



Zahrah Alghamdi, *Echoes of the One in Many*, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATHR Gallery Presents Zahrah Alghamdi: Between Memory and Matter

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia | September 28, 2025 – ATHR Gallery JAX is pleased to present *Between Memory and Matter*, a solo exhibition by Saudi artist Zahrah Alghamdi, curated by Daria Kirsanova. Expanding her distinctive language of soil, stone, textiles, and organic matter, Alghamdi traces the ways in which material can embody memory, history and belonging.

Rooted in the mountainous terrain of Al Baha, where architecture once seemed to rise organically from the earth, Alghamdi's practice begins with the textures of her hometown-mud, rock, and natural fibers that carry emotional and historical weight. These elements, in her hands, become storytellers: linking past and present, landscape and body, matter and meaning.

Alghamdi extends her vocabulary of materials toward the human figure. Drawings and sculptures shaped by personal and collective experiences evoke solitude, resilience and hope. They are not portraits in the conventional sense but emotional landscapes- abstracted expressions of loss and endurance.

At the heart of the exhibition, *Echoes of the One in Many* (2025) marks the first manifestation of her drawings in sculptural form: a circle of figurative bodies - some slumped, others interwoven - where her illustrative line work is personified in leather flesh.

In *The Bodies in Quiet Reverie* (2025), embroidered fabric unravels into abstraction, tracing remnants of memory and matter. These figures expose the skeletal framework of our bodies, revealing fragility and quiet strength, while embodying a still oneness.

Meanwhile, *Shards of Quiet Strength* (2025) expands outward in layered leather and clay. From a rounded core, forms multiply, cluster, and disperse, evoking unity within collective presence.

Her installations resist fixed interpretation, instead opening spaces for viewers to project their own personal associations. At once deeply grounded in Saudi heritage and attuned to universal human experience, Alghamdi's work demonstrates how art can transform materials into vessels of reflection.

"Zahrah Alghamdi's art begins with the soil, stone and architecture of her hometown, Al Baha. For her, these natural materials are not neutral; they hold memory, history and emotion. Mud, rock, and organic matter become storytellers, linking past and present." - Daria Kirsanova, curator

Opening Monday, September 29, 7:30–11:00 PM at ATHR Gallery JAX, Riyadh.

[END]

For media inquiries:

Rania Abdu

r.abdu@athrart.com +966 56 519 9386

Website: <https://athrart.com/> IG: @athrart

For international media inquiries:

Lachlan Woolsey

lwoolsey@fitzandco.com

M: +44 7521 452 544

About ATHR Gallery

Founded in 2009 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, by Mohammed Hafiz and Hamza Serafi, ATHR Gallery has from its onset been a pioneering gallery with a focus toward elevating contemporary Middle Eastern art on a global scale. Serving as a cultural bridge between Saudi Arabia and the world, its artists have been the driving force of the gallery from the inception and have inspired the responsive mandate that evolves to accommodate the ever-changing local scene. ATHR Gallery prides itself on being adaptive – a testament to a legacy that has spanned over a decade and encompasses artists working across multiple disciplines and subject matters, from traditional media such as painting and sculpture to more unconventional methods that echo the daring nature of the gallery. The topics they address also vary wildly, covering a spectrum of narratives that range from the interpersonal to the macro-cultural.

ATHR has expanded its presence in Saudi Arabia with two new locations following the success of its flagship space in Jeddah; ATHR Al-Ula is the first contemporary art gallery in the historical city, while its latest outpost, ATHR JAX in Riyadh, marks the gallery's move to the capital. Following the success of ATHR Gallery, ATHR has branched out to create the ATHR Foundation, with a focus on fostering the careers of emerging artists and the development of artistic spaces. ATHR has also diversified its ventures to include AKTHR: a cultural project delivery agency in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region.

About the artist

Zahrah Alghamdi is an interdisciplinary artist renowned for her site-specific installations that unfold across natural landscapes and interior spaces. Raised in Al Baha, her profound connection to the surrounding terrain informs her approach to sourcing and working with organic materials such as mud, dried branches, cotton, and leather. Her practice explores themes of memory, loss, and resilience, turning the act of making into both research and storytelling.

Alghamdi's work is a visceral return to craft – she scavenges, layers, seals, and assembles materials to awaken their sensory and symbolic presence. More recently, the human figure has become the focus of her practice: rooted in her sketches, these forms translate drawing into sculpture, transforming the body into a universal symbol of shared experience and endurance.

She holds a PhD in Design and Visual Art (2013) and an MA in Contemporary Craft (2009) from Coventry University, UK, and a BA in Islamic Arts (2003) from King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah.

Recent selected exhibitions include “Between Memory and Matter” (solo), ATHR Gallery, Riyadh, 2025; “Arabfuturs”, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2024; “Art Here”, Louvre Abu Dhabi, 2023; Coachella Desert X, USA, 2021; “Streams Move Oceans” (solo), ATHR Gallery, Jeddah, 2019; “Second Hand”, Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai, 2019; “After Illusion” (solo), Saudi Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2019; and “An Inanimate Village” (solo), British Museum, London, 2017.

She was an artist-in-residence at Artists in Labs, Zurich, Switzerland (2017). Her work is held in major collections including the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the British Museum, London; and the Art Jameel Foundation, Dubai.

About the curator

Daria Kirsanova is an art professional based between London and Zanzibar. She began her career in London in 2007 after studying at the Sotheby's Institute of Art, working with leading institutions including Victoria Miro Gallery, the Serpentine Galleries, and Hauser & Wirth.

After completing her MA in Art Theory at Chelsea College of Art and Design in 2011, she pursued an independent curatorial and writing practice, collaborating with Devi Art Foundation (New Delhi), Sazmanab Platform for Contemporary Arts (Tehran), YARAT Art Centre (Baku), and the Brunei Gallery at SOAS (London). Her writing has appeared in Frieze Magazine, IBRAAZ, and other leading publications.

In 2013, Kirsanova founded narrative projects, a gallery in London's Fitzrovia that represented internationally recognized artists whose works featured in the Venice Biennale (2015, 2017), Manifesta 12, and the Liverpool Biennale. The gallery's program earned acclaim in Frieze, ARTFORUM, Art Monthly, Financial Times, and Artnet, and participated in major international art fairs including The Armory Show, NADA, Artissima, and ARCO Madrid.

Since closing the gallery in 2020, she has focused on cross-regional projects, including "Reflections / Connections" at the National Museum of the DRC in Kinshasa, "Breaking the Mould: New Signatures from the DRC" at Alserkal Avenue in Dubai, and "The Two Faces of Tomorrow" at the Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF).

From 2024 to 2025, she joined ATHR Gallery in Saudi Arabia as Curator and now continues to curate for the gallery, advancing its global engagement and fostering dialogue across regions and practices.

يسعدنا دعوتكم لحضور افتتاح

المعرض الفردي للفنانة زهرة الغامدي "بين الذاكرة والمادة" في

أثر غاليري - جاكس

الاثنين، 29 سبتمبر 2025

مساءً 7:30 – 11:00

أثر غاليري، جاكس - الرياض

زهرة الغامدي : بين الذاكرة والمادة

يبتدئ فن زهرة الغامدي بالتربة، الحجر، والعمارة من مسقط رأسها، الباحة، حيث تبدو المباني وكأنها نمت من داخل الجبال. بالنسبة لها، تلك المواد الطبيعية ليست محايدة، فهي تحمل الذكريات، التاريخ، والمشاعر. في أيديها، الطين، الحجر، والمواد العضوية، كلهم يصبحون رواة لقصص تربط بين الحاضر والماضي.

مؤخرًا، اتجهت الغامدي إلى جسد الإنسان، حيث صنعت منحوتات ورسومات شكّلها الفقد، الصمود، والأمل. تلك الأعمال ليست تصويرية فقط، بل هي مشاهد شعورية تجسد العزلة، الفقد، والجُلد، بطريقة تدعو المتلقي إلى إدراك هذه المشاعر والتعاطف معها.

ترفض منحوتاتها وأعمالها التركيبية أن تختزل في معنى واحد. في المقابل، تخلق مساحات حرّة تمكّن المتلقي من استحضار ذكرياته ومشاعره. بين التجذّر في التراث السعودي، والاتصال بتجربة الإنسان في أنحاء العالم، تكشف ممارسة الغامدي لنا كيف للمواد ذاتها أن تحمل الذكرى، وكيف للفن أن يحوّل تلك الذكريات إلى تأملات مشتركة.

—داريا كرسانوفـا