

Cob.

SHADI AL-ATALLAH

Born in 1994 Saudi Arabia
Lives and works in London, UK

Shadi Al-Atallah is a multi-disciplinary artist working between London and Bahrain. Their life-sized distorted self-portraits explore mental health, queerness and racial identity, inspired by spiritual practices, family history and their childhood in Saudi Arabia.

Shadi Al-Atallah's own queer, mixed-race identity is bodied forth in vigorous, complex work that engages boldly with non-normative identities, composite cultural affiliations, spirituality and mental health. Part of a wider series drawing on the theory of 'catharsis' in Aristotle's Poetics, Al-Atallah's large scale paintings capture experiences of profound release and heightened, almost unbearable sensation. The works revolve around the idea of catharsis (from the Greek word meaning 'cleansing' or 'purging') as a radical working-through of emotion and of the self: a healing process, but one whose psychological intensity verges on the physically painful.

The distorted, overlapping limbs of Al-Atallah's figures seem to externalise the deep internal contortions produced by the building-up of unsustainable emotional pressure. At the same time, they capture the performativity of the convulsive, expulsive dancing practised by East Africans captured and sold into the Arab slave trade in the Saudi Arabia of Al-Atallah's birth. In a violent eruption of energy and feeling, this dancing brings the individual perilously close to loss of control. Yet as a restorative act of magical healing, its aim is to rebalance and fortify the soul and mind.

Al-Atallah graduated from the Royal College of Art with an MA in painting. Solo exhibitions include; *Fistfight*, Guts Gallery, London, UK (2023); *Waters That Never Quench*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles, US (2022); *I Lost The Title On The Plane*, Guts Gallery, London, (2021); *Fuck, I'm Stuck* (J. Hammond Projects, London, 2019); *Roadblocks*, Cob Gallery, London, UK (2018). Group exhibitions include; *Dreaming of Home*, Leslie Lohman Museum of Art, New York, USA (2023); Perrotin, Hong Kong (2022); *Figuring*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles, US (2022); *Un/Sense, NEXT: At Christie's, London 2022*, Christie's Auction House, London, UK (2022); *Reality Check*, Guts Gallery, London, UK (2021); *A New Art World: A New Art World is Possible*, Guts Gallery, London, UK (2021); *Guts Gallery Introducing*, Sadie Coles HQ, London, UK (2021); *When Shit Hits The Fan Again*, Guts Gallery, London, UK (2021); *Begin Again*, Guts Gallery (online) (2020); *When Shit Hits The Fan*, Guts Gallery (online) (2020); *Without a Painter*, Fitzrovia Gallery, London, UK, (2019); *Full English*, curated by DATEABLE ART, London, UK (2019); *the head, the hand*, Blank Projects, Cape Town, South Africa (2019); *SHARKS*, Swim Gallery, San Francisco, USA (2018); *Absinthe*, Collectivending, Spit and Sawdust, London, UK (2019); *Gender Fuckery in Contemporary British Art*, at b.Dewitt, London, UK (2019); *The People Art Resistance* (Part of the AfroPunk takeover), 198 Contemporary Arts, London, UK (2018). Public commissions include LDN WMN (curated by Tate Collective x Mayor of London, Tate Modern, London, UK (2018).

In 2018, Al-Atallah was invited to speak on a panel of artists as part of Insights: Beyond Gender - a talk organised by Tate Modern which explored gender and representation for artists today. Al-Atallah's work is included in The Dean Collection, USA; The Underdog Collection, Italy and the A4 Arts Foundation, South Africa.

EDUCATION

2018 - 2020 MA Painting, Royal College of Art, London, UK
2015 - 2018 BA Fine Art Camberwell, London, UK

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 *Fistfight*, Guts Gallery, London, UK
2022 *Waters That Never Quench*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles, USA
2021 *I Left The Title on The Plane*, Guts Gallery, London, UK
2019 *Fuck I'm Stuck*, J Hammond Projects, London, UK
2018 *Roadblocks*, Cob Gallery, London, UK

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023 *Dreaming of Home*, Leslie Lohman Museum of Art, New York, USA
2022 *Somatic Markings*, Kasmin Gallery, New York, USA
2022 *Them*, Juxtapoz Magazine X Perrotin, Hong Kong

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2022 *Figuring*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles, USA
2022 *AWITA (Association of Women in the Arts) x JW Anderson: Shadi Al Atallah*, Rosie Hastings and Hannah Quinlan, Curated by Beth Greenacre and Madeleine Martin, London, UK
2022 *Un/Sense, NEXT: At Christie's, London 2022*, Christie's Auction House, London, UK
2022 *And This Skin Of Mine, To Live Again A Second Time*, Guts Gallery, London, UK
2022 *20 (What Now?)*, PM/AM, London, UK
2021 *Reality Check*, Guts Gallery, London, UK
2021 *A New Art World: A New Art World is Possible*, Guts Gallery, London, UK
2021 *Guts Gallery Introducing*, Sadie Coles HQ, London, UK
2021 *When Shit Hits The Fan Again*, Guts Gallery, London, UK
2020 *Begin Again*, Guts Gallery (online)
2020 *When Shit Hits The Fan*, Guts Gallery (online)
2020 *Without a Painter*, Fitzrovia Gallery, London, UK
2019 *the head, the hand*, Blank Projects, Cape Town, South Africa
2019 *Sharks*, Swim Gallery, San Francisco, USA
2019 *Absinthe*, Collectivending, Spit and Sawdust, London, UK
2019 *Gender Fuckery in Contemporary British Art*, Dewitt Gallery, London, UK
2018 *AFROPUNK x 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning Present: People Art Resistance*, London, UK
2018 *BBZ BLK BK*, Copeland Gallery, London, UK

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

2023 *Unruly Bodies*, Goldsmiths CCA, London, UK
2023 *Dreaming of Home*, The Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, New York, USA

ART FAIRS

2019 Exposure EXPO Chicago, USA
Solo Presentation with Cob Gallery, selected by Naima Keith, Vice President of Education and Public Programs at Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Chicago, USA

COLLECTIONS

Dean Collection, USA
Underdog Collection, Italy
A4 Arts Foundation, South Africa

TALKS

2019 *Eating at the Same Table x Fuck I'm Stuck*, J Hammond Projects, London, UK
2018 *Insights: Beyond Gender*, Tate Modern, London, UK

PUBLIC PROJECTS

2019 CommuneEAST x The Curtain Hotel, London, UK
2019 CommuneEAST x Selfridges, London, UK
2019 *Intersect*, Cambridge University Queens' Art Festival, Cambridge, UK
2018 *LDN WMN*, Tate Collective, public commission, London, UK