

Lawrie Shabibi
Unit 21, Alserkal Avenue, Al Quoz 1
P.O. Box 123901, Dubai, UAE
T | +971 (4) 346 9906
F | +971 (4) 346 9902
E | info@lawrieshabibi.com

lawrieshabibi

Mandy El-Sayegh

A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose

In collaboration with sound artist Sami El-Enany and movement artist Chelsea Gordon. *Curated by Sara Raza.*

Opening Reception & Exhibition Walkthrough

Thursday, 22 February 2024 | 6 – 9 PM

Exhibition walkthrough with Mandy-El Sayegh, led by Sara Raza, and begins at 6 PM.

On view: 23 February – 4 April 2024

Performance: Tuesday, 27 February 2024 | 8:30 PM

[Dubai, 31 January 2024] – Curated by Sara Raza, London-based artist Mandy El-Sayegh presents, *A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose*, her inaugural solo exhibition at Lawrie Shabibi. A combination of painting, installation, video, sound, and performance, El-Sayegh's innovative approach to visual storytelling embodies the rebellious spirit of punk's DIY visual culture. El-Sayegh rebels against and liberates images and text from centralised commodification structures, exploring a fusion of various actions, creating an immersive audio-visual experience that weaves together ancestral, familial, and collective visual data from diverse sources such as ephemera, textiles, literature, newspapers, and printed materials.

El-Sayegh transforms the gallery space by layering painted surfaces using sheets from international newspapers of varying colours. Stretched canvases and unfinished paintings, rich with intricate patterns, symbolic references, and collages, further populate the white walls. The exhibition borrows from ancient and modern poetry and the title of the show is borrowed from a line in Gertrude Stein's *Sacred Emily* (1913), which reflects on the practices of daily life, through the repetition of words and the reclamation of language, actions, events, and objects.

As part of the project, sound artist Sami El-Enany has been commissioned to craft a spatialised, multi-channel sound work in response to the themes explored in El-Sayegh's art. This work centres around the concept of the square as a site for liberation and resistance, drawing inspiration from historical and recent political movements. El-Enany has also created a new score for a performance piece co-created by El-Sayegh and movement artist Chelsea Gordon. The performance

draws from diverse prayer rituals, incorporating hypnotic rhythms and motions to evoke trance-like states.

A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose showcases Mandy El-Sayegh's unique bricolage approach, connecting disparate visual cultural knowledge to create new meanings. The exhibition is an exploration of resistance, reclamation, and the intersection of visual and auditory narratives. To complement the exhibition, curator Sara Raza has contributed an insightful essay that provides a deeper understanding of the artist's work and the thematic threads running through the exhibition.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Mandy El-Sayegh's (b. 1985, British – Malaysian, of Palestinian origin) highly process-driven practice is rooted in an exploration of material and language. Executed in a wide range of media, including densely layered paintings, sculpture, installation, diagrams, and sound and video, El-Sayegh's work investigates the formation and break-down of systems of order, be they bodily, linguistic, or political.

Her first solo institutional show, the specially commissioned installation *Cite Your Sources*, was held at London's Chisenhale Gallery in 2019. Her work has also been shown in exhibitions at Overbeck-Gesellschaft – Kunstverein Lübeck (2023); Biennale Matter of Art, Prague (2023); Busan Biennale (2020); Sursock Museum, Beirut (2019); Sculpture Center, Long Island City (2019); The Mistake Room, Guadalajara (2018); Instituto de Visión, Bogotá (2018); and Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing (2017), among others. She was shortlisted for the Prix Jean François Prat in 2023, as well as the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in 2017. In 2022, she took part in the performance festival MOVE 2022: Culture club - Corps collectifs at the Centre Pompidou, Paris.

El-Sayegh's work is held in major institutional collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami; Start Museum, Shanghai; and Tate, UK.

Mandy El-Sayegh lives and works in London, United Kingdom.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Sara Raza is an award-winning curator and writer specialising in global art and visual cultures from a postcolonial and post-Soviet perspective. Sara holds a BA (hons) in English Literature and History of Art and an MA in 20th-Century Art History and Theory, both from Goldsmiths College, University of London, and pursued studies towards her PhD at the Royal College of Art, London. She lives and works in New York City, where she teaches at the School of Visual Arts

Masters Curatorial Practice and is a Red Burns Fellow at New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program and teaches on the Program's Masters' course.

Raza has curated for international museums, biennials, and festivals including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA; Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan, Italy; Rubin Museum of Art, New York, USA; Mathaf: Modern Arab Art Museum, Doha, Qatar; the MacKenzie Art Gallery, Saskatchewan, Canada; Maraya Art Center, Sharjah, UAE; the Tashkent Biennale, Uzbekistan; the 55th Venice Biennale, Italy, and the 3rd Baku Public Art Festival, Azerbaijan, among others.

Formerly, she was the Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator for the MENA region at the Guggenheim Museum, New York and Curator of Public Programs at Tate Modern, London. Raza is the West and Central Asia Desk Editor for ArtAsiaPacific magazine and has written for numerous artist monographs, books, and catalogues.

She is the recipient of the 11th Art Table New Leadership Award for Women in the Arts and was honoured by Deutsche Bank and Apollo as one of 40 under 40 global art specialists (thinkers' category). She is a Walter Hopps Curatorial Excellence Award Finalist and the Arts Council of England Emerging Curator's Awardee (2004-05).

ABOUT THE GALLERY

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

PRESS INQUIRIES

For press inquiries please contact:
Margarita Poroshina
E. margarita@lawrieshabibi.com
M. +971 56 6066087
T. +971 4 346 9906