

UN ART
JAMEEL



Artist films

As part of an ongoing effort to connect the gallery with wider global conversations, this section presents films by living international artists drawn from the Art Jameel Collection.

Following the presentation in 2025 of *Jameel Prize 7: Moving Images*, this display continues the collaboration with Art Jameel by bringing together selected works from its permanent collection. The artists represented come from different backgrounds and lived experiences, offering perspectives shaped by the places they inhabit or originate from, across the Middle East and beyond.

The films explore urban development as a shared condition of contemporary life, reflecting on how cities shape buildings, social relations, and the environment. Ecological concerns surface through reflections on industrialised agricultural production and its impact on land and labour. Visions of futuristic living in Dubai are approached as imagined ways of life shaped by ambition and infrastructure, while shopping malls in Qatar are examined as everyday spaces where consumption, leisure, and social interaction converge. Alongside these themes, calligraphy is revisited through optical and time-based experimentation, reintroduced as a living and evolving visual language.

Art Jameel is an independent organisation that supports artists and creative communities through exhibitions, commissions, research, learning and public programmes. With centres in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the organisation collaborates with a network of institutions around the world, with a commitment to making the arts accessible, engaging and meaningful for broad and diverse audiences.

One film will be shown at a time and changed approximately every three months.



Mounir Fatmi (born 1970)

Technologia (2010)

Video, Edition 3/5, 15 mins

Mounir Fatmi observes today's world and the, often erratic, motion of global contemporary society. He makes work related to identity, religion, multiculturalism and consumerism often using old media materials such as copier machines, typewriters, VHS tapes and books. He was a nominee for the *Jameel Prize 3* at the V&A, London in 2013.

Technologia is a work inside a work. It links ancient circular Arabic calligraphy with Marcel Duchamp's 'Rotoreliefs'. Duchamp (born 1887, died 1968) was a French artist who was influential in shaping the development of modern art. His rotoreliefs were decorative discs that created an illusion of depth and movement when played on a record player. These optical illusions were amongst the first manifestations of kinetic art (art that moves) produced in the context of a modern industrial society.

Mounir Fatmi was born in Tangier, Morocco and grew up in Casabarata one of the poorest regions of the city. He studied art in Rome at age 17 and then returned to Morocco where he attended art school in Casablanca. He currently lives and works between Paris, Lille, and Tangier.

Find more info about the artist here:
mounirfatmi.com

Ahmed Mater (born 1979)

Leaves Fall in All Seasons (2014)

Video, Edition 1/8 & 2 AP 19:54 mins, 2014

Ahmed Mater was born in Tabuk and now lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. His practice examines the profound social, cultural and ideological transformations experienced across Saudi Arabia in recent decades, and how these shifts are registered in the built environment and everyday life.

This film assembles mobile phone footage recorded by migrant workers on construction sites in and around Mecca between 2008 and 2013, often originally captured for communication with family members abroad.

Leaves Fall in All Seasons is part of a long-term project *Desert of Pharan* which documents the rapid development of Islam's holiest city. The work reveals tensions between public and private space as Mecca undergoes large-scale transformation to accommodate expanding pilgrimage infrastructures. The title references the ancient name associated with the mountainous landscape surrounding Mecca, mentioned in biblical sources as the Wilderness of Paran.

Find more info about the artist here:
ahmedmater.com



Mohammad Alfaraj (born 1993)

Glimpses of Now (2015 – Ongoing)

Single channel video, Edition 1/3 & 1 AP, 57:45 mins

Mohammad Alfaraj lives and works in the oasis city of Al-Ahsa in Saudi Arabia which serves as the primary source of inspiration for his practice. Al-Ahsa, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is one of the largest natural oases in the world. It features roughly 2.5 million palm trees that are watered by 280 artesian springs (water that rises from underground without needing to be pumped). This natural feature means year-round agriculture is possible in what would otherwise be an arid desert where life would struggle to survive.

This ecological richness has simultaneously supported industrial expansion, producing a landscape shaped by both preservation and transformation. This paradoxical world is captured in *Glimpses of Now*, a film assembled from mobile phone and handheld camera footage collected over a decade. The scenes – fleeting and unscripted – trace moments from everyday life across Saudi Arabia: coastal gatherings, agricultural labour, desert movement and urban rituals.



The call to prayer can be heard over a narrow, stepped street. What emerges from this layering of gestures, sounds and details of daily life is like a collective song of the present.

Alfaraj is thoughtful and modest about his life and his work. He grew up on a farm where everything is made good use of and has built his own simple home. He hopes to communicate through his work that although our destruction could be by our own hand, so too could our salvation.

Find more info about the artist here:
mennour.com/artist/mohammad-alfaraj

Sophia Al-Maria (born 1983)

Black Friday (2016)

Edition 3/3, digital video, 16:36 mins, 2016

Sophia Al-Maria was born to an American mother and a Qatari father. She spent her early life between the United States and Qatar. Her work examines accelerated development in the Gulf, often through atmospheres that blend documentary observation with speculative and dystopian themes.

Black Friday portrays shopping malls in Doha, Qatar. In the late-2000s, Al-Maria coined the term 'Gulf Futurism' to refer to the rapid modernisation of Gulf cities following the discovery of oil. This concept reflects the emergence of megaprojects, luxury consumption and technologically mediated environments alongside shifting cultural identities.

First presented in relation to *The Litany* (2016), the work treats the mall as an engineered interior - an environment of climate control, circulation, surveillance - where public life is staged through designed systems.

Within these controlled interiors, malls function as social arenas where leisure, surveillance and everyday interaction intersect. Al-Maria positions the Gulf as a site through which broader global transformations linked to petro-capitalism, climate control and hyper-urbanization become visible.

Find more info about the artist here:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophia_Al_Maria





Nadim Choufi (born 1994)

The Sky Oscillates Between Eternity and Its Immediate Consequences (2023)

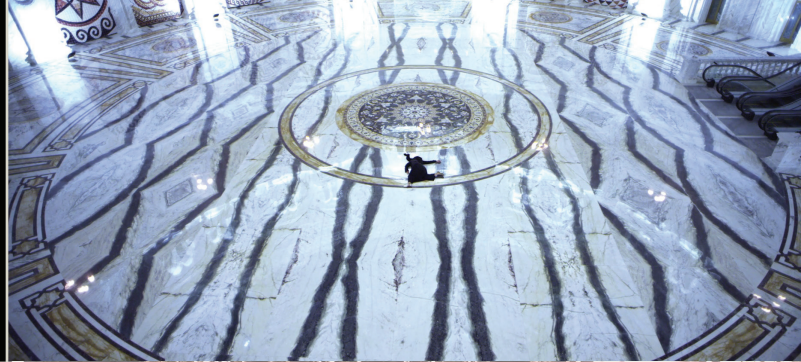
Digital video, Edition 1/1 & 1 AP, 18:10 mins

Nadim Choufi is a Lebanese artist who lives between Beirut and Rotterdam. His work challenges mainstream narratives of progress and futurity.

In 2017, the World Government Summit displayed audiovisual documentation of how we will live on Mars in 2117. Set in a space colony on Earth, *The Sky Oscillates Between Eternity and Its Immediate Consequences* explores how the future of smart cities relies on the promise of 'sustainable' closed systems in the face of health and ecological crises.

Based on the yet to be built Mars Science City in Dubai, the video is composed of digitally rendered environments and stock footage. Two narrators reflect on how the management and exploitation of environmental life cycles become foundational models for imagining future habitation.

Find more info about the artist here:
nadimchoufi.com



1. Mounir Fatmi 'Technologia' (2010)

2. Ahmed Mater 'Leaves Fall in All Seasons' (2014)

3. Mohammad Alfaraj 'Glimpses of Now' (2015-Ongoing)

4. Sophia Al-Maria 'Black Friday' (2016)

5. Nadim Choufi 'The Sky Oscillates Between Eternity and Its Immediate Consequences' (2023)

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