



Forsa  
School ×

مدرسة  
× فرصة



# Welcome to Forsa School

A collaborative effort between Sharjah Art Foundation and Naqd, Forsa School is an educational and professional programme designed to equip art practitioners and creative freelancers with practical skills needed to understand and navigate structural and institutional systems related to the UAE art industry. Running from 7 November 2020 to 13 February 2021, the initiative invites independent artists and designers residing in the UAE to participate in the programme, which will be composed of public seminars, private sessions and one-on-one mentoring led by a selection of key professionals from the art industry.

Registered participants will have access to a range of private sessions hosted by industry professionals that will cover and decode each key topic, providing participants with inside information and a safe space to discuss the challenges faced by the creative community. They will also have an opportunity to meet programme tutors for one-on-one mentoring sessions tailored to their individual needs. Public seminars will be streamed live and will be open to the general public.



# Programme Overviews

## OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

### TOOLKIT

Free resources compiled by tutors

### PUBLIC PRESENTATION AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Live sessions that will be recorded and placed on SAF and Naqd's websites  
6:00 - 7:00 pm on selected days

## FOR REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS

### ONE-ON-ONE MENTORSHIPS

With two chosen mentors

### STUDIO VISITS

One a month

### PRIVATE SESSIONS

Online or in-person on selected days

### MEETUPS

One a month

# Types of Sessions

## FOR THE PUBLIC

### **Public Presentations and Panel**

#### **Discussions:**

Abridged online versions (40–30 minutes long) of the private sessions will be made available to the general public.

#### **Toolkits:**

Every tutor is working on a downloadable resource that will be available for use by the public after the end of the programme.

## FOR REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS

### **Studio Visits:**

Once a month on a Saturday, participants will visit diverse studio set-ups across the UAE and get to know the journey behind them.

### **Private Sessions:**

Participants will work with tutors in three-hour sessions that will provide an intimate space for participants to ask questions and deep dive into topics that are important to them.

### **Meetups:**

Taking place twice a month, meetups are an opportunity for everyone to check in and remain engaged, but participants can also use this time to propose a topic or project they would like to share with their peers.

### **One-on-One Mentoring Sessions:**

Participants can secure a one-hour mentoring session with two different tutors of their choosing, allowing them to reflect more deeply on their personal practices.

# About the Tutors

## Artist Talks

Artist Talks is an independent platform created and run by artist Sarah Almehairi that organises and presents talks with creatives based in and/or affiliated with the UAE. The talks are organised as a biannual series, with one session held during the fall and the other in the spring. Launched in April 2020, Artist Talks aims to provide a forum for initiating conversation, sharing practices and freely asking questions. Truly artist-focused, it seeks to connect creatives in an informal yet supportive learning environment. The platform also acts as an archive, housing recordings of the talks that can be easily accessed for future use.

## Augustine Paredes

Artist and photographer Augustine Paredes' lyrical, contemporary and sensuous visual narratives are derived from his many-storied travels and Southeast Asian consciousness. Born on a Thursday, he is currently based in Dubai. Notable clients include Gucci, Les Benjamins, Puma, Adidas, Nike and Namshi, and his work has been featured in publications such as Vogue Arabia, Vogue Turkey, GQ Middle East, Elle Arabia, Elle Turkey, Der Greif, Canvas Magazine, Cosmopolitan Philippines, MEGA Man and Madame Magazine.

## Azim Al Ghussein

In his creative practice, Azim Al Ghussein experiments with trying to extend various kinds of labour so that it can be shared. His practice is concerned with value and the ways in which it is measured and divided. Al Ghussein has worked as an illustrator and adjunct instructor in universities and is currently the Education and Outreach Coordinator at Tashkeel, Dubai. He studied visual communication, comics and printmaking and often refers to the modes of production in these fields to facilitate his practice.

## Bait 15

BAIT15, an artist-run studio and exhibition space, was founded in late 2017 by Afra Al Dhaheri, Hashel Al Lamki and Maitha Abdalla. Zuhour Al Sayegh joined the collective in 2020. The members have interdisciplinary practices in painting, sculpture, textile and performance. BAIT 15 was conceived from a shared need for studio space and a mutual desire to establish an artist-run exhibition space. Independently managed and funded with an open and flexible mission, BAIT 15 can continuously adapt to the emerging art scene of the UAE. The collective is guided by the work created in the studios, the exhibitions that are held, and the artists, curators and communities with whom they engage.

## Clay Corner Studio

Founded by Emirati visual artist and ceramicist Hessa Al Ajmani, Clay Corner Studio offers art facilities for both beginning and experienced artists, adults as well as children, who are looking for a supportive place to nurture their talents and learn new skills. Distinguished by its light and earthy aesthetic, the studio stimulates the creative flow and helps members to connect with clay as a natural material that combines the elements of earth, water, air and fire. The first of its kind in Ajman, the studio is fully equipped with all the necessary facilities for a ceramic and painting practice. It also offers hands-on workshops in ceramic hand-building, painting and drawing along with other multidisciplinary workshops, classes and critique sessions.

## Daftar Asfar

Daftar Asfar is a collaborative publishing platform that focuses on creative collaboration and thoughtful artistic development. Founded in the Middle East, the project has received funding from the Warhol Foundation's Fulcrum Fund and presented work at Art Dubai's UAE NOW exhibition (2019). Most recently, the platform was awarded funding from the Arab Fund for Art and Culture (AFAC).

## Danah Nassief

Danah Nassief is a designer and an educator who has taught multiple courses as a design lecturer at Dar Al Hekma University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in addition to conducting independent workshops and talks focusing on subjects that are often overlooked in formal design education. Along with her role as an educator, Nassief also worked as an Art Director at Blueprint Communications in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, before establishing her independent practice as a design consultant for small and medium businesses. After nine years in corporate and commercial graphic design, Nassief joined the faculty of the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises at Zayed University in Dubai, where, in addition to teaching, she advised students from different disciplines on their educational and career paths. She is currently pursuing a PhD in graphic design alongside her work in design consulting practice and workshops.

## Jaffat El Aqlam

Jaffat El Aqlam, which established its digital existence through zines, open calls, workshops and collaborative dialogue, is an independent platform that celebrates artistic creations by humans from/based in the MENA region. Founded in 2014, Jaffat El Aqlam has grown to become an open space for artists/designers, writers, musicians, poets, start-ups and researchers to feature their work and contribute to the exploration of identities for those within and outside the MENA region.

## Kathleen Hoare

Kathleen Hoare is a Dubai-based family, wedding and portrait photographer. Always after the candid moment rather than something too posed, Hoare strives to catch emotion in every image shot for her clients. She treats every job as a personal project and prides herself on knowing that her images are not only happy snaps but memories to be shared with friends and family. Although photography has always been an interest and a hobby, Hoare started to take it more seriously in 2013, when she took her first workshop at Gulf Photo Plus. Since then, she has spent as many hours as possible shooting, learning and teaching photography in order to master the craft. She has left her corporate job to pursue photography as a career, shooting for private clients as well as major international brands.

## Kevin Jones

Kevin Jones is the founder of Juniper Mind. New York-born and Paris-bred, Jones has lived in the Middle East for the past fifteen years, serving as UAE Desk Editor for the magazine ArtAsiaPacific and contributing art criticism both regionally and internationally to other publications such as The Art Newspaper, Artforum, ArtReview and Flash Art International. He was an instructor in Art Jameel's Hayy:Learning initiative for emerging Saudi artists and Ithra's Emerging Artists Open Call and has been a faculty member and mentor at Dubai-based non-profit Tashkeel since 2015. Formerly a strategist with international branding and communications agencies, including Havas Worldwide, Jones has positioned Juniper Mind to help artists, brands and institutions think more critically.

## Lujain Abulfaraj

(Twothirds Design Studio)

Lujain Abulfaraj is the co-founder and creative director of Twothirds Design Studio, founder of Akwan, and co-founder and previous design director at WTD Magazine. She is a graduate of Visual Communications from the American University of Sharjah, where she began her exploration of Arabic typography and calligraphy. Abulfaraj kick-started her career by doing the branding for Makkah Newspaper, based in Saudi Arabia, as well as the UAE Pavilion in its first participation in the Venice Architecture Biennale. With 10 years' experience in the design field, Abulfaraj continues to find inspiration in cultural aesthetics coupled with Arabic typography and their transformation into experimental designs.

## Maha Bin Hendi Law Firm

Maha Bin Hendi Law Firm (the 'Firm') is the first commercial boutique law firm in Dubai to provide specialist legal services to select private clients. Through associations with renowned British- and Saudi-based legal practices, clients are guaranteed multi-jurisdictional services through one firm. Maha Bin Hendi is the Managing Partner of the Firm. She obtained her Bachelor of Law LLB (Honours) from the University of Westminster, London, and her Master of Laws in International Business and Trade Law from Fordham University, New York. Bin Hendi is a qualified Emirati lawyer, holding the right of audience before the UAE's Federal Courts and the Dubai Courts. She is also registered in Part I of the DIFC Academy of Law's Register of Legal Practitioners, UAE.



## Maryam and Yusur Al Dabbagh

Maryam Al Dabbagh and Yusur Al Dabbagh co-founded Rouya Consultancy along with their partners in 2015 to provide inclusive and diverse content as well as public relations and communication strategy services for organisations in the region. Maryam Al Dabbagh is an award-winning communication consultant, and Yusur Al Dabbagh is a Board Member at the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR). Both have vast experience in content development, communication strategies and crisis management in the UAE and abroad.

## Moza Almatrooshi

Moza Almatrooshi is a Sharjah-based conceptual artist who recently obtained an MFA from Slade School of Fine Art in London. Almatrooshi's practice is currently positioned within the study of erased mythology from the Arabian Peninsula, which she correlates with present modes of seeing. Within this lens, the exploration of those themes materialises in performances, moving image, audio media and text-based work. Recent work has culminated in a performance in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; a residency in Townhouse Gallery, Cairo; and moving image productions shown at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London, and during Lahore Biennale 2020.

## Munira Al Sayegh

Munira Al Sayegh is an independent curator who has curated exhibitions such as The Cup and the Saucer, Warehouse421, Abu Dhabi (2020); Gulf Now, Art Dubai (2020, 2019); The Creative Act: Performance, Process, Presence, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (2017); and Bayn, Abu Dhabi Art (2017). Al Sayegh has participated in panels examining the importance of non-institutional thinking and rhetoric in refining what local and regional art looks like from the bottom up. She has also published various articles on the region's contemporary art scene.

## Nadine Khalil

Nadine Khalil has held leading editorial positions for the past decade at magazines in Beirut (Bespoke, Executive | Life, A Mag) and Dubai (Canvas), covering arts and culture. She has authored a series of artist monographs, including works on Lebanese artists Samir Sayegh and Hanibal Srouji and the late filmmaker Jocelyne Saab. Her writing can also be found in Art Monthly, Ocula, Financial Times, Goethe's Art, Thought, Women's Review of Books, Selections and Harper's Bazaar Art. Before she began writing for publications, Khalil worked as an independent curator with the non-profit art organisations Ashkal Alwan and the Arab Image Foundation and with video art festivals in Europe such as MidEast Cut and the Arab Independent Film Festival. She has an academic background in anthropology.

## Saira Ansari

Saira Ansari is a researcher and writer with an interest in South Asian art history, global modernity, alternative narratives and science fiction. Ansari has served as a Contributing Editor (Art) for the South Asian literary journal Papercuts, Managing Editor for monographs on Abbas Akhavan (SKIRA / Works on Paper, 2018) and Poursan Jinchi (Akkadia Press / Works on Paper, 2019), and Arts Correspondent at The Rio Times (2010). Her writing has been published in various art publications, including Art in the Age of Anxiety (Sharjah Art Foundation and Mörel Books, 2020). Ansari was previously Director of Communications at The Third Line, Dubai, and now works in Publishing and Research at Sharjah Art Foundation.

## Sheikh Salem bin Faisal Al Qassimi

Salem Al Qassimi is the Founder and Principal of Fikra, a design-led educational platform that comprises Fikra Design Studio (est. 2006), Fikra Campus (est. 2017) and the Fikra Graphic Design Biennial (est. 2018). A multidisciplinary graphic designer, educator and entrepreneur, Al Qassimi has been teaching design for over a decade—as an instructor at the Rhode Island School of Design, Assistant Professor of Design at the American University of Sharjah, and more recently, as Adjunct Assistant Professor of Design and Photography at New York University Abu Dhabi. His research addresses notions of contemporary cultural identity in the UAE and the region through the lens of design. He has won several international awards, including the Type Directors Club (TDC) and protoType at Typecon2016, and he has participated in a number of exhibitions both in the UAE and abroad. He has edited several books and actively publishes articles, reviews and essays on Arabic typography, culture, design and design education.

## Samt

A platform co-founded by Walid Al Wawi, Samt is one of the first virtual gallery spaces to deal strictly with the political Middle East through anonymous contributions and provide a mentorship programme for artists. Born in 1988, Al Wawi is concerned with the contemporary hybridisation of Middle Eastern identity and the implications of its geopolitical claustrophobia for cultural naturalisation.

## Sofiane Si Merabet

Travel-obsessed and polyglot, artist and cultural entrepreneur Sofiane Si Merabet has always been involved in projects reflecting on plural identities. From the digital platform TheConfusedArab ([www.theconfusedarab.com](http://www.theconfusedarab.com)), Si Merabet explores the 'future of nostalgia' concept. In parallel with his on-going questioning around themes such as memories, identities and diaspora, he has started to explore these themes through interactive installations. In the majority of his installations, Si Merabet interrogates emblematic spaces and their roles in human interactions.

## Stefan Messam

Stefan KK Messam has been drawing for as long as he can remember. His work explores conventions of identity and the range of codes and symbols people construct to remind themselves of identity, experiences, memories, day-to-day routines, passions and secrets. Expanded to construct a compelling visual narrative, his work presents a playful look at these concepts with cryptic sets of symbols and codes that are never really meant to be read, only acknowledged as representative of a depth of identity and personality. He is Associate Professor in Foundations and Design at the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises, Zayed University, Dubai. He earned a master's degree in design, majoring in illustration and visual narrative.

## Stephanie Mahmoud

Stephanie Mahmoud has spent over a decade working in marketing, project management and brand strategy. Her interests include art in all its forms, gardening and the intersection of food and culture. A deeply organised (but also deeply messy) person at heart, she learned (through much trial and error) how to use her professional skills in project management and apply them to... everything in life. She is excited to share that knowledge—as well as all of the mistakes she has made along the way—to help other creatives manage their time and resources effectively.

## Toleen Badawi

As a coach for individuals, executives and other groups, Toleen Badawi is constantly exploring and working to understand how to make people fulfilled and more successful in their lives, both professionally and personally. She helps her clients develop a personal vision and manage change during personal and professional transitions, and she offers guidance towards personal and professional growth that will lead to fulfillment and happiness. Her training approach is influenced by a coaching model that increases the retention of material, engagement and success of the trainees. When working directly with organisations, Badawi focuses on training individuals, teams and different organisational levels, from mid-management to executive, to guide trainees in developing the proper internal mental process to ensure that targets and objectives are achieved while employee engagement and a healthy organisational environment and culture are maintained.

## Yasmin Atassi

Yasmin Atassi is the Director of Green Art Gallery in Dubai, which she co-founded in 1995 with her late mother, Mayla Atassi. Since its inception, Green Art Gallery has played an important role in introducing modern Arab art to Dubai and helping to establish a vital dialogue among some of the most important modern Arab masters, including Fateh Moudaress, Louay Kayyali, Ismail Fattah, Dia Azzawi and others. Taking over the Gallery in 2010, Atassi went on to rebrand and build up the Gallery's curatorial program and artist roster. Representing a multi-generational mix of artists from the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Turkey and beyond, the Gallery has focused on contemporary artists working across different media, both traditional and new, whose practices reflect our current time and draw on research-based ideas.

# Programme Schedule

## PUBLIC SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

The schedule below contains listings of all the public sessions from November 2020 to February 2021. These online sessions are open and accessible to the public. All public session and panel discussion links will be made available on the Sharjah Art Foundation website on a monthly basis.

## NOVEMBER

**Small Batch Production**  
**15 November 2020, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**  
**Danah Nassief**

This session will explore the ways in which creative practitioners can pivot in terms of strategy, finances and fees around value-based time. Exploring the model of artisanal production as a way to support their practice, participants will learn how to diversify their incomes but also discern oversaturated markets.

**Art Law 101**  
**16 November 2020, 5:00 pm–6:00 pm**  
**Maha Bin Hendi Law Firm**

This session will explore the elusivity of applying law to the arts. From protecting intellectual property and demanding fair fees to reading and negotiating agreements, participants will be armed with awareness and knowledge of their legal rights.

**NOVEMBER****Navigating Digital Landscapes****17 November 2020, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm****Participating platforms: Samt, Daftar Asfar, Jaffat El Aqlam, Artist Talks**

This panel discussion will explore the ways in which low-fi digital strategies can have fundamental impacts on the creative community. Each of the participating platforms has been independently grown and has developed into an institution in its own right. The speakers on this panel will reflect on that journey, arming attendees who are seeking to build digital communities with a strategy and path.

**Studios and Practices****18 November 2020, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm****Azim Al Ghussain, Moza Al Matrooshi**

In this panel, artists Azim Al Ghussein and Moza Almatrooshi will reflect on the different studios from which they have worked throughout their careers and the pivotal moments that caused them to steer in different directions, evolve their practices and eventually move on to different studios and set-ups. Addressing challenges they faced and thinking of possible solutions, the panelists will also shed light on different studio and production options that creatives have readily available in the UAE.

**Subtle Branding Practices****18 November 2020, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm****Lujain Abulfaraj (Twothirds Design Studio)**

This session will explore how storytelling and subtle branding are paramount to the ways in which creative practitioners should be presenting themselves. From navigating social media and presentations, working with clients, and paying closer attention to details and systemic methods of working, participants will be armed with the understanding that branding is not something that requires hiring a graphic designer, but rather, a holistic representation of oneself.

**DECEMBER****Practicing Beyond the Artworld**  
**13 December 2020, 7:00 pm–8:00 pm**  
**Kevin Jones**

This session will address the challenges artists face when they write about their practice. Instead of focusing on the harrowing struggle sometimes associated with writing, this session will celebrate writing as a craft and a possible extension of an artist's practice. Using other artists' texts as a tool, participants will examine the formal constraints of the artist statement and learn guidelines for sidestepping common traps such as jargon, identity clichés, second-guessing, biographical reliance, misalignment with practice 'drivers,' over-focus on media/process, overstatement and conceptual haze.

**Everyday Budgeting and Time Management**  
**13 December 2020, 5:00 pm–6:00 pm**  
**Stephanie Mahmoud**

This session will look at how to effectively manage work projects, life goals and everyday tasks by using simple, accessible tools. Participants will draw from the tutor's personal experiences in managing projects, improving time management, meeting financial goals and ultimately achieving peace of mind. The session will also delve into small daily habits that can have a profound impact on life goals.

**Critical and Curatorial Practices**  
**14 December 5:00 pm–6:00 pm**  
**Munira Al Sayegh**

This session will explore the new ways that emerging artists can showcase their work, collaborate with curators and rely less on institutional support. Participants will also have the opportunity to consider how to engage new communities, approach different institutions and discern which exhibition spaces are actually suited for their practice.

## **JANUARY**

**Expanding Your Craft**  
**10 January 2021, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**  
**Augustine Paredes**

In this session, participants will learn how to expand their craft as photographers, diversify their revenue sources through collaborations with different practices, find an artistic niche, build an online portfolio, speak about their practice and teach the craft of photography.

**Writing as Practice**  
**12 January 2021, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**  
**Saira Ansari**

This session will develop participants' skill sets in writing, focusing on creative non-fiction as opposed to industrial and commercialised styles of writing. The session will cover writing for periodicals, reviews, catalogues and essays while also exploring how writing can be a playful and liberating activity.

**The Influential Educator**  
**January 12 2021, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm**  
**Rania Jishi**

This session will cover the basics of lesson planning for artists and art practitioners who are looking to education as a way to bridge gaps between audiences and institutions. It will also explore contextualised and fluid methods of teaching to produce programmes that are relevant to both hosting institutions and audiences.

**Critique and Writing**  
**January 13 2021, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm**  
**Rania Jishi and Nadine Khalil**

This session will cover the basics of lesson planning for artists and art practitioners who are looking to education as a way to bridge gaps between audiences and institutions. It will also explore contextualised and fluid methods of teaching to produce programmes that are relevant to both hosting institutions and audiences.



**FEBRUARY****Dealing with Artist Blocks**  
**7 February 2021, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**  
**Stefan Messam**

This session will explore how to overcome creative blocks, moments of staleness and roadblocks in an art practice. Through prompts and drawing exercises, the session aims to disrupt, pivot and evolve participants' practice and streams of thought around their work.

**Improving Your Relationship with Failure**  
**8 February 2021, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**  
**Toleen Badawi**

This session will explore the mental blocks hindering the development of an art career. Combining methods from executive coaching and cognitive healing, this session will help participants better understand their fears and doubts and navigate issues related to self-worth and imposter syndrome so they can overcome any mental blocks through a structured career strategy.

**The PR Dialogue**  
**9 February 2021, 5:00 pm–6:00 pm**  
**Maryam Al Dabbagh and Yusur Al Dabbagh**

In this session, participants will learn how to write about their work and practice for the press and how to utilise public relations tactics and communication tools to increase awareness and public engagement. The session will cover creating a press kit, furthering intercultural communications, creating bilingual strategies and building relationships with the press.

**Navigating Galleries**  
**13 February 2021, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm**  
**Yasmin Atassi**

This session will explore how to navigate relationships with galleries, from representation to expectations, and how to edit and curate what would be shown in a gallery. The session will also look at alternative ways of showcasing work (not relying solely on one kind of representation) and how these ways can strengthen and cement a career in the arts.

## PRIVATE SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

The list below includes an overview of all the private sessions and studio visits that will be available for the programme's registered participants. The one-on-one mentoring sessions and the meetups will be scheduled separately. To make the most of their time during the Forsa School programme, participants will need to commit to at least two private sessions per month, two one-on-one mentoring sessions and two meetup sessions.

### **Studio-Building Methods and Realities Moza Almatrooshi**

In this studio visit, participants will be able to connect with Moza Almatrooshi over a collectively prepared meal and engage in image-making while exploring her multifaceted studio space, kitchen and library.

### **Art Law 101 Maha Bin Hendi Law Firm**

This session will explore the elusivity of applying law to the arts. From protecting intellectual property and demanding fair fees to reading and negotiating agreements, participants will be armed with awareness and knowledge of their legal rights.

### **Subtle Branding Practices Lujain Abulfaraj (Twothirds Design Studio)**

This session will explore how storytelling and subtle branding are paramount to the ways in which creative practitioners should be presenting themselves. From navigating social media and presentations, working with clients, and paying closer attention to details and systemic methods of working, participants will be armed with the understanding that branding is not something that requires hiring a graphic designer, but rather, a holistic representation of oneself.

### **Everyday Budgeting and Time Management Stephanie Mahmoud**

This session will look at how to effectively manage work projects, life goals and everyday tasks by using simple, accessible tools. Participants will draw from the tutor's personal experiences in managing projects, improving time management, meeting financial goals and ultimately achieving peace of mind. The session will also delve into small daily habits that can have a profound impact on life goals.

### **Writing as an Extension of your Practice** **Kevin Jones**

This session will address the challenges artists face when they write about their practice. Instead of focusing on the harrowing struggle sometimes associated with writing, this session will celebrate writing as a craft and a possible extension of an artist's practice. Using other artists' texts as a tool, participants will examine the formal constraints of the artist statement and learn guidelines for sidestepping common traps such as jargon, identity clichés, second-guessing, biographical reliance, misalignment with practice 'drivers,' over-focus on media/process, overstatement and conceptual haze.

### **Small Batch Production** **Danah Nassief**

This session will explore the ways in which creative practitioners can pivot in terms of strategy, finances and fees around value-based time. Exploring the model of artisanal production as a way to support their practice, participants will learn how to diversify their incomes but also discern oversaturated markets.

### **Critical and Curatorial Practices** **Munira Al Sayegh**

This session will explore the new ways that emerging artists can showcase their work, collaborate with curators and rely less on institutional support. Participants will also have the opportunity to consider how to engage new communities, approach different institutions and discern which exhibition spaces are actually suited for their practice.

### **Journeying into Graphic Design** **Sheikh Salem bin Faisal Al Qassimi**

This studio visit will explore Fikra Campus and the Fikra Design Studio. Participants will engage in an intimate conversation with founder Salem Al Qassimi about supporting the design community and the challenges of launching a space.

### **Navigating Galleries** **Yasmin Atassi**

This session will explore how to navigate relationships with galleries, from representation to expectations, and how to edit and curate what would be shown in a gallery. The session will also look at alternative ways of showcasing work (not relying solely on one kind of representation) and how these ways can strengthen and cement a career in the arts.

### **Writing as Practice** **Saira Ansari**

This session will develop participants' skill sets in writing, focusing on creative non-fiction as opposed to industrial and commercialised styles of writing. The session will cover writing for periodicals, reviews, catalogues and essays while also exploring how writing can be a playful and liberating activity.

**Social Media and Collaborative Strategies**  
**Sofiane Se Merabat**

This session will consider the challenges of having a social media presence that may be over- or under-exposing one's practice. It will also debunk negative myths around commercialism and collaboration with luxury brands, presenting these instead as opportunities to support an art career so long as creative practitioners are able to remain anchored in their own identity.

**Maintaining a Studio Practice**  
**Azim Al Ghussein**

In this session, participants will explore the ways in which they can pursue a studio practice within the parameters of contemporary living in the UAE. The topics to be discussed include workspace set-up, scheduling and planning, finances and sustainability within creative practices. The content of the session should be relevant to both designers and artists living and working in the UAE.

**Business Basics for UAE Photographers**  
**Kathleen Hoare**

This session will explore how freelance photographers can set up their own business in the UAE. From obtaining licenses and shooting permissions and pricing work to dealing with locally based gear sellers, marketing and creating service lists, this session will arm participants with a pathway to launch.

**Setting Up a Studio for Artists by an Artist**  
**Clay Corner Studio**

This studio visit will explore Clay Corner Studio, which was founded to address the needs of a wide spectrum of practitioners, from beginners to practising artists. The studio's multifaceted business model both subsidises the co-founder's personal practice and supports the community at large. This session will reflect on the challenges of and opportunities in launching a studio.

**Dealing with Artist Blocks**  
**Stefan Messam**

This session will explore how to overcome creative blocks, moments of staleness and roadblocks in an art practice. Through prompts and drawing exercises, the session aims to disrupt, pivot and evolve participants' practice and streams of thought around their work.

**Improving Your Relationship with Failure**  
**Toleen Badawi**

This session will explore the mental blocks hindering the development of an art career. Combining methods from executive coaching and cognitive healing, this session will help participants better understand their fears and doubts and navigate issues related to self-worth and imposter syndrome so they can overcome any mental blocks through a structured career strategy.

**Critique and Writing****Nadine Khalil, Rania Jishi**

This session will look at different modes of engagement that creative practitioners can use with the publishing industry and consider the need for more peer-to-peer critique. Debunking the cultural and emotional challenges around critique and feedback, the session will arm participants with ways in which the publishing industry, journalism and conversations around their work can be made less intimidating and more engaging.

**The Influential Educator****Rania Jishi**

This session will cover the basics of lesson planning, looking to education as a way to bridge gaps between audiences and institutions. It will also explore contextualised and fluid methods of teaching to produce programmes that are relevant to both hosting institutions and audiences.

**The PR Dialogue****Maryam Al Dabbagh and Yusur Al Dabbagh**

In this session, participants will learn how to write about their work and practice for the press and how to utilise public relations tactics and communication tools to increase awareness and public engagement. The session will cover creating a press kit, furthering intercultural communications, creating bilingual strategies and building relationships with the press.

**Setting Up a Studio****Bait15**

In this session, participants will learn about the journey of a self-funded artist-run studio nestled in a residential neighbourhood in Abu Dhabi. The collective will share their experiences around setting up the studio, managing it, engaging with the community, establishing the necessary discipline and setting boundaries while also motivating and inspiring each another.

## About Sharjah Art Foundation

Sharjah Art Foundation is an advocate, catalyst and producer of contemporary art. Through the Sharjah Biennial, the annual March Meeting, year-round exhibitions, film and music programmes, education and community outreach programmes, grants, residencies, commissions and publications, the Foundation encourages a shared understanding of the transformational role of art.

## About Naqd Critique

Naqd Critique is a platform for artist-led critique sessions focused on contemporary art practices. Artists, curators, researchers, academics, gallerists and members of the community are invited to join and engage in critique sessions. Naqd was created to provide feedback and constructive criticism for artists and creatives in order to further their growth and development.

# Meet the Team!

## Hessa Al Ajmani

**(Youth Education Coordinator,  
Sharjah Art Foundation)**

Hessa Al Ajmani is a visual artist and ceramicist based in Ajman. In 2019, Al Ajmani founded Clay Corner Studio, the first public art studio in Ajman dedicated to ceramics and painting. She currently manages and teaches regular ceramics classes in the studio, which caters to professional and amateur artists and offers facilities, private spaces, memberships and classes. The studio has become an integral community space for Ajman's residents. She also works in the Learning Programme for Youth and Adults at Sharjah Art Foundation, where she organises workshops, excursions, photowalks and other events to engage the Sharjah community with artist exhibitions, significant local sites and contemporary themes.

## Mouza Al Hamrani

**(Youth Education Coordinator,  
Sharjah Art Foundation)**

Mouza Al Hamrani is an illustrator and multimedia designer based in Ajman. Her practice revolves around experiences within her Khaleeji [Arabian Gulf] upbringing, touching on cultural inheritances, existentialism, superstition and the human condition. Often humorous, playful and stylised, her work incorporates kinetic and graphic elements as well as captions. Al Hamrani is a Salama Bin Hamdan Artist Fellowship (SEAF) fellow, and her work has been shown in a number of exhibitions, including Breaking Khaleeji Cultural Myths, Sadu House, Kuwait City (2019), and Arab Animation, Manarat Al Saadiyat, Abu Dhabi (2019). She holds a BSc in Multimedia Design from Zayed University, Dubai.

## Rania Jishi

(Curator, Forsa)

Rania Jishi is a multidisciplinary artist specialising in illustration and curious about pottery. She is the founder of Naqd Critique (2017), an artist-run platform of critique sessions organised across the UAE. During COVID-19, she founded Forsa and co-founded Forsa School. Jishi currently works as an Adults Program Specialist at the Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi. Other teaching and education experience include work with Sharjah Art Foundation, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Art Dubai, New York University Abu Dhabi and other organisations in the UAE. She graduated with a BA in Studio Art from the School of Visual Communications, American University in Dubai. She is also a Salama Emerging Artist Fellowship (SEAF) fellow and a Campus Art Dubai alumna.

## Nahla Tabbaa

(Curator, Forsa)

Nahla Tabbaa is an artist, pedagogue and culinary ethnographer. Interested in urban research, materiality and alchemy, she works within these realms to create social impact. She has designed and delivered institutional programmes, critical practice courses and workshops across the fields of visual arts, culture, culinary arts and their intersectionalities with the urban and the everyday. She previously led and developed the community programme at Sharjah Art Foundation and currently develops education projects independently and in collaboration with institutions such as Art Jameel, Dubai; Warehouse421, Abu Dhabi; and the Beacon House National Trust University, Lahore. She is also a culinary navigator and ethnographer with Frying Pan Adventures, Dubai, and she is the co-founder of both Forsa and Daftar Asfar, a mobile sketchbook publishing platform. She earned her MA in Curatorial Practice from the Bath School of Art and Design, UK (2012), and her BFA in Sculpture from Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design, London (2009).