



NYUAD's Ways of Seeing exhibition seeks to challenge your views of art

The Art Gallery at New York University Abu Dhabi has announced its next show; curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, will come to the gallery in September



Melissa Gronlund
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The Art Gallery at New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) has announced its next show: *Ways of Seeing*, curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, will come to the gallery in September.

Maya Allison, director of the Art Gallery, says that the show is particularly apt for the space, which she describes as both “inward-facing and outward-facing” within the institutional context of NYUAD.

“It is an unusual show from a curatorial standpoint,” she says. “It’s grouping objects by how different they are from one another, and each object is making it clear to the viewer how they should be interacting with each other. I hope visitors to this exhibition will have an experience akin to that of a really great seminar discussion – you take something and you look at it from all angles.”

The show’s title comes from the art critic John Berger’s landmark 1972 BBC programme, where, over the course of four shows, Berger revealed the cultural assumptions and ideological biases that underlie the supposedly neutral field of art appreciation. Later published as a book, it remains an important milestone in contemporary art history: it allowed art history to ask questions about class, gender and geography, and widened the field of art-historical analysis – advertisements, for example, could receive the kind of study normally reserved for a Leonardo. Bardaouil and Fellrath’s show analyses the many strategies which artists use to communicate to the viewer. One grouping focuses on the construction of the image.



Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger Making of 'The last photo of the Titanic afloat' by Francis Browne, 1912 2016

Swiss duo Jojakim Cortis and Adrian Sonderegger physically recreate iconic photographs in miniature. Another piece investigates how the gallery setting transforms a found object into a work of art. "Hans-Peter Feldmann's box of chocolates sits on a pedestal, with a brass plate that says 'No'. It's directly addressing the viewer and the viewer's question of whether they can take it," Allison explains. "It's interactive: is it art, or isn't it? It opens up questions about how the gallery itself tells us how to look at it.

"One of the challenges of museums is to get viewers to think critically about their own relationship to the objects," she continues. "What kind of person am I going to be? Am I going to be the person who takes the candy bar, or am I going to follow the rules and not touch it?"

The exhibition brings together 26 artists and artist collectives with 41 works, and spans a variety of media from painting, sculpture, and photography to sound, film, and installation. For this edition of the show, Bardaouil and Fellrath have introduced artistic perspectives on the Gulf, such as photographs of Emirati nationals surveying the development to their country by Sheikha Lateefa bint Maktoum. German artist Andreas Gursky, who has been in all three editions, here shows a large-plan photograph of the man-made Dubai islands that were created in the shape of the world's continents.



Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath Bardaouil and Fellrath's show analyses the many strategies which artists use to communicate to the viewer Pawan Singh / The National

Bardaouil and Fellrath, who are from Lebanon and Germany respectively and collaborate under the moniker Art Reoriented, are well known for their critical and art-history-grounded shows. Their long-running project, Art et Liberte, investigated Surrealism in Egypt from 1938 to 1948, and has toured to, among others, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Reina Sofia in Madrid, and the Moderna Museet in Stockholm.

This will be the third iteration of Ways of Seeing, which was previously installed in Istanbul and Brussels.

Ways of Seeing will run at the Art Gallery at New York University Abu Dhabi from September 3 to November 17

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