

PRESS RELEASE

CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE MIDDLE EAST ARTWORLD

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Lindsey Moore and Nat Muller

June 2009

Hardback

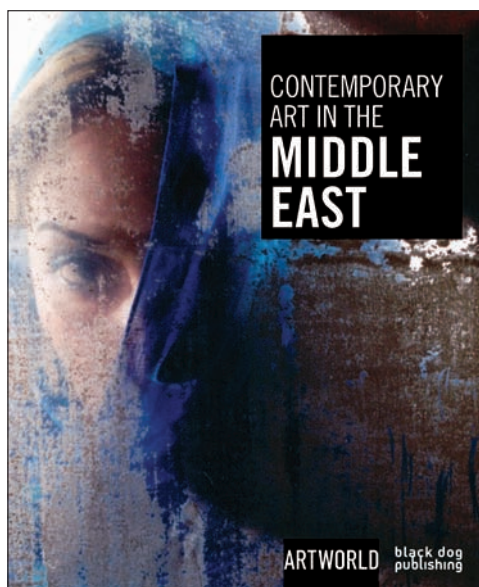
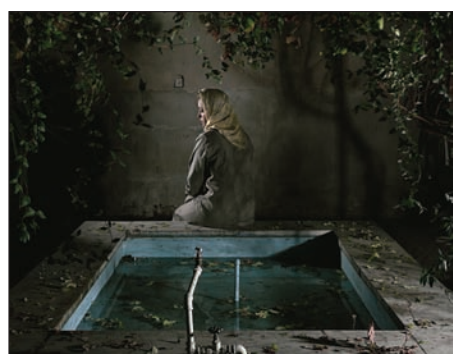
232 pages

138 colour and b/w ills

28 x 23 cm

ISBN: 978 1 906155 56 8

UK £29.95



black dog
publishing



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architecture art design
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theory and things

Black Dog Publishing Ltd
London UK

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london wc1x 9ng
united kingdom

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Contemporary Art in the Middle East is the first in the cutting-edge new ARTWORLD series which opens up the most challenging and under-exposed art scenes in the world.

Showcasing the most explosive, dynamic and provocative art coming out of the region, *Contemporary Art in the Middle East* shatters common stereotypes and presents a new way of looking at one of the most complex and misunderstood areas of the world today. Artists from opposite ends of the spectrum come together in a vivid confrontation of diverse styles across boundaries; from the brash pop art of Shirin Aliabadi to the restrained calligraphic minimalism of Golnaz Fathi; from the provocative conceptualism of Mona Hatoum to the vibrant installations of Farhad Moshiri; from the slick beauty of Youssef Nabil to the edgy realism of Afshin Dehkordi. All feature together in a formidable collage of artistic expression.

Lavishly illustrated profiles of the most influential artists working today are supported with essays by writers who represent the diversity of voices from this region: Nat Muller breaks through familiar representations of the Middle East in Western media, Lindsey Moore explodes myths about women and artistic freedom, and Suzanne Cotter and TJ Demos unveil artistic output from two of the most politically volatile centres, Palestine and Lebanon.

Supported by an extensive resource featuring essays from Edward Said's *Orientalism* and interviews with influential figures from across the art scene, *Contemporary Art in the Middle East* provides a new way of understanding the Middle East outside the headlines and through the engaging medium of art. The first survey of its kind, it provides a forum for new thinking that is insightful and inspiring, essential for anyone interested in getting closer to the reality of the Middle East as it actually exists today.

Suzanne Cotter is Senior Curator and Deputy Director at Modern Art Oxford. She has organised exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery, the Whitechapel Gallery and the Serpentine Gallery. Her distinguished career as a curator includes the 2006 exhibition *Out of Beirut* and she also edited the book of the same name.

TJ Demos is a critic and lecturer in the Department of History of Art, University College London. Demos writes widely on modern and contemporary art and his most recent book is *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*. He is currently working on a book on contemporary art and globalisation.

Lindsey Moore is the author of *Arab, Muslim, Woman: Voice and Vision in Postcolonial Literature and Film* and a lecturer in English Literature at Lancaster University.

Nat Muller is an independent curator and critic based in Rotterdam. She recently spent nine months in Cairo as the first curator in residence of the Townhouse Gallery.