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The surrealist works of Hayfa Abdullah

By Anna Seaman



Bellows 2015 oil on canvas 33 x 57 in. Courtesy Hayfa Abdullah

Among the next wave of young female artists from Saudi Arabia, Hayfa Abdullah is a figurative painter based in Jeddah whose slightly surrealist works seem to be gaining traction.

Next week, she will open her first solo show in New York at Stellan Holm Gallery where she will be presenting 25 works from her last series.

They include depictions of women floating out of shisha pipes or erupting from spray bottles and handheld lighters and men pouring from coffee pots.

“My paintings depict the vivid world of my imagination,” says Abdullah. “Influenced by the surrealist work of Frida Kahlo, my vibrant painting series strives to show the bold, audacious side of humanity. Whether featuring women smoking hookah, blue haired femme fatales emerging from spray bottles, men drooping onto a palette board with paints, my paintings seek to give inspiration and voice to the hidden side of every individual.

I hope that the same freedom that my paintings give me will be given to the voiceless parts of people everywhere in the world.”

* On show at Stellan Holm Gallery, Madison Avenue, New York from April 21 – May 27. Net proceeds from the show will be donated to The Child Mind Institute, a non-profit organisation dedicated to transforming the lives of children and families struggling with mental health and learning disorders.



TOP Left: Cotton Pads 2015 oil on canvas 57 x 33 in. Courtesy Hayfa Abdullah, **TOP Right:** Mahjoob 2015, oil on canvas, 57 x 33 in. Courtesy Hayfa Abdullah **BOTTOM Left:** Hookah 2015 oil on canvas 57 x 33 in. Courtesy Hayfa Abdullah, **BOTTOM Right:** Ice Cube 2015 oil on canvas 54 x 43 in. Courtesy Hayfa Abdullah