

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Lawrie Shabibi and P420 at Frieze New York  
Booth D11  
13 – 17 May, 2026  
The Shed, 545 West 30th Street, New York**

Lawrie Shabibi and P420 announce their joint participation in Frieze New York 2026, presenting a focused collaborative presentation in a shared booth. The presentation brings together artists working across diverse cultural contexts and artistic disciplines, including **Nabil Nahas** (b. 1949, Lebanese), **Hamra Abbas** (b. 1976, Pakistani), **Nada Elkalaawy** (b. 1993, Egypt), **Francis Offman** (b. 1987, Rwandan) and **Adelaide Cioni** (b. 1976, Italian). Working across marble, textile, painting, and material-based practices, these artists offer distinct yet interconnected approaches to surface, structure, and material memory.

The presentation includes several works spanning textile, painting, sculptural installation, and industrial material processes. Two works on canvas incorporating found materials and coffee grounds by Francis Offman are shown alongside a textile composition by Adelaide Cioni, in which wool is stitched directly onto canvas. These are presented in dialogue with marble inlay works by Hamra Abbas and textural paintings by Nabil Nahas, alongside figurative compositions by Nada Elkalaawy that engage with layered surfaces and the fragmentation of memory. The restrained, minimalist booth design emphasises the relationships between the works, highlighting both contrast and continuity across practices.

The presentation considers expanded interpretations of painting through material transformation across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Offman's works combine textiles and found materials to reflect on postcolonial histories and fragmented memory. Cioni's stitched wool compositions explore decorative pattern, gesture, and the language of textile as image. Abbas's marble inlay works draw from both Mughal ornamentation and the traditions of Renaissance painting, while Nahas's practice transforms paint into highly textured, dimensional surfaces that suggest natural and cosmic systems. Elkalaawy's paintings, in parallel, extend these concerns through an exploration of image-making as a process of accumulation and erasure, where multiple temporalities and sources converge to produce nuanced, often ambiguous representations of memory.

Nabil Nahas continues his exploration of the relationship between nature and abstraction through richly textured paintings that merge organic form with geometric structure. A Lebanese-American

artist based between New York and Beirut, Nahas has lived and worked in New York for over five decades, where his primary studio remains. His works demonstrate a deep engagement with pattern, repetition, and surface, often referencing marine life, fractal systems, and the underlying order of the natural world. Engaging with histories of colour, geometry, and abstraction, Nahas extends these legacies through a painterly language that is both tactile and immersive. He will also represent Lebanon at the 61st Venice Biennale with an installation titled *Don't Get Me Wrong*, on view from May 9 to November 22, 2026. The project explores the relationship between man, nature, and the cosmos, offering a visual and spiritual experience that transforms the spectacular into a vehicle for introspection.

Hamra Abbas has, over several years, developed an ongoing engagement with marble inlay (*pietra dura*), a decorative technique that involves the precise cutting and assembling of coloured stones to produce intricate pictorial compositions. Repositioning this historically ornamental practice within a contemporary artistic framework, Abbas extends its visual and conceptual possibilities beyond its traditional architectural function. Her works draw from Mughal architectural traditions and their use of garden imagery, where idealised landscapes operate as metaphors for paradise, harmony, and the cyclical relationship between life and mortality. Through this lens, Abbas examines the symbolic role of nature within architectural language, exploring how colour, pattern, and material surface contribute to constructed visions of the natural world.

Additionally, Abbas' *Tree Studies* series, originally commissioned for the Louvre Abu Dhabi as part of the Richard Mille Art Prize exhibition *Art Here 2025*, reflects her ongoing engagement with material and craft. Working with lapis and marble techniques rooted in South Asian traditions, she reimagines botanical drawings of olive, pomegranate, and cherry trees into quiet, meditative forms.

Nada Elkalaawy's practice explores the threshold at which images shift from truth into fiction, engaging figurative painting as a site for the construction and erosion of memory. Working from an archive of collected imagery rather than direct observation, she develops compositions that interweave family photographs, still lifes, art-historical references, and digital sources. Through processes of layering, mirroring, and doubling, her paintings foreground subtle transformations of presence and absence, where surfaces operate as accumulative fields of gesture and trace. Motifs of flowers, plants, and domestic objects recur as carriers of emotional and symbolic weight, functioning as vessels for narratives of mourning, regeneration, and attachment. By bringing together multiple temporalities and spatial registers, Elkalaawy produces compositions that are at once intimate and unstable, inviting a sustained engagement with the ambiguities of recollection and representation.

Francis Offman's works consist of unstretched canvases with irregular contours, combining fields of flat colour with collaged fragments of salvaged paper, including materials taken from everyday packaging such as bread wrappers and shoeboxes. These inserted elements enter the composition as interruptions or ruptures, creating surfaces that oscillate between abstraction and fragile figuration. Occasionally, forms emerge that suggest landscapes or natural elements — trees, mountains, or horizons — though these references remain unstable and fragmentary. Offman's compositions evoke distant geographies, including Rwanda, where he spent part of his childhood, while engaging with themes of displacement, memory, and fractured identity.

Adelaide Cioni's practice operates at the intersection of textile, painting, and performance. Drawing remains central to her work, alongside an intentional absence of linear narrative and a sustained feminist perspective. In recent years, Cioni has expanded her practice through collaborations with music and dance, developing a multidisciplinary approach that situates textile and gesture within performative and spatial contexts. She lives and works between Spoleto and London.

Together, these artists present a reflection on how material, surface, and process continue to expand the language of painting today, revealing dialogues that move across geographies, histories, and artistic traditions.

## **ABOUT P420**

Founded in Bologna in 2010 by Alessandro Pasotti and Fabrizio Padovani, P420 has always maintained a commitment to promoting creativity and pushing artistic boundaries. Born from the founders' initial experience in the world of art and artists' books, the gallery emerged with the aim of promoting an inclusive approach to contemporary art, embracing artists from diverse backgrounds, generations, and disciplines.

The name P420 is inspired by Pantone 420, a universally recognized shade of grey known for its ability to serve as the perfect background, enhancing whatever it accompanies. P420 thus emerges as a platform whose primary aim is to embrace and elevate artistic ideas and expressions, fostering their harmonious coexistence within a context that supports, encourages, and celebrates diversity and innovation. Here, every voice can resonate powerfully and distinctly, much like a work of art standing out against the backdrop of Pantone 420.

P420 has been instrumental in the rediscovery of artists such as Irma Blank, Laura Grisi, Ana Lupas, and Stephen Rosenthal, collaborating directly with the artists or, when necessary, with their heirs or the Estates representing them. Through exhibitions, off-site projects, fairs, and a strong online presence, the gallery also supports the evolving narratives of contemporary art, initiating and supporting the journey of many young emerging talents like Victor Fotso Nyie, Francis Offman, and Shafei Xia.

Over the years, P420 has expanded its program to encompass a diverse array of artists from around the globe. Despite this growth and its active engagement in international contexts, the gallery remains attentive to the local art scene. Recently, P420 has unveiled new spaces adjacent to the gallery, specifically dedicated to artists' studios, thus establishing a fresh hub for the artistic community in Bologna.

## **ABOUT LAWRIE SHABIBI**

Lawrie Shabibi, founded in 2010 by William Lawrie (formerly Director of Contemporary Middle Eastern Art at Christie's) and Asmaa Al-Shabibi (former Managing Director of Art Dubai), opened in 2011 in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue, a key hub for contemporary art in the region.

Initially focused on emerging artists from the Middle East and North Africa, the gallery has broadened its scope in recent years to include artists from diverse regions and generations, with a continued emphasis on underrepresented voices. A significant part of the program supports diaspora artists exploring themes of identity, memory, history, and socio-political issues.

The gallery also curates art historical exhibitions, highlighting pioneers such as Mona Saudi, Mohamed Melehi, Nabil Nahas and Mehdi Moutashar including presentations at Frieze Masters in

London, and has facilitated placements in institutions including the Guggenheim, Tate Modern, and Centre Pompidou. By integrating established and emerging artists, the gallery creates a layered program that deepens the context for underrepresented regions.