

# Ahaad Alamoudi

Portfolio 2025



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# Ahaad Alamoudi

Saudi, b. 1991, Jeddah, KSA

## Statement

*My practice navigates the shifting cultural and architectural landscape of Saudi Arabia, focusing on how transformation is experienced, remembered, and imagined. Through performative installations, sound, light, and image, I explore the tension between presence and absence, tradition and futurity. Rooted in collective memory and oral histories, my work often engages with vernacular architecture, folklore, and the language of spectacle to question what is preserved, what is erased, and what emerges in between.*

*Projects such as Ghosts of Today and Tomorrow and my ongoing research with Sindbad investigate how communities articulate identity and adaptation amidst rapid change. I am particularly drawn to the poetics of the present: a space where utopia is not a fixed future, but a lived and contested now.*

## Bio

**Raised between England and Saudi Arabia,** lives and works in Jeddah. Travelling between the two kingdoms, Ahaad's work addresses history and representation. She graduated from Dar Al Hekma University in Jeddah with a BA in Visual Communication in 2014 and graduated with an MA in Print from the Royal College of Art in 2017.

In her research about Saudi's reforming ethnography, Ahaad's photography, video and print installations aim at reinterpreting historical renditions of a reforming culture.

Ahaad's solo exhibition during 21,39; Heat Burns, Athr Gallery, Jeddah (2020), and her group shows include: Colour Bar, Maraya Art Center, Sharjah (2019), Screens Series, New Museum, NYC (2019). Public/Private, Historical Jeddah (2019), Out of Place, Athr Gallery, Jeddah (2019), Al Obour, SAC, Jeddah (2019). Young Arab Exhibition, ArtX, NYC (2018). Refusing to be Still, SAC, Jeddah (2018). The Parallel Kingdom exhibition at the Station Museum in Houston, The Generation exhibition at Minnesota Street Project in San Francisco (2017 & 2016). We Need to Talk, Edge of Arabia, Jeddah (2012)



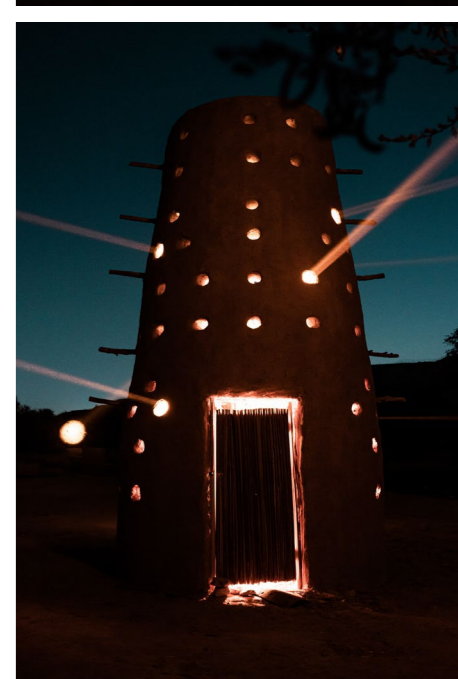
# Ghosts of Today and Tomorrow

Performative Installation / 2022

**Ghosts of Today and Tomorrow (2022)** by Ahaad Alamoudi is a performative installation that considers light and sound as natural carriers of information. Alluding to the historical use of pigeons as message carriers, the installation comprises two pigeon towers. From each, a majles singer will perform a mawwal vocal piece, a variant local to the Hijaz and Tihama regions of the traditional vocal Arabic music.

The illuminations are animated by the performers in conversation: when one begins to sing, light will emanate from their structure while the other remains silent and their structure dark. A mawwal, Alamoudi explains, in its form, is ephemeral, but its brief performances are outlived by the lasting impressions they leave. Here, making use of the apertures of the dovecote used to shelter pigeons, light will pour out and spread over the surrounding audience and space.

The current period of change in Saudi Arabia is considered by many to be a time of enlightenment. In order to parse this moment, this installation creates contrasts – between light and darkness, silence and noise, the past and the future.





# The Green Light

Five-Channel Video Installation / 2022

**So much of what we experience currently undergoes different forms of mimicry.** Information is created, gathered and then shared in continuous loops. Through each reiteration the mimicked form carries with it new information, and through its continued motion, it begins to form and reform and thus this cycle is birthed, and we are birthed into the cycle. A message shared, received and repeated The work visualizes this motion, it discusses Saudi Arabia's current state of reformation. As the country reforms, adapts and evolves; voices begin to emerge and take light, while others are blurred and some are no longer heard. Thirty six men stand on a plinth and chant lyrics to arab pop songs when green light is shone on them.



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The men stand as regular tessellations in the installation. Within each layer 4 men represent 4 basic shapes, and each form is a unit from which more complicated patterns are constructed. Their harmonies unite and give power to a new unified form. Throughout the performance each form is constructed and deconstructed as the light switches on and off. When the light is switched off the messages they hold lay dormant, once the light is on then the messages continue to spread and form a new whole. Together through their repetition and their occupation of space they manifest new truths and new realities as a result of an action. The work challenges how ideas can spread and manifest from one mimicked form to another, constantly creating new simulacrum.



# Waiting Room

Video Sound Color / 2021

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**A waiting room or waiting hall** is a building, or more commonly a part of a building or a room, where people sit or stand until the event or appointment for which they are waiting begins.



# The Social Health Club

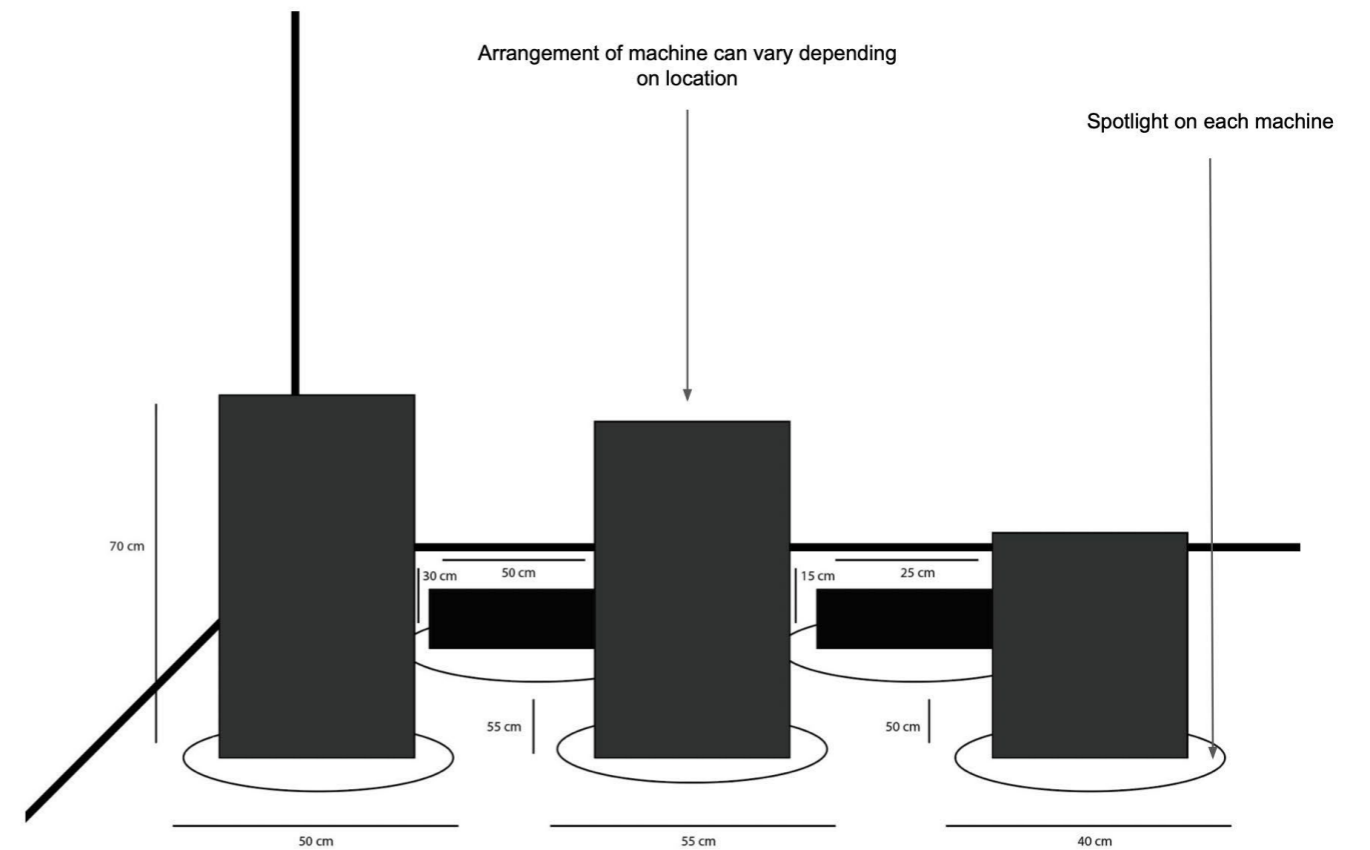
Installation & 4k Video / 2020

**In the Social Health Club**, a collection of old, obsolete health and training machines takes center stage, their once-innovative designs now relics of a bygone era. These machines, difficult to understand or use, stand as symbols of a time when health and productivity were tied to the promise of technological progress. Their presence evokes questions about relevance, purpose, and the ways past ideals are reshaped or discarded as society evolves. Arranged to form a “social health club,” these devices invite interaction not for their intended function but for open-ended exploration.

There is no prescribed use, no clear instruction. Instead, they transform into spaces for collective engagement and quiet reflection, reframing objects of individual optimization into tools for communal experience. The act of engaging with these machines becomes a critique of the modern obsession with positivity, where health, productivity, and happiness are often conflated with success.

The installation captures a tension between the optimism and ambition of the past and the fragility of such ideals when viewed through the lens of rapid societal change. These machines, strange and unfamiliar now, reflect the transformation within Saudi Arabia, where the past is frequently reinterpreted or left behind in the drive toward progress.

The work questions what is lost and gained in these shifts, exploring the ways in which individual strategies for improvement are scaled to fit entire populations. It draws attention to the aesthetics of melancholy, standing in stark contrast to the aggressively optimistic narratives that dominate contemporary measures of success. This space becomes a reflection on progress and health, asking whether these concepts can ever be reduced to mechanisms and strategies, or whether they require something more enduring, something less mechanical, to be fully understood.



**The video can be viewed from a sculpture** made up of modified outdoor gym equipment entitled *The Outdoor Health Club*, referencing the proliferation of exercise equipment in public spaces all over the Kingdom. The modified fitness machines become active viewing 'seats' and viewers must put themselves in physically uncomfortable positions, adjust their bodies to fit into the gym equipment-like devices. As Michael Eysenck, a British psychologist developed the "hedonic treadmill theory" which compares the pursuit of happiness to a person on a treadmill, who has to keep walking just to stay in the same place.

You can pedal or row while you watch, but it's heavy and gets you nowhere. The iron is exactly that, a yellow iron, and it stands conspicuously on a pedestal, spotlit in a central point in the exhibition. At first sight, the iron is seemingly innocent, but as you approach, this reified object begins to communicate with you. Other speaking objects in the show include the grumpy Falcons in the video installation *What is this*. Skeptical and moody, they have a lot to say about the changes happening around them but they remain obstinate and indifferent to the pressures to be positive. The artist examines the idea of pressure, power and technology, where the nature of imposed changes attempts to define who we are. The various fitness machines, the singing iron and moving mechanic racks, offer divergent and disarming takes on how we have humanised technology, all the while being subjected to these technologies and becoming more machine like in our ways of thinking, responding and being. Who is serving who? And how and in what ways are we controlled by these systems and machines?



# Land of Dreams

Digital print on cardboard cutout

/ 2019-2024

**In the piece Land of dreams**, the artist questions how land can be defined by scattering 24 large billboards of the signer Ahlam across a deserted landscape in Jeddah. The day before the installation the artist posted a location and stated this location would lead you the land of dreams. Alamoudi wanted the viewer to come with their own notion and interpretation of their land of dreams and then be subjected to Ahlam scattered across an empty plot of land.

Ahlam is one of many central pop figures in Arab culture; she comes with her own connotations and meanings, all obtained through her career as an Arab pop singer.



**The two falcons** act as reactive representatives of change, they exist within an infinite cycle of shifts; constantly responding, reacting and conveying emotion across screens to each other. In a state of constant flux, the two struggle to adapt to the changes occurring around them. From early times, Saudi Arabia has been interested in falcons and hunting. Falconry is a cultural legacy that includes values and ethics that have characterized the falconers in the Arabian Peninsula. Falcons have been associated with men in the Arabian Peninsula for thousands of years.



# What Is This?

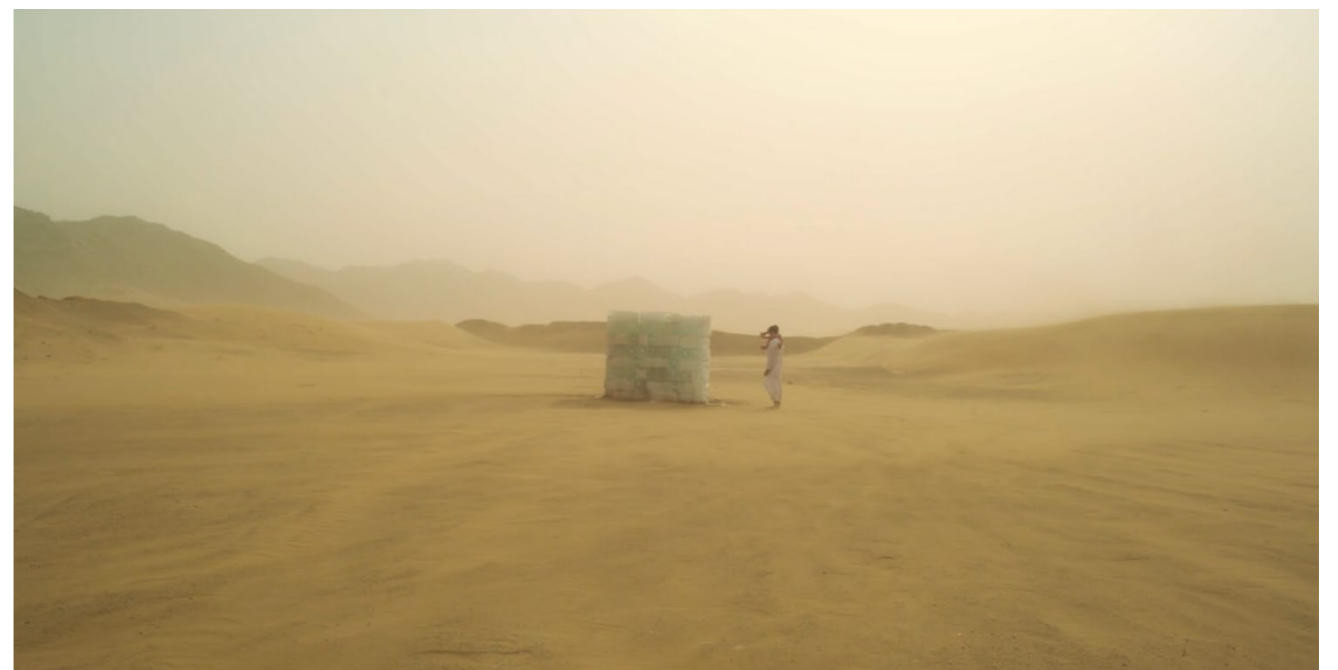
Two-Channel Video / 2019-2024

# I Was Told Ice Wouldn't Melt in Heat

HD Video / 2019

**To melt away into another time**, a new form, another being. To exist between two opposing entities where life and death reside in dialogue, in motion. The work archives and studies this moment of change; it questions the existence of the present and mourns the loss of it.

Saudi Arabia is currently in a phase of resurrection, where a new vision of the country's future has launched, Vision 2030. Translating what the country was to what it should be; a nation that is more ambitious, with a vibrant society and a thriving economy. This new vision has propelled the country into unimaginable speeds of change. Everything from the private to the public sector has been affected by this vision, and the country as a whole is striving towards these new set goals. By questioning the complex process of change; what is lost and what is gained through its motion. We can begin to define the transparency of these ideological shifts occurring within the kingdom. Who is it for? And how does the nature of these imposed changes begin to define who we are as a nation?



# Niun

4k Video / 2018



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**NIUN is a collaboration** between US artist and designer Michael Mogensen and Saudi artist Ahaad Alamoudi. It is inspired by the proto science fiction writings of Zakariya al-Qazwini, who wrote in Arabic in the 13th Century of a man who falls to earth from another planet and also of utopia. NIUN asks those who interact with it to consider what the future could be in the context of current events in Saudi Arabia. NIUN is a short film, an installation and a series of events inviting the viewer to question the future now. The installation is the home to the film's human protagonists.

The work is a commentary on and invitation to consider possible and impossible futures and why they are so. NIUN 1 and NIUN 2 no longer want to wait for the future, but want the future now. Centered around a rock, R.D (the two begin journeying to claim ownership over their futures. Facing challenges such as language, food, technology, the piece follow the two as they find their way through these borders and basic obstacles of life. The piece is divided into phases with this piece being the 1st. The 2nd phase will consist of the development and production of short animated episodes that will further develop the story of NIUN and its protagonists.

Phase I began in December 2017 when Alamoudi and Mogensen started to research the work of al-Qazwini and how such a story might be re-imagined in the context of our present. The two met in Jeddah to develop the story, built a home for the protagonists of the story in the desert near Jeddah based on prototypes, and shot a short 7 minute experimental film as a way to explore their own interest in the future as storymaking, how it is imagined, or allowed to be imagined, and as an invitation to question events occurring around them. NIUN Phase I was intended as the first phase in a series of events and happenings as the story developed and grew, inviting others in to co-create and respond to it over time.

>>> Video stills





# When I Was Asked

Embroidered Fabric / 2018

**Guidelines to be created and implemented by June 2018.** The ban was officially lifted on 24 June 2018. Many within the country are initiating movements through different forms of action. Either by actively contributing in creating and forming the change, or by participating and actualizing them into their daily life. Women are now driving all over Saudi, football stadiums now include family sections, changes such as these have affected the way we live, operate and navigate this new forming landscape. As society begins to instigate and navigate this future; questions of ownership, authorship and power start to emerge. Large aspects of the changes occurring are documented through visuals that are distributed across the Kingdom. These images form a language that act as justifiers of excellence, power and strength within the country's communities. Largely supported by government and capitalistic enterprises, these branded visuals operate as pillars of knowledge and communication. Additionally, Ahaad's signature tongue-in-cheek nature of her artworks is present here as well where the word "driving" could also mean "leading." The piece, when I was asked, is proof and a response to these actions.



# Self-Portrait as a Pomegranate

4K Video / 2017

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**The work addresses topics of struggle** of equality and non-representation of females within the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is an intimate look at how femininity and sexuality is dealt in the Kingdom.

**Masculine hegemony** is apparent not only socially but also politically. This hierarchy of power is constantly highlighted and questioned through western media, forming its own narratives. I am interested in confronting this western gaze with my own experience as a Saudi, through the construction of a staged reality.

**Written by a Kuwaiti poet**, Abdullah Hameed Alsaheed, the song recited within the work is an ode to a female lover that is upset. The song, "O Pomegranate", gained its popularity within the Arab world in the early 60s. Actors, artists and musicians have been making different renditions of the song ever since its debut and its popularity has allowed it to sustain its presence within Arab popular culture.

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# Saudi Michael Jackson

HD Video / 2016

**Questioning the roles of hybridity** within different landscapes, and how information is spread across different cultures. I am interested in the reformation and interpretation of this information. The work is a re-staging of choreography within a formed landscaped.

[>>> Video link](#)



# Tini Warwar

HD Video / 2016

**Tini Warwar is an underground song** that has found its way into the mainstream, and took over the music scene in Saudi Arabia in 2013. Different musicians and singers started making their own rendition of the song, and it is still considered a favorite among Saudi wedding singers.

This socio-cultural product is a reflection of the effects of globalization and the struggle of hegemony that is occurring in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The song is a hybrid being that is a reflection of western influences, combined with Saudi traditional beats and a countdown from 10 to 1. The lyrics throughout the song are a comparison between the past and the present. It showcases current views of Saudis, and what they perceive to be more superior or powerful. It is an example of the economical social hierarchy within the society.

The dance performed in the video is a traditional Arabian dance called "AlKhibayti". In the past this dance was usually danced in preparation for war and has different influences including Sufi and Hejazi. Today this dance is usually danced as a cultural performance in weddings and social events.

# Education /

- \* Phd Candidate, Royal College of Art, 2020-25
- \* Master in Research, Royal College of Art, 2020
- \* Masters in Print, Royal College of Art, 2017
- \* Bachelor of Arts in Visual Communication, Dar Al-Hekma University, 2014

# Exhibitions /

- \* Unmirror, ATHR Gallery, Riyadh, 2026
- \* Unfolding The Embassy, Fena Alawwal, 2024
- \* Moving Mountains: Ahaad Alamoudi Solo, Hay Jameel, Jeddah, 2024
- \* Wadi AlFann, Campfire Tales: Crossroads of Creativity, Al Ula, 2024
- \* Bloomberg New Contemporaries Exhibition, Camden Art Center, London, 2024
- \* Bloomberg New Contemporaries Exhibition, Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool, 2023
- \* A Way With Light, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, 2023
- \* SINDBAD: I Can See Land, Albalad, Jeddah, 2023-24
- \* Noor Riyadh, Refracted Identities Shared Futures, JAX District, 2023
- \* Returning to a Present, Group Exhibition, Athr Gallery Al Ula, 2023
- \* Earthwise, Beaconsfield Gallery, London 2023
- \* HOPSCOTCH, Copeland Gallery, London, 2023
- \* OTO, Fold x LUX, London, 2023
- \* Ancient Futures, The Opening Gallery, New York Arab Festival (NYAF), New York, 2023
- \* YallaSwap, MDLBEAST SoundStorm, Riyadh, 2022
- \* SINDBAD: Land of Fragile Hearts, Naqsh Art Studio, Jeddah, 2022
- \* We Dream of New Horizons, Noor Riyadh Festival, Riyadh, 2022
- \* Videodrome X De Renava Art Biennale, Paris 2022
- \* Keep it up, Art Basel Statements, Athr Gallery, Switzerland 2022
- \* Pygostyle, Residence Gallery, London, 2022
- \* Bienal Sur, JAX district Riyadh - CCK, Buenos Aires - Al-Kuzam Palace, Jeddah, 2021
- \* Garden of E-Arthly Delights, Sumac Space, Berlin, Germany 2021
- \* Sinbad: A Dream Like State of Mind, Studio, Jeddah 2021
- \* Spacetoons, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, 2021
- \* Roundabout, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, 2021
- \* "Suadi Old Man Calling The Camels In The Desert and they run to him like baby run to his mother, then they start Kissing and hugging him", Bawa Gallery, 2021
- \* Each Vertebra is an Extinct Sun, Galerie Imane, Paris, France 2021
- \* Pending, San Mei Gallery, London 2020
- \* Imprint. Misk Art Institute, Riyadh, 2020

- \* Les Metamorphoses, Videodrome, Paris 2020
- \* DIG, San Mie Gallery, London 2020
- \* Heat Burns: Ahaad Alamoudi Solo, Athr Gallery, Jeddah 2020
- \* Durational Portrait, Athr Gallery, Jeddah 2020
- \* Color Bar, Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah 2019
- \* Habibi Collective, Catford Mews, London 2019
- \* New Museum, Screens Series: Ahaad Alamoudi, New York 2019
- \* Public/Private, Saudi Arts Council Albalad, Jeddah 2019
- \* 45th Bahrain Annual Fine Art Exhibition, The Arena, Bahrain, 2019
- \* Out of place, Athr, Jeddah 2019
- \* Al Obour, 21,39 6th Edition, Saudi Arts Council, Jeddah 2019
- \* Dubai Design Week, Eastern province of KSA Pavilion, Dubai 2019
- \* Young Arab Exhibition, ArtX, New York, 2018
- \* 30DAYFREETRIAL, SET, 2018
- \* MANWAR, Makan Hafez Gallery, Jeddah, 2018
- \* Refusing to be still, Saudi Art Council, Jeddah, 2018
- \* Event Night, The mosaic rooms, London, 2017
- \* C\*nt, KK Outlet, London 2017
- \* Letters, Athr Gallery, Jeddah 2017
- \* RCA Degree Show, Royal College of Art, London 2017
- \* Tadafuq, Beydoun Exhibition Space, Jeddah 2017
- \* EDIT+CONTROL, Hockney Gallery, London 2016
- \* Phantom Punch, Bates Museum of Art, Lewiston Maine 2016
- \* GENERA#ION, Minnesota Street Project, San Francisco 2016
- \* Parallel Kingdom, Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston 2016
- \* Notes.app, Dyson Gallery, London 2016
- \* Break/Link, CGP London, London 2016
- \* Mabout Almater, Alhangar, Jeddah 2016
- \* Work in Progress Show, Royal College of Art, London 2016
- \* Bsm Allah, Alhangar, Jeddah 2015
- \* Rhizome, 55th Venice Biennale, Venice 2013
- \* Identity, Dar Al-Hekma University, Jeddah 2013
- \* We Need to Talk, Edge of Arabia. Jeddah 2012
- \* Rock Paper Scissors, Dar Al-Hekma University, Jeddah 2012
- \* Young Saudi Artist, Athr gallery, Jeddah 2012
- \* Saudiyat Exhibition, Jeddah 2012
- \* Lamman, Dar Al-Hekma University, Jeddah 2011
- \* Shubak Festival, City Hall Exhibition, England/London 2011
- \* Most competitive youth, Crossway Foundation, England/London 2011 - Dar Al-Hekma foundation year final Exhibition, Jeddah 2011
- \* Jeddah Prep Annual Exhibition, Jeddah 2010

## Talks /

- \* AGSIW X Cultural Summit Abu Dhabi Creative Talk: Channeling The Uncanny in Counter-Futurisms, Kristin Smith Diwan, Ahaad Alamoudi, Talal Al Najjar, Ayman Zedani, Abu Dhabi, 2024
- \* Spatial Value: A conversation with Rut Blees Luxemburg, SHarbatly Annex, Albalad, Jeddah, 2024
- \* Lighting Talk: Comic Timing: How Humor Can Play a Role in Visual Arts, Hisham Fageeh, Abdullah Al Jahdhami (Shaweesh), Ahaad Alamoudi, Noor Riyadh, JAX District, Riyadh, 2024
- \* The Search For Land: A panel discussion with SINDBAD moderated by Hamza Hashem, Sharbatly Annex, Albalad Jeddah, 2023
- \* Somerset House Studios, Finding Loopholes in the www Land of the oppressed, London 2023
- \* Film Critisim Forum, Technology & The Film Viewing Experience, Artist Conversation, Tabuk 2023
- \* Global Art Forum 16: "Predicting the present", Dubia 2023
- \* Digital Art Forum, Sothebys, Diriyah Biennale Foundation, Riyadh 2022
- \* Misk Art institute, Spacetoons: Artist Talk, Riyadh 2021
- \* Gulf Arts and Culture Symposium, Washington DC, 2018
- \* Art Dubai, In discussion with Ahaad Alamoudi, Matteo Ion, Pierre Depaz, Marisa Maria Katz: Contemporary art and VR, 2018
- \* Abu Dhabi Art, (Mis)interpretation: Critical thinking in Arab contemporary art practice, 2018
- \* Primer 8, Transformation and possibilities - Speculative futures, Berkley 2018
- \* Talk, Ahaad's Presentation at Mnassa headquarters, Jeddah 2017
- \* Talk, In Conversation: Abdulnasser Gharem, Ahaad Alamoudi and Shaweesh with Sarah Thornton, San Francisco 2016

## Art Fairs /

- \* Art Dubai - 2023
- \* Art Basel - 2022
- \* Art Basel OVR: Portals - 2021
- \* Dubai Design Week - 2019
- \* Art Dubai - 2018 / 2021
- \* Abu Dhabi Art Fair - 2018
- \* Young International Art Fair #11 Paris - 2017

## Residencies /

- \* Gazell.io, Artist in Residence, London, 2024
- \* Greece Art Residency, Under the Shadow of The Acropolis: Cultural Heritage through the lens of Digital Art, 2023
- \* Residency Unlimited, New York City, 2019
- \* Up and coming, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, 2019
- \* Middle East Now Residency, Florence 2018
- \* 21,39 Refusing to be still, Germany, 2018
- \* Crossway Foundation Texas, 2017
- \* Crossway Foundation London, 2010

## Experience /

- \* Teaching Placement, Liverpool Hope University, Liverpool 2022
- \* Lecturer, Dar Al Hekma University, Jeddah 2018-19
- \* Teaching Placement, Kingston University, London 2017
- \* Teaching Placement, Birmingham City University, London 2017
- \* The Saudi Art Council (21,39), Print workshop, Jeddah 2015
- \* Dar Al Hekma University, Central Academic Advising Officer, Jeddah 2014-2014 - 3 Points, Internship program, Jeddah 2013
- \* Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Booklet Design, Jeddah 2013
- \* Hekayat 10, "Buddies" advisor, Jeddah 2013
- \* Naqsh Art Studio, Educational program, kids workshop. Instructor, Jeddah 2013 - Edge of Arabia (We Need to Talk), Lino Printing Workshop, Jeddah 2012
- \* Ibdaa - Technical Drawing and Expressive Art Workshop, Jeddah 2010-2011

## Publications /

- \* Outland, Archive from the future, 2023
- \* Elle Magazine, Ahaad Alamoudi x Roberto Cavalli collaboration, 2023
- \* GQ Magazine, Voices of the Kingdom, 2021
- \* Elle Magazine, Let it Shine, 2021
- \* The National, A New Wave of NFT Art is Taking Over the Kingdom, 2021
- \* Khaleejjesque, Ahaad Alamoudi Arresting in her vibrancy, 2018
- \* Canvas Magazine, The Kingdom Stirs, 2018
- \* Arab News, Ancient and modern attitudes collide in the work of Saudi artist Ahaad Alamoudi, 2018

- \* The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, Ahaad Al-amoudi:  
Imagining Saudi Past and Future through Art, 2018
- \* Arab News, 'Punching holes in the darkness':  
Leading Middle East female artists light up London, 201
- \* Vogue Arabia, Ahlam Alshamsi Gets Blown Out of Proportion, 2017
- \* Bazaar, Saudi Art Heads West, 2016
- \* RCA, Print Student Ahaad Alamoudi Visits Southwest USA  
with Crossway Foundation, 2016
- \* Elpaso Times, International students explore borders, identity, 2016
- \* SF Weekly, The Surrealism of Saudi Arabian Contemporary Art, 2016
- \* East Bay Express, Contemporary Saudi Arabian Art, in Context, 2016
- \* Art Radar, A feminine look at Saudi Arabia's "GENERA#ION"  
at Minnesota Street Project, San Francisco, 2016
- \* The Creators Project, 12 Saudi Arabian Artists Explore the Kingdom's Future, 2016
- \* Saudi Gazette, Saudi artists present an intellectual artistic paradigm  
in the United States, 2016
- \* OF NOTE, the burqa issue, 2015
- \* Urban Times, From Jeddah to England and back again, 2014
- \* Robertk, Review of the Venice biennale, 2013
- \* Athr Gallery, Young Saudi Youth-Booklet, 2012
- \* Edge of Arabia, We Need to talk-Booklet, 2012
- \* Flaneur, Young voices in Saudi Art, 2012
- \* Saudi Gazette, Edge of Arabia, 2010
- \* Design magazine, Crossway Foundation, 2010
- \* Hullabaloo: Young Writers Poetry 2005

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