

NOUR

FESTIVAL OF ARTS



LEIGHTON HOUSE MUSEUM

CONTEMPORARY ART, MUSIC, LITERATURE AND DRAMA FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2010



Leighton House is widely recognised as one of the best examples of the historic exchanges between the UK and the cultures of North Africa and the Middle East. The unique architecture of the house combines Syrian, Iranian, Turkish and Egyptian artwork with British art and design. These cultural fusions have drawn and fascinated the public ever since the house was opened as a museum in 1900.

THE FESTIVAL AIMS TO:

- Highlight the creative talent of emerging Middle Eastern and North African artists to UK audiences;
- Assist UK-based artists of Middle Eastern and North African origin in gaining a platform for their work;
- Host forums and discussions so that British audiences can discover and engage with contemporary artistic forms from these regions of the world;
- Offer the visiting public insights into the diverse make-up of the Middle East and North Africa today;
- Challenge stereotypes of this region of the world and its people through cultural expression;
- Disseminate a comprehensive education programme to deliver the aims of the Festival.

We hope you find something within our exciting programme to take part in over the coming months and look forward to welcoming you to Leighton House.

Leighton House Museum is delighted to announce its inaugural Nour Festival of Arts which will run from October to December 2010. The word Nour, which translates as 'illumination' or 'light' in many Middle Eastern languages, is an appropriate title for this showcasing of contemporary arts and culture from the Middle East and North Africa. Fine art exhibitions, film screenings, literary readings and musical concerts are just some of the activities planned for this unique London event.

PARASTOU FOROUHAR

October 1 – November 5

Free exhibition

Museum admission applies

Parastou Forouhar exhibits "The Funeral" – an installation of office chairs covered in a popular folk material sold in Tehran's markets for Ashura, the annual Shi'ite ceremony that mourns the martyrdom of Imam Hossein in the seventh century. Originally these printed shrouds came in symbolic colours – black and white, red and green – but today they are printed in day-glo colours for an interesting blend of religion with pop culture. Standing empty in a room, they commemorate the deceased victims who once sat in them. Also on display are "Signs" – a series that plays on the imagery of road and traffic signs to express the battle of the sexes in Iran (for women, there is "no entry" and "access denied", while men enjoy "right of way") and "Eslimi" ("Ornaments") – a fabric pattern-book of deceptive charm. Look closer and we see the patterns are composed of intricately rendered instruments of torture, such as knives, whips, knuckledusters and pistols.

Photographer, installation and multi-media artist Parastou Forouhar was born in 1962 in Tehran, and since 1991 has lived and worked in Germany. Her work is a response to the dramatic social changes that she experienced after the 1979 Iranian Revolution. While early projects



Parastou Forouhar: *The Funeral*, installation of office chairs and fabric

explored themes of displacement and identity, a great and terrible influence on her recent work was the politically motivated murder of her parents in Iran in November 1998. Her parents were intellectual activists, and like them Forouhar is critical of religious and political fundamentalism throughout the world. Her belief in free society is expressed in imagery that is surprisingly witty, often humorously macabre and always highly original.

EXHIBITIONS



Fathi Hassan: *Ask Frenche*, mixed-media on paper

FATHI HASSAN | HARAM ALEIKUM

November 12 – December 12

Free exhibition

Museum admission applies

In this, his first solo show in the UK, Hassan is exhibiting a series of large and small-format mixed-media paintings on paper. All are variations on the theme of “Haram Aleikum”, an Arabic phrase that can be interpreted a multitude of ways, and which expresses pity, shame, the forbidden and the sacred. Through his varied depictions of this phrase, Hassan not only responds to his experiences as an African in Europe but to the politics of the West towards the Middle East and vice versa.

Fathi Hassan was born in Cairo in 1957 to Sudanese and Egyptian parents. He first studied art as a teenager in Cairo with the celebrated sculptor Ghaleb Khater and in 1979 won a grant to study set design at the Naples Art School in Italy. Since graduating in 1984, he has lived in Le Marche, Italy. In his drawings, paintings, sculptures and installations, Hassan experiments with the written and spoken word, exploring the theme of ancient languages erased by colonial domination. With invented, Kufic-inspired scripts, he plays with the symbols, textures and calligraphy of his Nubian heritage to explore the space between graphic symbolism and literal meaning in vibrant colours and collage.

ARIS RAISSIS | ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

October 4 – December 2

Free exhibition

Museum admission applies

A feature of the festival will be the residency of artist Aris Raissis within the stunning interiors of Leighton House Museum itself.

Raissis’s subject matter runs parallel to Frederic Lord Leighton’s, especially Leighton’s influence regarding the Middle East, where Raissis was born. As a portrait and figurative artist whose work is displayed at W.H. Patterson Gallery (London), Raissis has welcomed the opportunity to be artist-in-residence at Leighton House in order to create new works of art that will incorporate a visual, as well as an atmospheric feel of this beautifully refurbished historic landmark. Challenging the more negative associations that surround the term ‘Orientalist’, Raissis’s work will explore the psychology of what it means to represent eastern subject matter, while being conscious of his own Egyptian heritage. He teaches his students the techniques of the Old Masters on a one-to-one basis, always paying close attention to quality and sensitivity. Raissis aims to encourage the public to visit and witness art in the making, as well as to participate in talks which the artist will give on the techniques of the Old Masters from the Renaissance to the Victorian era.



Aris Raissis: *La Paysanne*, oil on canvas

FESTIVAL LAUNCH EVENT



FESTIVAL LAUNCH EVENT

Saturday 2 October

2.00 – 4.00pm

Free event, no booking required

Museum admission applies

Come along and take part in our special afternoon of activities to mark the opening of the Nour Festival of Arts. Music, dance, storytelling, henna painting and food tasting will all take place throughout the interiors of Leighton House Museum. Garden will be open weather permitting.



2.00 – 2.15

Tanoura Dance performance with Egyptian Dance Master Shafeek Ibrahim

2.30 – 3.00

Interactive storytelling and music session with actress Alia Alzougbi and singer and musician Khaled Hakim

3.00 – 3.15

Meet the artist: Parastou Forouhar

3.30 – 3.45

What's in the Arab Hall: A description by Alan Kirwan, Education Officer, Leighton House

3.45 – 4.00

Tanoura Dance performance with Shafeek Ibrahim

CONCERTS



REEM KELANI

Friday October 22

6.30 – 10pm

Tickets £10.00, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

One of the most important Arab female singers of her generation, Reem Kelani is a consummate live performer, who enlightens as well as entertains her audiences. Her set will draw from her acclaimed Palestinian album "Sprinting Gazelle" as well as including songs by the great Egyptian composer Sayyid Darwish (1892-1923).



RHIAN DUO

Friday November 19

6.30 – 10pm

Tickets £10.00, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Palestinian pianist Tala Tutunji and Irish cellist Tara-Lee Angell formed the Rhian Duo in 2008, when they were both Masters students at Trinity College of Music, London. Whilst classical music forms a large body of their repertoire, Tutunji and Angell are proud of their respective cultural heritage and background. Together they have developed a unique partnership blending old and contemporary traditional Irish and Middle Eastern music creating a fusion of eastern and western elements.

With this distinctive musical identity their concerts have broken classical musical boundaries and introduced audiences to a rich and exciting musical and cultural experience.

FILM



CAIRO STATION (BAB EL-HADID)

Thursday November 4

7.00 – 10.00pm

Film starts at 7.30pm

Tickets £8.00/£6.00 students, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Dir: Youssef Chahine | 1958 | Egypt | 76 min Arabic with English subtitles
Official Selection: Berlin Film Festival

A seminal neo-realist poem to the director's adopted city, *Cairo Station* charts the story of Kenawi (Chahine), a crippled newspaper vendor, who becomes consumed by the voluptuous drinks seller Hanuma (Hind Rostum) and dreams of whisking her away from her fiancé Abu Seri (Farid Chawqi).

Programme curated by James Neil, Parallax Media



EXPOSED SUDAN

Saturday November 27

7.00 – 10.00pm

Film starts at 7.30pm

Tickets £8.00/£6.00 students, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Screening of *Cinema in Sudan* (2008 | 52 min) and *Independence Day* (1956 | 10 min) followed by a discussion with speakers from the Rift Valley Institute and the filmmaker Frederique Cifuentes Morgan.

The films show a unique collection of archive footage and stills photography from one of the founding fathers of African and Sudanese cinema, Gadalla Gubara.

The Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is an independent, non-profit research, training and advocacy organisation working with communities and institutions in Eastern Africa, including Sudan and the Horn.

LITERATURE



ZENA EL KHALIL

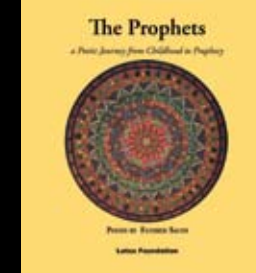
November 23

6.30 – 9.00pm

Tickets £5.00, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

A question and answer session with the award winning author of *Beirut, I Love You*. Zena el Khalil, born in 1976 in London, has lived in Nigeria, London, New York and Beirut. She is an installation artist, painter, curator and cultural activist. During the July 2006 attacks on Lebanon, her blog beirutupdate.blogspot.com received international acclaim. It was publicised on news portals such as CNN and the BBC and excerpted in The Guardian and Der Spiegel online. In 2008, she was invited to speak at the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo. She lives and works in Beirut. Her artwork can be viewed at ziggydoodle.com.



FATHIEH SAUDI

December 3

6.30 – 9.00pm

Tickets £5.00, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Whispering Prophets: an evening of poetry reading with guest poets and musicians with writer and poet Fathieh Saudi. Drawing on her recent collection of poems, *The Prophets*, the author travels into the childhood of the prophets: Moses, Jesus and Mohammed. She creates a poetic world of feelings, hope and despair, humanity and exile, tracing each prophet's unique path to revelation.

Fathieh Saudi was born in Jordan. She is the recipient of several awards for her humanitarian and cultural work. She is currently the Chair of Exiled Writers Ink and is also a member of the Society of Authors and Board Member of English PEN. The acclaimed art critic and novelist John Berger recently wrote, '*This is a strange and haunting book. Not so much because of what it relates, but because of its voice*'.

COMEDY & THURSDAY LATES



AN EVENING WITH SHAZIA MIRZA

Saturday November 13

8.00 – 9.00pm

Doors open from 7.00pm

Tickets £10.00, includes refreshments.

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Shazia Mirza, one of the UK's top comedians, brings her performance to Leighton House Museum. Shazia has appeared on *Have I Got News For You* (BBC), Joan Bakewell's *Taboo* (BBC), *Richard & Judy* (CH4), *First Sight* (BBC2), and *60 Minutes* (CBS).

"Her laconic one-liners represent something quite unique in modern comedy. In these fraught times, she actually manages to make being a Muslim woman seem wonderfully life-enhancingly funny. Anglo-Islamic understanding is now even more elusive than before, but if anything, that makes Shazia's comedy even more valid, and even more vital!"

THE GUARDIAN GUIDE William Cook



THURSDAY LATES AT LEIGHTON HOUSE HASSAN HAJAJJ PRESENTS....

MARQUES TOLIVER

Thursday October 28

6.30pm – 10.30pm

Free event, no booking required

"Seamlessly blends soul and R&B warmth with masterclass-level classical leanings and an incredible ability to craft heart-rending songs that soar and dip like melancholic birds of prey. Move over, John Legend." THE GUARDIAN Paul Lester

An exciting festival initiative is the bringing together of some of the most inventive and experimental musical sounds of contemporary Middle Eastern and North African fusion music that can be heard in London. On October 28 and November 25, artist and curator Hassan Hajajj invites established and up-and-coming musical talent to perform live sessions within the sumptuous interiors of Leighton House. For further acts please see our website, www.leightonhouse.co.uk. Bring your friends, have a drink and experience world music in a unique venue.

DAY SYMPOSIUM & TALKS

DAY SYMPOSIUM

ART AS PROTEST: THE IMPACT
ON CONTEMPORARY ART OF
THE MIDDLE EAST

Saturday 20 November

10.00 – 4.00pm

£12.00/£6.00 students.

Includes tea/coffee

Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

This one-day symposium explores the often complex relationships that can exist between art and politics. In particular it examines how contemporary art of the Middle East has both shaped and been shaped by the political and cultural events of the region for the past 50 years. Issues for debate, amongst others, include gender equality, state authoritarianism, and the 'War on Terror'.

Speakers include MONA KHAZINDAR, Curator of the Department of Contemporary Art and Photography, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; DR VENETIA PORTER, Assistant Keeper (Curator), Islamic and Contemporary Middle East, British Museum; ROSE ISSA, internationally renowned London-based curator (Chair); and LAILA SHAWA, artist.

TALKS

FREDERIC, LORD LEIGHTON AND
THE MIDDLE EAST

Saturday 16 October

3.00 – 4.00pm

Alan Kirwan, Education Officer,
Leighton House Museum

£5 per talk

Booking recommended on 020 7471 9153

This talk analyses Leighton's travels in the Middle East, the countries visited and the purpose behind the adventures. The region's impact on Leighton's art will be discussed along with the obvious implications for the designs of his home. Leighton's place in the wider issue of European Orientalism will also be examined.

COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ARAB ART

Saturday 6 November

3.00 – 4.00pm

Robin Start, curator and founder
of The Park Gallery

Tickets £5 per talk

Booking recommended on 020 7471 9153

This talk explores the background to the current market, a history of the modern Arab art scene and an introduction to collecting. Specific attention is paid to the Arabian peninsula, Morocco to Egypt, and the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean as well as Iraq. The art of Turkey and Iran will be discussed in brief.

COURSES AND DEMONSTRATIONS



LIFE DRAWING COURSE

Tuesdays, October 5 – November 9
11.00 – 4.00pm
£250.00
Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Life drawing in the historic studio at Leighton House with Charlie Cobb, artist and tutor at the Prince's Drawing School.



TRADITIONAL TEXTILES

Wednesdays, October 6, 13, 20, 27
10.00 – 1.00pm
£45.00
Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Join textile expert Nausheen Sheikh on Wednesday mornings in practical, hands on explorations of traditional Middle Eastern textiles. Participants will be tutored to create their own textiles in a course that explores the following areas:

- colour combinations in traditional textiles from primary and secondary resource materials;
- how to achieve harmony and balance in the colouration of patterns;
- what is 'texture' and how it is created;
- introduction to the Biomorphic forms, 'Islimi' motifs and their application to geometric patterns;
- exploring various embellishment techniques.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT LEBANESE CUISINE

Sunday October 17
3.00 – 4.30pm
Free event, no booking required

An opportunity to see master chef Karim Haidar demonstrate recipes from his new book, *Lebanese Cuisine Past & Present*. Haidar is head chef at La branche d'olivier and Pointbulles in Paris, and Comptoir Libanais in London. He is noted for reinventing Lebanese cuisine, giving new life to forgotten recipes, revisiting the classics and creating new dishes. For further information on Karim Haidar see www.karimhaidar.com



THE ART OF IZNIK CERAMICS

Sunday 14 November
Demonstrations from 2.00 – 2.45pm
and 3.00 – 3.45pm
Free event, no booking required

A rare opportunity to hear Turkish artist Ismail Yigit and his assistant Okan Ozsoy talk about the illustrious history of Iznik ceramic production and observe as they paint some of the classic Iznik motifs onto pottery. Yigit is the primary artist today responsible for reviving the workshop methods of classic Iznik ceramics in contemporary Turkey.

FAMILY EVENTS



TALES FROM THE SILK ROAD HALF-TERM FAMILY ACTIVITY

Friday October 29
11.00 – 12.30pm (5-7yrs)
2.00 – 3.30pm (8-11yrs)
£5 per child
Booking essential on 020 7471 9153

Participatory and interactive storytelling workshops for children, bringing to life stories from the East through music and performance. Workshops led by musician and singer Khaled Hakim and actress Alia Alzougbi.

SUNDAY FAMILY ACTIVITY DAYS

Sundays, October 31 & November 28
2.00 – 4.00pm
Free event. No booking required
Museum admission applies.

Creative art workshops inspired by Middle Eastern and North African themes.



FREE PUBLIC TOURS AT LEIGHTON HOUSE MUSEUM

Wednesdays at 3.00pm
Museum admission applies.
No booking necessary.

Sixty-minute tours of the interiors that include special access to the secret model's staircase and the rarely seen servant quarters in the basement.



THE SKILL OF WEAVING

Fridays, November 12, 19 and 26
10.00 – 2.30pm
£90.00. Maximum number of spaces 20
Booking essential on 020 7471 9156

A fantastic opportunity for schools to enjoy a day-long workshop with the award-winning artist Rezia Wahid, MBE. Rezia is a renowned British textile artist of Bangladeshi origin. Her work has been exhibited both in the UK and abroad. These workshops are ideal for teachers who want to introduce their students to work with a professional artist and add some inspired craft and design to their Autumn/Winter semester art programme.

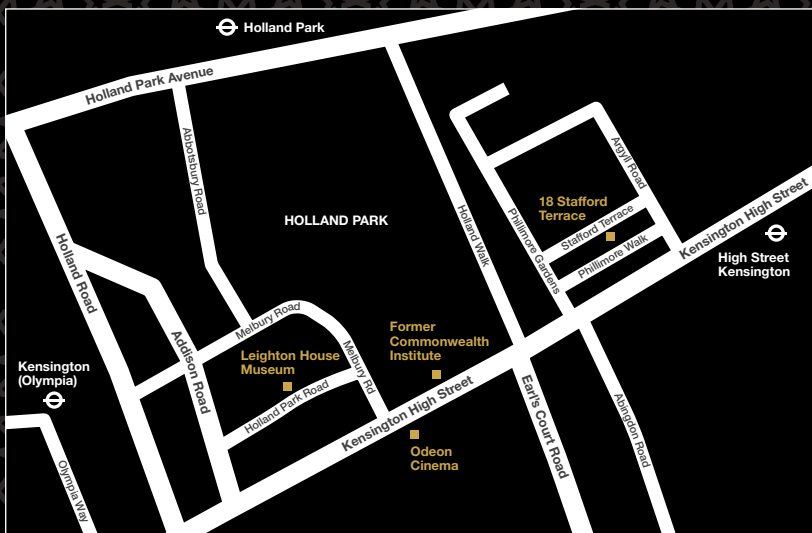
SCHOOLS PROGRAMME



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MUSIC OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Every Thursday, October-December
10.00 – 11.30am
£90.00 per class of 30 pupils (Teachers and adult helpers free of charge)
Booking essential on 020 7471 9156

A unique London initiative which introduces primary and secondary school students to the historic and contemporary music of Syria, Turkey and Egypt with established musicians Abdul Salam Kheir, Kalia Baklitzanaki and Tala Tutunji. Hear the strings of the amazing Oud and the rhythmic sound of the Ney. An added feature of the workshops is connecting the music to the historical Middle Eastern objects found at Leighton House Museum.



Leighton House Museum
12 Holland Park Road, London W14 8LZ
Tel: 020 7602 3316
Email: museums@rbkc.gov.uk
www.leightonhouse.co.uk

Open 10am to 5.30pm daily, closed Tuesdays

Underground: High Street Kensington, Olympia or Holland Park

Buses: 9, 10, 27, 28, 49, 328

Coach/Car: Coaches may drop visitors off outside the Museum but cannot park. Metered car parking is limited in Holland Park Road and surrounding streets. The Holland Park car park on Abbotsbury Road is approximately ten minutes' walk away.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Leighton House Museum