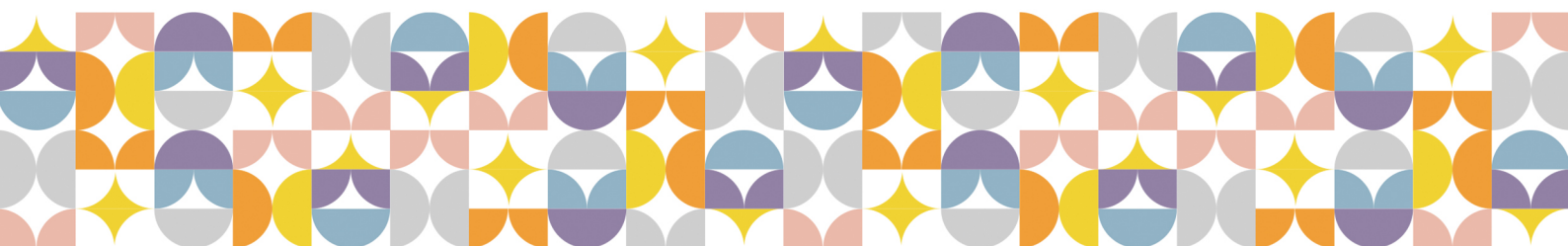


**THE ART CIRCLE AWARD 2022
SHORTLISTED ARTWORKS**





SHE

Rima MOUKAHAL

mixed media on unprimed canvas, 45 x 40 cm

This red thread sewing each step in our lives,
 Surrounded with love and warmth,
 Layered in red and tenderness.
 Forms beautiful strong land.
 The door to the higher divine is open,
 He selects us, we are His preference,
 To be his partner in creation and birth,
 We walk the path leaving our marks of achievements and,
 Worship the way of victory and wisdom for the successors,
 And in the heart of all, occurs that feminine petal;
 SHE is the essence of life.

This abstract work is inspired by the theme of Fatat Al Arab, the great poet of the gulf and Arab world. The artist wants to emphasize on the strength and determination of the Arab women, the same way the great poet did. Despite their society's limitations and restrictions, Arab women, have had the power to explore any aspect in life in all times. She wants to show through this mixed media work, the depth of women's emotions, strength, and passion. By using the geotextile- fabric she focuses on their ability to absorb and transform all difficulties into valuable outcomes, the same way the color soaks in the fabric and alters into beautiful shapes and forms that give the perfect frame for their existence. The stitched square resembles the persistence of their hearts; our women don't accept failure; they keep walking towards their aims and engrave their steps for next generations of women, the same way the stitches go around the square. Women's lives in the Arab world are all connected into evolutionary paths from one generation to another. Part of the top line of the square is kept without stitching to hint the belief in destiny and God's will, which plays a big role in our psyche and the way we approach life, believing and surrendering to our faith is part of our resistance and motivation to bring out wisdom and patience from every difficulty we experience. The texture and petals in the middle represent how women embrace their roles, as mothers and daughters, naturally and in a very organic way, while holding on to their femininity, and show wisdom and worth over their lifespan. Finally, the color used represents the heart, love, and blood running in our veins which nurture us and our babies and warmth the whole existence. There is no life without her. SHE is the partner of the creator. The only tools to execute this work was the artist's hands, no brush nor knife palette.

Rima MOUKAHAL

Rima Moukahal is a self-taught artist. Her fascination with colour and painting started at a young age. As a pupil at the Italian Girls' School in Beirut, she was awarded a trip to Italy to study drawing in the summer of 1975. With the arrival of the Lebanese civil war, her dream to become an artist collapsed. After a long career in the corporate world, she decided to return to her passion. Rima pursued intensive private courses in drawing and painting, mentored and guided by prominent Arab artists in Cairo, Beirut and Dubai.

Rima's practice is rooted in Abstract Expressionism, inspired by her emotional response to collective life experiences. When creating, she trusts intuition to guide her completely through an unplanned inner spiritual journey. Rima is a member of Tashkeel.



I DREAMED THE MOON SWALLOWED ME

Noura ALI RAMAHI

ink on canvas, 51 x 51 cm

The work entitled "I dreamed the moon swallowed me" combines the poetry of Ousha with my poetry. She wrote many poems about the night and moon, as have I. I did not approach the work as a painter, but rather as a poet. I took a quote from the poet saying she dreamed that she dreamed she swallowed the moon until it went through her mouth and nose and filled her entire being. Those words became the backdrop of the night in my work. The moon is formed by her poems and mine, hers being in Arabic and mine in English. Through meditative repetition of her words and her dream, it became my dream too. Her moon became my moon. Her inspiration became my inspiration. Her ink became my ink and our words swallowed each other. That is why I presented the moon as a separate canvas piece being swallowed by the night (the backdrop canvas). I often write my poems on my walks at dawn when the moon lights my path and I selected three of my poems which feature the moon to use for this artwork.

Noura ALI RAMAHI

Born in Lebanon, Noura Ali-Ramahi is an Emirati artist based in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the American University of Beirut in 1997. Ali-Ramahi featured her works in solo exhibitions at N2N Gallery (Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2018); and the Etihad Modern Art Gallery (Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2022). She has participated in various group exhibitions both locally and internationally, including at TwoFour54 (Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2016); World Trade Center (Dubai, UAE, 2017); Tashkeel Studio (Dubai, UAE, 2021); Art Club (New York, USA, 2021); and the Etihad Modern Art Gallery (Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2021). In 2019, Ali-Ramahi led a Plastic Collage Workshop at Warehouse421 in Abu Dhabi.



OUSHA

Karine ROCHE

mixed media on canvas, 40 x 60 cm

The composition blends the organic lines of the sleeper with the vision of the moon. The painting is composed of several paintings on paper which unite thanks to the geometric framework of the pattern of arabesques. There are 4 colors: white, for the moon and the face, black, for the night and shadows, red and gold for the traditional dress and certain stars. Thus, the elements of the body and the sky correspond by colors. I worked with paper by applying colors to it, not words. The pieces are cut and reassembled like a puzzle where the pieces would only have 2 possible shapes but various patterns. We could recreate millions of images just as the limited letters of the alphabet will be able to recreate as many words, sentences and ideas according to their combinations. The Dream can have a mystical connotation, a premonitory character which opens onto another reality. It is a door to the unconscious and inspires creation. By swallowing the moon, a celestial star in relation to the earth, her body and mind make symbiosis with the cosmos through the world of dreams. Her creation, by merging with the universe itself allows her to authentically recreate her own perception of the world.

Karine ROCHE

Born in France. She graduated in spatial Design from the National College ENSAAMA, Olivier de Serres in Paris. She has been based in the UAE since 2009. .

Her work has been presented in spaces including Sharjah Art Museum, Museum of Decorative and Folk art (Moscow), Tashkeel, Proart gallery (Dubai) and art Sawa (Dubai), as well as Art Fairs such as Art Paris, Art Elysée, Star't .

Her works are part of private and corporate collections, including the city of Vitry-Sur-Seine (France), the Colas Foundation Colas (France), West Lake Museum (Hangzhou, China).



UNTITLED

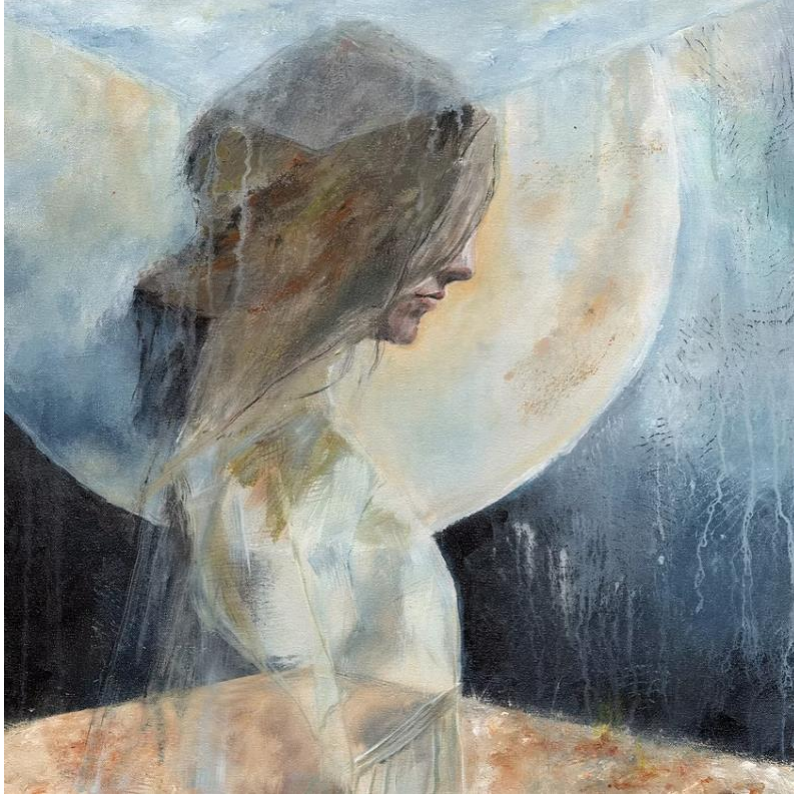
Romeo ROBIS

mixed media on wood, 60 x 40 cm

As the moon symbolically represents female and its essence, the gesture speaks for itself, she's in deep thoughts, focusing and concentrating that exudes a sense of wellbeing. The crescent moon symbolizes a new beginning, and that it always starts within yourself.

Romeo ROBIS

Born in Manila, Philippines, Dubai based filipino artist Romeo Robis started his career as a graphic designer in the late 1990s after graduating from Technological University of the Philippines – College of Fine Arts. Romeo draws his influences from a wide range of sources: from popular animations and manga, graphic design to contemporary art. Having worked on a range of media over the years, from acrylic and oil to pen & ink and on to digital art and photography, he developed a personal affinity with human connections and emotions and the oftentimes overlooked beauty in reality, which all of this has greatly inspired and reflected in his work.



SWALLOWED THE MOON

Caroline HEMING

acrylic on Canvas, 40 x 40 cm

Juxtaposing ethereal transparencies with the perspective of walls in a room, and a floor of sand, I chose a literal interpretation of the poet's experience. For Ousha Al Suwaidi to awake from a dream and have poetry flow like water was such a miraculous gift. I aimed to capture that dream-like experience, and in doing so, honor her legacy as the United Arab Emirates' Fatat Al-Arab.

Caroline HEMING

Many say to pick a style and stick with it. I say why? Why must I be defined by the way I use my brush, the subject matter I choose, or the way in which I decide to tell a story on canvas? I thrive when I'm toggling between realism, expressionism, and the abstract. Oh, I suppose there will come a day when I'll settle down in one direction, but in the meantime, I'm going to continue challenging myself to explore, experiment, and enjoy the creative journey without boundaries.



UNTITLED

Kim MIHUYN

mixed media on Korean traditional paper, 54 x 45 cm

He walks his own path in obedience, relying on the moonlight in the dark night sky, is walking alone on a lonely path. That road is very beautiful, sublime, and shining. To illuminate the world with his words, he is walking the path of solitude. He is a light in itself, unique, and the most beautiful in the world.

Kim MIHUYN

Artist Mihyun Kim is contemporary artist from South Korea. She has been working on paintings about the theme of 'Heaven is Near'. 'The times of heaven' includes the concept of space and time, 'heaven', which is an important question and wish for all human life, continuously in the past, present and future. She is constantly studying heaven and trying to create an image of heaven.



WHIRLING DERVIS

Suha HAIDAR

acrylic on canvas, 60 x 40 cm

My painting emphasizes universal love, peace, acceptance of various spiritual paths and a mystical union with the divine, dervishes famous practice of whirling is their way of dhikr (remembrance of Allah).

Suha HAIDAR

Suha Haidar is a Lebanese artist, living in Abu Dhabi since 2007. She loves paintings, that tell a story or express specific emotions. Her work aims to awaken old memories and relate to the viewer through familiar sensations. She has painted many types of artworks, such as pop art, mixed media, landscapes, and others. Haidar uses oil and acrylic paints and many more art materials in her art.

Being open to different art forms has given Haidar a broad perspective on the arts allowing her to mix different art forms together to create new styles and unique works of art.



MESSENGER PIGEON IN THE MOONLIGHT

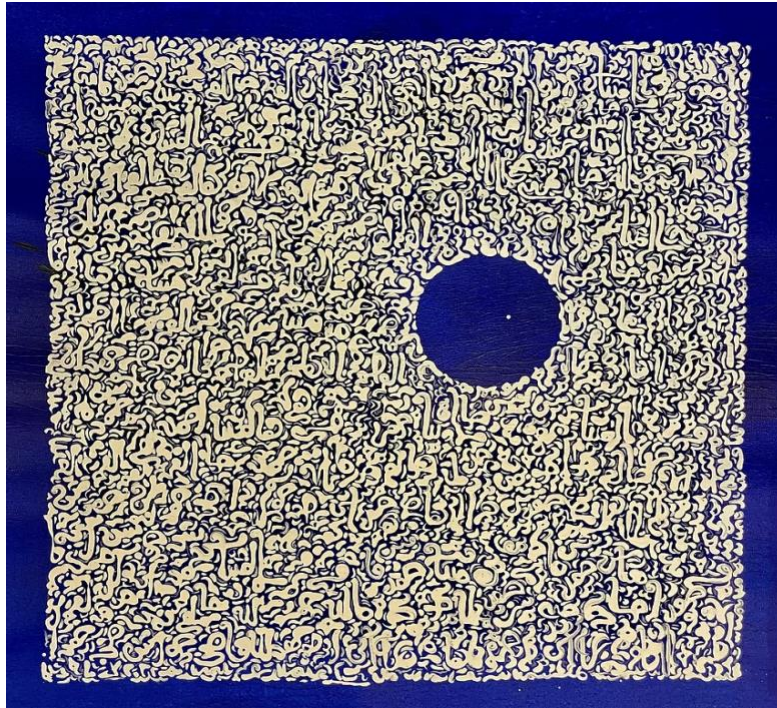
James RACZKOWSKI

oil on board, 40 x 40 cm

James Razko (b. 1987, NJ, USA) works with several distinct and interwoven bodies of work that explores established culture, conflict, and social justice. Informed by pop culture, history, and personal experience, Razko's oeuvre eschews overtly political paintings, instead opting for poetic imagery, like *Messenger Pigeon in the Moonlight*, to foster dialogue while challenging biases, belief systems, and tropes. Recently, his work employs Trompe l'oeil to, among other things, investigate notions of truth in the post-truth era. Razko earned his B.F.A. at Stockton University in 2011 and his M.F.A. at the New York Academy of Art in 2015. Solo Exhibitions of his work have recently been organized at Spring Break, New York, NY (2021); Stockton University, Pomona, NJ (2018); The Noyes Museum of Art, Atlantic City, NJ (2016). His work is published in the acclaimed book, *The Figure*. In 2018, Razko received the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grant.

James RACZKOAWSKI

Razko earned his Master of Fine Arts degree at the New York Academy of Art in 2015. During his time at the Academy, he received the Academy Scholarship, the New Jersey Heart of a Hero Scholarship, was awarded a summer residency in Moscow, Russia, and was one of six nominated for the Chubb Fellowship. His work is published in the acclaimed book, *The Figure*. In 2018, Razko received a grant from the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



THE MOON AND THE PLANT

Lana KHAYAT

oil and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 cm

The moon and the plant- two stark contraries have been used as a medium to reimagine and recreate a version of my own for the theme- 'I Dreamed that I Swallowed the Moon'. The moon is the only celestial body that lives a borrowed life, yet with such humility while withholding its own unique charm. The fairies have worshiped the moon for ages, the moon light has served as a source of hope and calm amidst the ghory night sky and the absence of the moon has always led to nothing but ill omen. On the other hand, a plant is nothing, yet everything at

the same time. It begins with nothing but a seed {a dot} and goes on to being a mess of foliage, granting and nurturing life further ahead.

My artwork is a tapestry of words representing the language of trees. Dancing letters, morphing and fusing to form leaves. My acrylic and oil on canvas work portrays the humble beginning of the leaf, but in their pursuit of growth, soon swallow the moon. However, the moon continues to be their only source of tranquility while the world around them keeps burgeoning and spinning. Just like the moon continues to be the root source of all strength and order for the confused leaves, similarly, I'd encourage that we all swallow and keep safe a moon of our own- a moon that can protect us from the disorder of the universe while we keep growing and blossoming like the leaves.

Before signing off, I'd like to share a small personal anecdote. I've spent a considerable number of years in countries other than my own; I've travelled continents to find and search for who I am and where my heart and soul lies. But, what truly kept me grounded all these years was a reminder that my art is the moon that lies swallowed and all nations that I've trodden upon are the leaves that keep contributing to my growth. Nothing that I ever do is done without an intention to connect back to my heart through art- no matter where in the world I go. I'd like to leave you with a tiny food for thought- try to find your moon and see, have you been able to swallow it yet!

Lana KHAYAT

Lana Khayat was born and brought up in Beirut, Lebanon. She is an undergraduate in Design from the American University of Beirut, and a Masters in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts, New York where she also worked at the Guggenheim Museum. She is currently residing between Spain and Dubai. She has worked with the XVA Gallery (UAE), Hafez Gallery (KSA), Galleria Thema (Spain), and is now preparing for her first Solo show with XVA Gallery, Dubai in December 2022.

Lana comes from a family of Artists. Her great-grandfather, Mohamad Suleiman Khayat contributed to the creation and restoration of Ajami rooms from Syria. His work is showcased at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, NYU and the ShangriLa, Hawaiï. Her grandfather glorified the same walls of Ajami rooms for decades,

whereas his father kept the art from his previous generations alive through his skills of architecture. Belonging to a family of rare artists, their influence was inevitable and runs in Lana's blood. She followed their footsteps and chose art as her form of expression, just like her forefathers.

All her life, she has believed that nature has music for those who are willing to lend an ear and as an introvert, she has found herself fluent with nature rather than mankind. That makes her art a free-flowing journey of the conversations she has had with the wilderness and trees. During her dialogues with nature, she has realized that some learnings are too deep and personal to be put into words and that inspired her to choose the canvas as her medium of expression. Her art is a mystical representation of her dialogues with nature, each tone and stroke overflowing with meaning beyond human script or language. As Milan Kundera in his book 'Immortality' beautifully suggests, "Things exist in their essence even before they are materially realized and named." She resonates with the same thought and believes that if we all look around, there are messages that lie beyond human tongue that can only be deciphered in the company of the wild!



UNTITLED

Marie-F TURNER

mixed media on canvas, 60 x 40 cm

Poem written by the Emirati poet Ousha Al Suwaidi also known as Fatat Al-Arab, 'I dream, I swallowed the moon'.

'Giving life to words' was what I was aiming for. I was looking to interpret and translate messages of tolerance, love and humanity into my artwork', The magic of the moon'.

The art piece is minimalist in style. The random shapes, forms, space, texture & narrative characters give movement and life to the painting.

These visual components interact and connect between themselves. They also enhance the surrealist composition.

The range of chosen colours such as orange, yellow and white, also contribute to create a lively ambiance nevertheless settled by the blue background, a symbol of peace for me.

Creating artwork which convey a message is at the very heart of my work as well as the advocacy for a better understanding between cultures. This is particularly true in my "when East meets West" collection where oriental elements are mixed with western values and vice versa. It will resonate even more in this composition's artwork.

This beautiful poem, written by The Girl from the Gulf, offers us an insight to the beauty of the world which I portray in my painting, 'The magic of the Moon'.

Marie-F TURNER

Marie-F Turner is a French-British artist living in Dubai. Self-taught artist (other than illustration), Marie started her artistic journey as an illustrator, creating characters for greeting cards and stationary experimenting at the same time with various medium such as paint, pens and collage. Marie then moved quickly towards a more abstract style of artwork. Her contemporary style is a mix of photography, bold abstract shapes, and narrative characters and objects.

They all take place in surrealist colourful compositions where they interact and connect between themselves. Inspired by cubist and surrealist movements, Marie adds to her artwork a personal touch having travelled extensively, mostly in Asia and the Middle East where she settled now, after years of living in Paris and London.

The advocacy for a better understanding between cultures is at the very core of her creative work. This is particularly obvious in "when East meets West" Collection, where oriental elements are mixed with western values and vice versa.

As a fine art painter, digital artist, photographer and illustrator, her artwork portrays a happy fantasy world aiming to give the observer a feeling of positivity and optimism. In addition to that, Marie often mentioned that her studies of Law & Political Sciences have greatly influenced her work and her way of understanding the world. These elements help her to interpret and translate in a more accurate way, any commissioned work she undertakes.

Marie's Happy Fantasy World of art talks to many and can be seen regularly in various exhibitions in London and more recently with other artists in UAE, at the French Pavilion EXPO 2020 Dubai, Alliance Francaise and more.



DREAM

Tala ATROUNI

acrylic on canvas, 40 x 60 cm

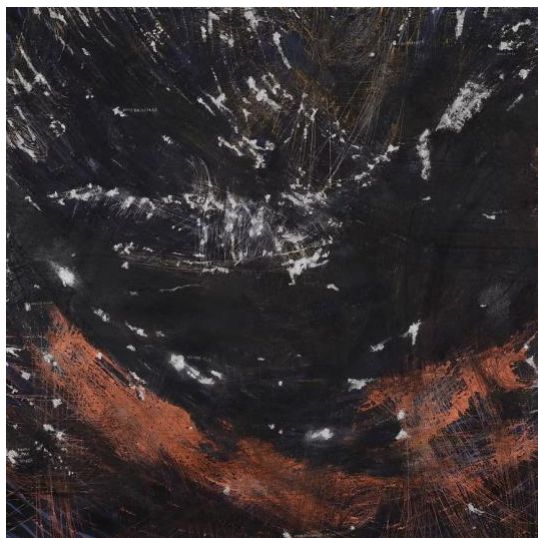
The word "dream" is the postulation that cherishes an aspiration, ambition, or ideal. This emotionally charged work explores my personal journey through cancer and chemotherapy over the past year. In this painting, I am expressing my dream that life is renewable, and it will resume its normality after any dark period.

I am inspired by painting my personal experiences. This artwork is filled with colors and textures. In this painting, colors symbolize emotions. The green strokes represent abundance in nature. The pastel colors are associated with calming and peaceful vibes, which are much needed. The black surroundings are used to elevate the contrast in the painting. They also represent the mystery of the experience, the willpower, and the fear of the unknown. The ranges of blues represent peace and trusting for the process of the journey.

Electrifying brushstrokes burst from the depth of the canvas to arrest the viewer. From darkness to light, grief to hope, confusion to conviction; those who ever doubted life are proven wrong.

Tala ATROUNI

Tala Hammoud Atrouni is a Palestinian artist from Lebanon who was born in Beirut in 1977. As a child, her love for art was expressed shyly. She often found herself busy with colorful crayons and paper. In Beirut, she was exposed to the city's cosmopolitan society and vibrant culture. This exposure enriched her perspective on life. She grew up admiring her father's art of calligraphy, poetry, and drawings. Despite the lack of formal art exposure in her high school, her passion for fine art drove her to pursue her education in the field. After high school, in the fall of 1995, she enrolled in the school of fine arts at the Lebanese American University in Beirut. In addition to fine art classes, her dad advised her to enroll in more practical courses in advertising so that she would earn a minor degree in the field and improve her chances of finding a job. She earned her Bachelor's degree in July of 1998 with an award of excellence in the art of painting and sculpture. A year later, she moved to San Francisco, California with her husband. This move has given her a new perspective regarding her future career. After working in the high tech industry for three years as a publishing team leader, she decided to continue her graduate studies and pursue a future in art. She attended the Academy of Arts University in San Francisco. In August 2005, she graduated with an MFA degree in illustration. After living in San Francisco for 11 years, and Muscat for 4 years, She is currently living in Abu Dhabi, UAE.



FROM OUSHA TO NORA: 3504 LUNAR CYCLES

Fabiola CHIMINAZZO ASSUMPCAO

mixed media on canvas, 60 x 60 cm

The idea for this artwork was to understand and connect the poet Ousha Al Suwaidi, through the eyes and life of another brilliant Emirati woman whose passion and desire to reach for the moon was similar: Nora Al Matrooshi, the first female UAE astronaut born in 1993. As Ousha, Nora was a kid when she first dreamed of the moon. The painting represents the space of 3504 lunar cycles between their births; through the use of scratched lines, the artist carefully draws the number of cycles in circular movements to represent the 73 years that set apart these two powerful women. During the marking process, the tool removes

the materiality of the paint, chipping the last layer of paint and leaving empty spaces that are then re-enacted with silver spots. The result is an overlapping of lines in space; the marks and silver spots are transformed in a lunar map surface. The idea was to represent the moon's topography where areas and spots carry the exact name and information from Nasa, and two spots represent both the poet's and the Astronaut's birth. The intent is to establish a visual archival of the dimensions, cycles, and spaces that speak about the strength, beauty, and simplicity that permeate the universe and the legacy these two women quietly and perseveringly built. And reflect on how their endeavors go beyond what they once thought possible.

Fabiola CHIMINAZZI ASSUMPCAO

Graduated in Visual Arts at FAAP - Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado (1994). Her research includes painting, photography, printmaking, drawing, objects, installations, and video. Her work has been shown in several group exhibitions throughout Brazil, including UNICAMP - University of Campinas - São Paulo; USP - University of São Paulo - Paço das Artes 2015 - São Paulo; Centre of Arts and Culture Adamastor in Guarulhos - São Paulo. She has received Brazilian awards and prizes such as XXIII Visual Arts Exhibition Guarulhos - São Paulo - 2014; VI Visual Arts Exhibition of S. José do Rio Preto - SP - 2013; IV Artistas sem Galeria Visual Arts Exhibition - São Paulo - SP - 2013; XXI Visual Arts Exhibition Atibaia - SP - 2012. She has participated in art residencies Procedência e Propriedade (Charles Watson) - Rio de Janeiro - 2012 and Cabana Extemporanea - FUNARTE - São Paulo - 2011. Some of the mentors and artists she worked with during the last ten years of her practice are Rubens Espirito Santo, Nino Cais, Carla Chaim, and Sylvia Furegatti. Chiminazzo's work is in MACS - Museum of Contemporary Arts of Sorocaba SP - Brazil collections. She is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts at NYUAD (New York University Abu Dhabi). Since 2017, she lives and works between Brazil and Dubai, UAE.