

## PRESS RELEASE

### Salma Dib: Marks of Return

Aisha Alabbar Gallery, Dubai

Nov 16 - Jan 7

Aisha Alabbar Gallery is proud to present Marks of Return, a solo exhibition by Palestinian artist Salma Dib, whose practice transforms the wall from a boundary into a witness, a living archive of resistance, memory, and endurance.

In Marks of Return, Dib explores the wall as both surface and subject: a site where silence is broken, where resilience is inscribed, and where belonging and liberation continue to be rewritten. Her layered compositions emerge from the raw, fragmentary language of urban walls scraped, overlapped, and interrupted echoing the precariousness of memory itself, always vulnerable to erasure yet insistent in its reappearance.

A highlight of the exhibition is a monumental installation composed of 25 smaller works, assembled into a single, unified whole. This piece stands as both symbol and archive—a meditation on resistance, collective memory, and the endurance of a Palestinian people.

Dib's recent presentation at Ishara Art Foundation, No Trespassing (2025), expanded on these ideas by transforming an entire room into an immersive environment that evoked the claustrophobic yet defiant presence of walls in Palestine. Through the interplay of material, light, and texture, she invited viewers into a psychological space—a passage through the darkness of displacement and endurance, illuminated by the faint persistence of hope.

"Seeing Salma's installation at Ishara Foundation this summer left me with goosebumps. Amid the horror unfolding in Palestine, her walls became a passage through pain toward the faint but steadfast promise of light."

— Shilan Samaei, Gallery Director, Aisha Alabbar Gallery

At a time when Palestine continues to face unimaginable devastation, Dib's work bears witness to a history that refuses disappearance. Through her poetic yet forceful visual language, the wall becomes not a site of division, but a space of remembrance—a living surface that holds the persistence of a people and their hope for a brighter day.

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### About the Artist

Salma Dib (b. Damascus, 2000) is a Palestinian interdisciplinary artist whose practice spans painting, sculpture, and neon signage. Her work addresses the complexities of the diaspora experience and the realities of displacement, using symbolic abstractions to explore themes of anonymity and the feeling of being without a home. As the granddaughter of Palestinian refugees, Dib's art reflects on generational trauma passed down through wars and conflicts.

During her studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Dib focused on the study of exterior walls and graffiti, examining their social impact on marginalized communities—research that continues to shape her practice today.

Her recent exhibitions include No Trespassing, Ishara Art Foundation, Dubai, UAE (2025); Schal: The Woman from Different Perspectives, PAKD Gallery, Berlin, Germany (2025); Summer and Women, Etihad Modern Art Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE (2024); Open Studios, The Sima Collective, Dubai (2023); Silent Auction, Ren House, Dubai, UAE (2023); Embodied

History, Site Galleries, Chicago, IL, USA (2021); and Bright Line, The Latent Space, Chicago, IL, USA (2021).

Dib holds a BFA with a concentration in Painting and Neon Signage from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA (2022).

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#### About Aisha Alabbar Gallery

Established in 2018, Aisha Alabbar Gallery is a leading platform for contemporary and modern art in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Rooted in a strong curatorial vision, the gallery is dedicated to presenting a diverse roster of emerging and established artists from the UAE, the wider MENA region, and the international art world. It aims to foster dialogue between local practices and global contemporary discourse, contributing meaningfully to the evolving narrative of art in the region.

As one of the first women-led Emirati galleries, Aisha Alabbar Gallery has played a pioneering role in championing artists who are redefining the cultural landscape. The gallery is committed to nurturing talent through thoughtfully curated exhibitions, artist-led initiatives, and strategic collaborations with curators, institutions, and cultural organizations regionally and internationally.

With a strong emphasis on research, education, and public engagement, the gallery produces publications, hosts panel discussions, and develops educational outreach initiatives that encourage critical dialogue. Its programming reflects a dedication to presenting bold, innovative practices that speak to contemporary concerns while honoring the region's rich cultural heritage.

Aisha Alabbar Gallery continues to serve as a cultural catalyst, supporting artists in building sustainable careers and ensuring their work resonates globally — leaving an enduring mark on the contemporary art scene of the UAE and beyond.

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#### Exhibition Details

Artist: Salma Dib

Exhibition Title: Marks of Return

Venue: Aisha Alabbar Gallery, Warehouse 19-C, Alserkal Avenue, Dubai, UAE

Dates: Nov 16 - Jan 7

Opening Reception: Nov 16th, 6-8 PM

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