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## PRESS RELEASE

### Lawrie Shabibi at Artissima 2023

3 - 5 November 2023

*Mona Saudi: When Earth Breathes*

*Back to the Future* | Booth BTTF 5

OVAL Lingotto Fiere, Turin, Italy

For Artissima, Lawrie Shabibi is pleased to present *When Earth Breathes*, an opportunity to explore the artistic journey of Jordanian sculptor Mona Saudi (1945~2022). This showcase features a curated selection of ten drawings created between 1973 and 1978, as well as three sculptures from her entire body of work. Saudi's art reflects a deep sense of resilience, mirroring the enduring spirit of Mother Earth herself. Her pieces delve into the profound connection between humanity and the planet, celebrating universal themes such as fertility, growth, and the cyclical nature of life using natural materials.

Saudi's unique perspective as a pioneering female artist bridges the gap between the intricate details of her drawings and the fundamental essence of her sculptures. Her analytical drawings showcase her meticulous technique and ability to capture human emotions and struggles. Through intricate lines and delicate shading, these drawings encourage viewers to reflect on their own experiences of love and somber emotions. The drawings on display convey powerful stories, emphasizing the interconnectedness of our diverse journeys. Beyond their captivating forms, they also narrate the turbulent era of the early 1970s, marked by the darkness of unrest and upheaval during The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). Like a visual diary, her drawings serve as a poignant testament to the intersection of personal expression and the harsh realities of her time.

On the other hand, Saudi's sculptures radiate dynamic feminine energy and enduring relevance, bringing her exploration of identity and memory into a three-dimensional realm. Her work "Motherhood" (1972) transcends time, space, and aesthetics, encouraging us to contemplate the profound mysteries of our world and its creation. It delves into the essence of remembering, belonging, and our shared histories. These three sculptures blend raw materials with profound emotion, meticulously carved and molded to evoke visceral responses. Standing before these, one may sense the presence of ancestors, the echoes of forgotten stories, and the enduring spirit of resilience.

*When Earth Breathes* serves as a reminder that the artist's work and the natural world—with all its beauty and mystery—continue to hold a lasting presence in our hearts and minds. This

exhibition booth aims to highlight the collective consciousness and shared connection to the world that surrounds us.

## **MONA SAUDI**

Mona Saudi (b. 1945, Amman, Jordan – d. 2022, Beirut, Lebanon) studied sculpture at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris before moving to Beirut, where (with interruptions) she worked as an artist for more than five decades.

Saudi's large scale sculptures adorn public spaces in Amman, and in Paris her *Géométrie de l'esprit* sits outside the Institut du Monde Arabe, the only sculpture allowed by architect Jean Nouvel to do so. Other works of hers are held at the British Museum, London. In 2018, *Poetry & Form*, a survey of her works curated by Hoor Al Qassimi, was presented at the Sharjah Art Museum in collaboration with Sharjah Art Foundation.

Her works are in the collections of the Sharjah Art Foundation; the British Museum, London; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah; Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman; the Khaled Shoman Foundation, Amman; National Museum for Women in the Arts, Washington D.C; Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyya, Kuwait; the Museum of Modern Art, Kuwait; Moussem culturel international d'Assilah, Assilah; Arab Bank Headquarters, Amman; Jabal Amman, Public Square, Amman; University of Science & Technology, Irbid; Al Wafa Bank, Casablanca; International Sculpture Park, Lebanon; Al Hariri Art Collection, Beirut; and the Ministry of Culture, Cairo.

## **LAWRIE SHABIBI**

This exhibition not only showcases the exceptional talent of pioneer sculptor Mona Saudi but also underscores our gallery's steadfast commitment to nurturing dialogue and supporting artists from the diaspora. Lawrie Shabibi is a contemporary art gallery housed in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue. The gallery supports the long-term development of the careers of young international contemporary artists with a focus on those from the Middle East and North Africa. The gallery also organises art historical exhibitions working with an older generation of artists from the region. Liaising with curators, institutions, museums and collectors the gallery has successfully introduced international artists to the region whilst at the same time presenting Middle Eastern artists to the international contemporary art community. By holding a regular programme of exhibitions, screenings and talks, publishing catalogues and participating in international art fairs, Lawrie Shabibi has been a forerunner in the development of the contemporary art scene in Dubai.

For more information on Lawrie Shabibi please visit:

[www.lawrieshabibi.com](http://www.lawrieshabibi.com)

## **PRESS INQUIRIES**

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