

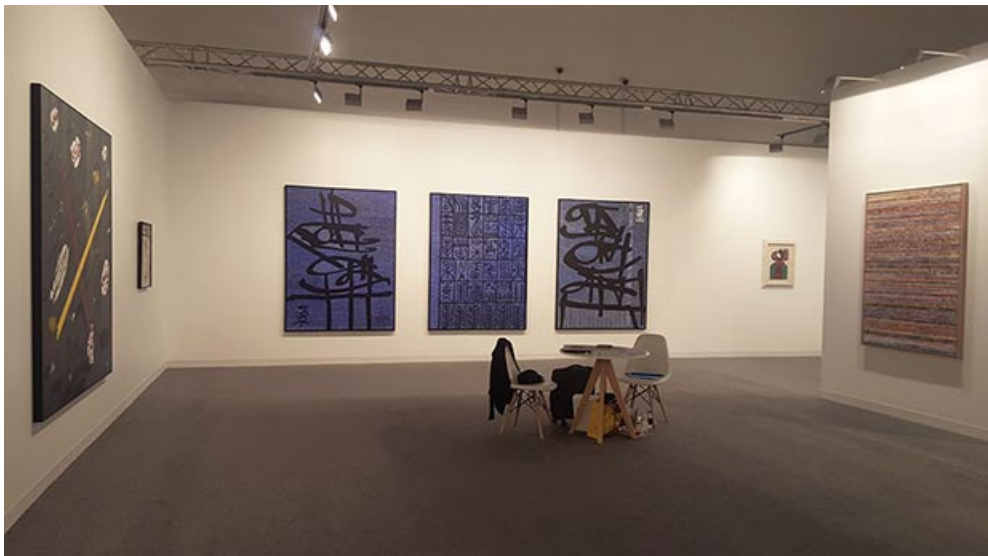
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Elmarsa gallery's booth at Abu Dhabi Art 2015./ Courtesy of Elmarsa Gallery

A synthesis of East and West, in the work of Algerian ceramic artist Khaled Ben Slimane is easily recognizable for its repetitive calligraphy, in praise of God and a conceptual form in quest of beauty, freedom and absolute. He plays with graphics and his favourite colours like ochre, blue and gold. Khaled explores time, the universe, the infinite space in reutilizing the traditional ways and materials such as canvas, bronze, wood or paper. His works have been shown in numerous international contemporary art fairs represented by Galerie El Marsa in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Paris, Marrakech, Miami Beach, etc. Today, he lives and works in Tunis and travels all around the world.

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Both works by Khaled Ben Slimane, Untitled, 2015, Acrylic on canvas, 130x100 cm (left), Ascension I, 2015, Acrylic on canvas, 132x102 cm (right) / Courtesy of Elmarsa Gallery

Algerian artist Mahjoub Ben Bella shows in his work the abundant expression of the forms, shapes and colors, thus giving to see a dense body of work which fits in a double heritage: Arab calligraphy and European painting. His wide variety of motifs and the performance of his chromatic scale create a constant and thorough dialogue with signs and colors. His singular pictorial universe developing relentlessly marked out his art instantly. Through numerous exhibitions around the world and acquisitions by prestigious collections and museums, he stands out as an internationally renowned artist. His creations have nevertheless remained deeply rooted in his Algerian roots. He lives and works in France.



Mahjoub Benbella, Untitled, 1986, Oil on canvas, 70 x 60 cm (left). Abdelkader Guermaz, Metamorphose, Circa 1974, Oil on panel, 69x56 cm (right) / Courtesy of Elmarsa Gallery

Rachid Koraichi's work belongs firmly within the Sufi tradition and spirituality, yet encompassing modernity and universality. Through a wide variety of mediums and materials, from paper to ceramic, he considers his work to be anchored in the context of the sacred script and signs. In his art, the aesthetic is intimately linked to the word, or language, as it includes Arabic script and poetry. His work has been exhibited in numerous museums and institutions all over the world. He has won numerous awards including the Jameel Prize 2011 with *The Invisible Masters* (2008) exhibited at Victoria & Albert Museum in London then at the Arab World Institute in Paris and Casa Arabe in Madrid (2012). He lives and works in Paris, France.



Rachid Koraichi, *Lettre Bleue a ma mère*, 2015, Triptych, Mixed media on canvas, 220 x 150 cm each / Courtesy of Elmarsa Gallery

Elmarsa Gallery showed also works by three important Algerian artists: Abdelkader Guermaz (1919 - 1996), Baya (Algeria, 1931-1998) and M'Hamed Issiakhem (1928-1985).



Khaled Ben Slimane, *Hawa*, 2015, Acrylic on canvas, 200x200 cm (left). M'Hamed Issiakhem, *Femme accoudée*, Oil on canvas, 69x58cm (right). / Courtesy of Elmarsa Gallery

Abdelkader Guermaz is considered as one of the founders of modern art in Algeria. Attaining critical success in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the artist was largely forgotten upon the 1981 closure of the gallery *Entremonde* that represented him. His work is featured in international museum collections, has been rediscovered in posthumous shows and texts.

Baya's work is a mix of surreal, childlike imagery, of richly coloured two-dimensional forms whose spatial composition transgresses all rules of order. Her work is rich in symbols and ornamentation ranging from mystical to Islamic in origin, a reflection of her Arab-Berber identity.

Algerian painter M'Hamed Issiakhem shows in his work love for abstract Expressionism and other artistic styles, which he adopted. As a pioneer of modern Algerian art, he was one of the founders of the Algerian National Union of Plastic Arts in 1963 and held exhibitions in Algeria and abroad.

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