



**If interested
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MIT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
**Contemporary Art
in the Middle East**
4.627/4.628

Finally recognized within the global visual context, contemporary art from the Middle East remain as vague and problematic as the name of its region. This course introduces students to the contemporary arts and cultures of the region, which throughout history has been part of the so called Islamic world. With a review of the formation of Islamic aesthetics and Islamic attitudes towards the arts, the course will begin its investigations from the disjuncture of colonialism and its affects on artists' understanding and transformation of modern art as distinctly expressive of new socio-political realities. While the focus of the course will be on the Arab world, modern and contemporary art in various regional countries will be broadly investigated in terms of production, reception, exhibition and value, in both local and global markets, through exploring and reevaluating discourses of culture, identity, and globalization. The course will introduce students to various methodologies of decoding works, and will examine several moments from the contemporary development around the region and within the new global interest.

The course is open to graduates and undergraduates. It is structured as a pro-seminar. One session each week will be devoted to a lecture on a specific topic. The second session will be a class discussion on the same topic with designated students' presentations on various aspects of the topic. The class requirements are three short papers (7 pp) and two class presentations for undergraduates; the short papers may be substituted by a research paper for graduate students on a topic to be discussed with the instructor and to be presented in the class.