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Meet The Middle Eastern Artists Making Their Mark In London



A selection of the 31 female artists exhibiting as part of I Am at London’s St Martin in-the-Fields. From left: Afsoon, Lulwa Al-Khalifa, Rawan Al Adwan, Azadeh Ghotbi, Zena Assi, Ahaad Alamoudi, Nermine Hammam and Soheila Sokhanvari

These female artists are taking centre stage in the UK’s vibrant art scene this summer

Zena Assi, 43, Lebanese, mixed media artist

What’s it like to be a female artist from the Middle East?

It’s a blessing and a curse. You have your scars that give layers of sensibility and acomplexity that defines you and marks your work.

Why do you make art?

I don’t know how to be anything other than an artist. My studio is my sanctuary. I can play the architect, the director, the slayer or the creator.

What are your passions and how do you express them?

I don’t express my passions, I keep them buried deep inside, so that frustration forms and finds a way of escaping on its own.

Can art change the world?

Ideally, art can help build a bridge between different cultures. Words, sounds and images are powerful tools, it depends how you use them.



Al Kouwa Fi Yad El Mar2a, Zena Assi