Stafford](#) is a Canadian curator and producer who specializes in cultural production and Contemporary Arabic Art. She started her career in Bahrain at Al Riwaq Art Space before moving to the Bahrain Ministry of Culture. There, she mainly produced and directed large-scale public projects and worked in the National Museum as a senior exhibition specialist. She has conceptualized, managed and directed various private and public events, exhibitions and brand launches. From 2018 - 2020 she represented and managed the career of contemporary Saudi artist and children's literature author and illustrator, Halla bint Khalid. In 2019, Stafford curated Halla bint Khalid's work for "Tasleemah" which was presented in the Zurab Tsereteli MoMA in Tbilisi, Georgia. Currently she continues to advise and manage various international artists. She curates and mounts international exhibitions and manages participations regularly.

With an exclusive Vernissage the group exhibition 4:1 celebrates its opening on the 6th of August and will remain open at aquabitArt gallery (Auguststraße 35, 10119 Berlin) until the end of the month. The show can be visited Tuesday to Friday from 11am to 6pm or by appointment.

Press material including artworks, portrait pictures of the artists as well as the curator are here prepared to download: https://bit.ly/GroupShow41_press
For interviews requests please reach out to us directly.

Sincerely,
Katharina Fronius

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