



Detritus of Memory, 2026 by Abdullah Al Othman. Courtesy of the artist and ATHR Gallery.

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ATHR Gallery proudly presents a solo exhibition by newly represented artist Abdullah Al Othman

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, May 12, 2026 - ATHR Gallery is pleased to announce *Syntax of the Ever-Changing*, a highly anticipated solo exhibition by Saudi artist Abdullah Al Othman, opening on May 20 at JAX District.

Through sculpture, assemblage, photography, archival imagery and found materials, Al Othman constructs a visual language informed by the evolving architecture and material memory of the city. Drawing from observation, photography, and the gathering of archival fragments, the artist speaks the “vocabulary” of the built environment - a place continuously expanding, collapsing, accumulating and reforming. Much like poetry, his practice recombines textures, surfaces, colors and industrial remnants into new syntaxes that attempt to articulate what language alone cannot fully contain.

Working with discarded wood, corrugated metal sheets, found sepia-toned photographs, nails, steel, concrete and other found materials, Al Othman transforms these materials that are marked by time,

labor and erosion into layered compositions that exist between painting, sculpture and artifact. Rusted, jagged, frayed, and worn, these surfaces become carriers of memory - holding the traces of every hand, function and force that shaped them.

The exhibition unfolds across six interconnected registers, each examining the relationship between matter, temporality and the conditions through which images, structures and histories are continuously assembled and undone. Construction debris is reassembled into framed structures where residue itself becomes the primary unit of meaning; archival and contemporary photographs are disrupted through painterly intervention; architectural materials are stripped of utility and rebuilt into dense accumulations of texture and sediment; and sculptural forms remain suspended between states of incompleteness and becoming.

Among the works presented is *Time Consents to Be Held*, a triad of works composed of discarded formwork wood, bent nails and metal sheets retrieved from construction sites across Riyadh.

In *In the Residue of Rust* (2026), found formwork wood, rusted metal sheets and nails are assembled into a composition shaped by corrosion, exposure and accumulation. Meanwhile, *In the Hues of Patination* (2026) introduces copper sheets into the work, allowing oxidation and surface transformation to emerge as records of time itself.

Elsewhere in the exhibition, thirty-two works pairing archival photographs of Saudi Arabia from the 1970s and 1980s with found objects create speculative narratives, while concrete bricks are displaced from their structural role and reimagined as surfaces of bodily encounter and ritual use.

Originally beginning his career as a writer and poet, Al Othman continues to approach material through a literary sensibility. Across the exhibition, each work functions like a line within an unfinished poem - fragmented, and open-ended - inviting viewers to navigate, misread and reconstruct meaning through their own encounter with the work.

Syntax of the Ever-Changing opens May 20, 7-11 PM at ATHR Gallery Riyadh in the JAX Arts District.

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About ATHR

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 for Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region.

About the Artist

Abdullah Al Othman (b. 1985 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) is a multidisciplinary artist and published contemporary poet whose practice spans sculpture, installation, video, photography, graffiti, street art and interventions as well as text. Rooted in the belief that art should move beyond illustrating issues or prescribing meaning, Al Othman approaches marginal spaces and overlooked narratives as central sites of inquiry and creation. Through assemblage, archival material, and poetic gestures, he constructs visual languages shaped by memory, transformation, and the evolving urban landscape.

Al Othman has presented his work extensively both within Saudi Arabia and internationally, with participations in the Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale, Desert X AlUla, and the Lyon Biennale, alongside exhibitions and projects in Riyadh, Jeddah, Berlin, Vienna, Basel, Venice, New Delhi, and New York City. His solo exhibitions include *The Question / More Questions* at Alaan Artspace, Riyadh (2014).