

**The Third Line at Cromwell Place, London**  
**Gallery 5**  
**2 – 9 June 2021**

The Third Line is pleased to announce a group exhibition of works by **Anuar Khalifi**, **Sara Naim** and **Sophia Al Maria** at Cromwell Place in London. Featuring painting, sculptural photography and video, the exhibition provides unconventional insights into identity, image-making and history while probing the relationship between human memory and the material world.



Anuar Khalifi, *Safi Safari*, 2021, 119.5 x 170 cm

**Anuar Khalifi's** paintings, which will concurrently be presented in an online exhibition, examine identity through the blending of real and imaginary worlds. These semi-autobiographical portraits are born out of the artist's mind. Inspired chiefly by current events, Khalifi depicts recognisable moments in present and past collective memory and superimposes his feelings and reactions about it. Physically and metaphorically inserting himself in the picture, and by extension, challenging representation as well as social and political responses to these events. Khalifi's clever manipulation of modernist painting techniques and the genre of portraiture play a critical role in challenging representation in art and asserting presence in cultural institutions; re-writing art history.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Text by Dina Ibrahim

A self-taught artist, Khalifi has exhibited in a number of solo and group exhibitions in the Middle East, Europe and North Africa including but not limited to; *Ce qui s'oublie et ce qui reste*, Musée National de l'histoire de l'immigration, Paris (2021); *Personal Mythologies*, Galerie Julien Cadet, Paris (2020); and *Forever Is A Current Event*, The Third Line, Dubai (2019). Khalifi's work has been acquired by MACAAL, Musée d'Art contemporain africain Al-Maaden, Marrakech, Morocco.

**Sara Naim's** sculptural photographs explore the notion of boundary and the way it shapes our perception. Using scientific tools to study micro formations, Naim explores the lack of boundary between things and highlights the sinuous line between perception and reality. Presented in this group exhibition is a selection from two recent bodies of work: *Reaction* and *Tingling, Throbbing, Waves*. The latter explores the materialisation of emotions and bodily sensations, with each artwork being composed of felt sensations and abstract gestures that create solid, physical forms. During various Vipassana meditation sessions guided by Naim, she asked the sitters to draw their sensations which she then detail-selected, magnified, printed and shaped to inform her photographic sculptures. The act of physically, mentally and emotionally translating sensations into form addresses the blurred boundary between imagination and perception. *Reaction* consists of sculptural photographs that magnify a small area of polaroid film, exposing the random microcosms formed by chemical reactions with light which are the basis of analogue photography. Naim emphasizes the process of photography at the molecular level by rendering these two-dimensional scans into organic three-dimensional shapes, raising questions about the medium and image-making as a whole.

Naim received her MFA in Fine Art Media at The Slade School of Fine Art, London (2014), completed her Bachelors in Photography from London College of Communication (2010) and Art Foundation at Chelsea College of Art (2007). She has exhibited internationally in both solo and group exhibitions; *Science Fictions*, Centre Photographique Rouen, Rouen, France (2019); *Building Blocks*, The Third Line, Dubai (2019); *Tribe: Contemporary Photography from the Art World*, Katzen Arts Center, Washington D.C., USA (2018); and *The Third Image* (Biennale des Photographes du Monde Arabe Contemporain), Institut du Monde Arab and Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Galerie Binome, Paris, France (2017).

**Sophia Al Maria's** film *Limerent Object II* acts as a trance-inducing tone poem meditating on deep time and history. Part of the *Limerent Object* series, the video explores myths and the life-cycle of the world, including the ruins of an apocalyptic future — a recurring theme in Al Maria's sci-fi-influenced practice. The video, originally commissioned in 2019 for Faena Art in Miami, will be presented in a fireplace towards which the viewer is drawn and transfixed.

An artist, writer and filmmaker, Al Maria received her MFA in Aural and Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London. With musician Fatima Al Qadiri, Al Maria coined the concept of Gulf Futurism to describe how the future as imagined by the West has already become reality in the Gulf. Her work has been shown in various international exhibitions including: *Bitch Omega*, Julia Stoschek, Dusseldorf, Germany (2020); *Beast Type Song*, Tate Britain, London (2019); *Sophia Al-Maria: BCE*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2019); *Biennale of Moving Images*,

Miami, USA (2017); Black Friday, Whitney Museum, New York (2016); The 9th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2012) and many more. Al Maria's works have been acquired by international institutions and foundations including Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA; Art Jameel, Dubai, UAE; MATHAF, Doha, Qatar; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE.

The Third Line is pleased to participate in this first ever pop up event by Abu Dhabi Art at Cromwell Place in London, bringing together 4 galleries from the UAE, Tabari Artspace, Isabelle Van Den Eynde, Lawrie Shabibi and The Third Line, alongside an exhibition of *Beyond: Emerging Artists* by Abu Dhabi Art. With thanks to Abu Dhabi Art and the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi for their support of this collaborative event.

### **Location**

4 Cromwell Place, London, SW7 2JE, United Kingdom

### **About The Third Line**

Founded in 2005, The Third Line is a Dubai-based art gallery that represents contemporary artists locally, regionally and internationally. The Third Line also hosts non-profit, alternative programs to increase interest and dialogue in the region.

Represented artists include Abbas Akhavan, Anuar Khalifi, Ala Ebtekar, Amir H. Fallah, Farah Al Qasimi, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Jordan Nassar, Laleh Khorramian, Lamy Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Nima Nabavi, Poursan Jinchu, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sara Naim, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, yasiin bey, Youssef Nabil and Zineb Sedira.

### **Media Contact**

Gabriella Moore | Gallery Manager | [press@thethirdline.com](mailto:press@thethirdline.com) | +9714 3411 367