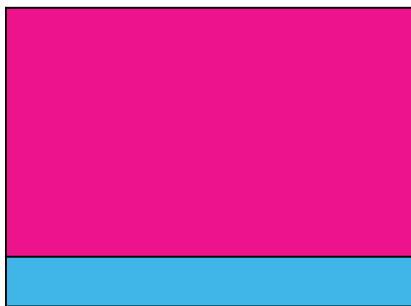
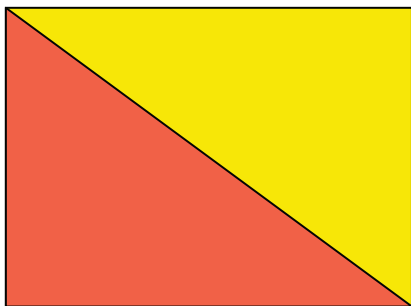
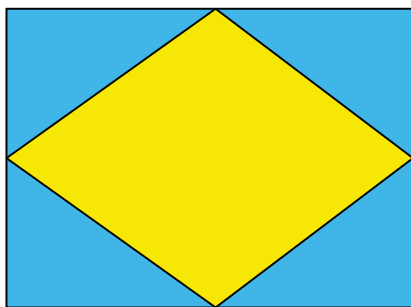
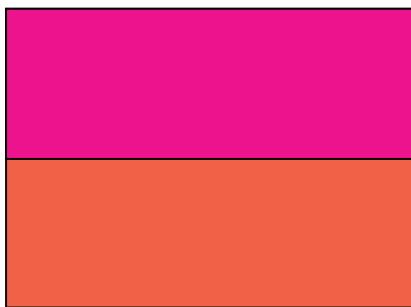
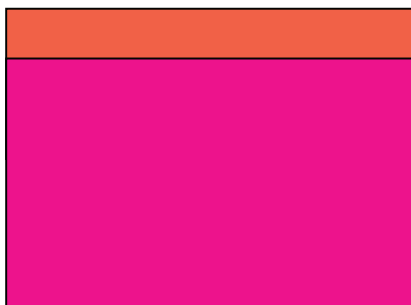
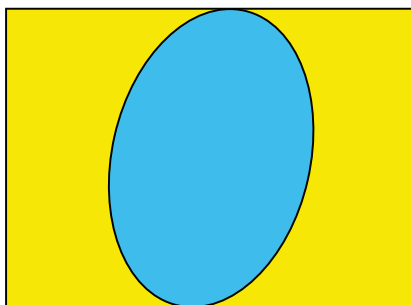


SELF-PORTRAIT WITH A CAT I DON'T HAVE

بُورْتَرِيَّةِ خَاتِي مَعَ قِطَّةٍ لَا أَمْلِكُهَا



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‘Self-portrait with a cat I don’t have’ is the second chapter of Bady Dalloul’s ‘Land of Dreams’ nomadic exhibition series, after the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (September 2024 – January 2025, curated by Martin Germann), and before Lisbon’s Centro de Arte Moderna Gulbenkian (opening September 2026, curated by Helena de Freitas)

Unless otherwise noted, all works are courtesy of the artist and The Third Line, Dubai

Artworks made in 2023–2024 were produced with the support of Centre national des arts plastiques (Cnap), the French National Centre for Visual Arts

Special thanks to Kataoka Mami, Benjamin Weil, Helena de Freitas, Martin Germann, Sasha Baydal

Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai

September 20, 2025 – February 22, 2026

‘Self-portrait with a cat I don’t have’ is Bady Dalloul’s first institutional solo exhibition in the United Arab Emirates. Blending autobiographical anecdotes with stories of individuals he encounters, the artworks feature fragile heroes and ordinary people navigating systems larger than themselves. Dalloul repurposes everyday materials—including books, matchboxes, board games and magazines—to create surprising dialogues across cultures and genres. He elevates everyday narratives into epics, bridges high and low brow, and importantly, connects non-Western cultures, at times unexpectedly, outside of conventional Eurocentric delineations and gaze.

Specially made for this exhibition, *Age of Empires*, a new series of fifty works on paper, uses *onmyodo*, a 19th-century Japanese astrology manual, to contemplate the life and death of imperial power. On the gallery walls, *Matchboxes*, a series of dozens of minuscule drawings framed in matchboxes, offer snapshots of everyday scenes, news broadcasts and political developments witnessed by the artist over the years, notably in his family’s native Syria. Inside a recreated apartment inspired by Dalloul’s live-in studio in Dubai, multiple small works retrace the last five years of his nomadic practice, which has taken him between France, Japan and the UAE.

Many of these works are displayed within small wooden boxes, creating an intimate and delicate scale. Dalloul’s attraction to these boxes stems from the elaborate woodwork he grew up with at home, notably Damascus craftsmanship used in games like *tawleh* (backgammon) or *barjis*. To make his works, the artist either collects vintage wooden board game boxes, repurposes everyday objects like bento boxes, or has them custom-made. Their design makes them perfect frames, their dividers creating vignettes for storytelling.

‘Self portrait with a cat I don’t have’ is titled after a modest self-portrait made in Tokyo. The title evokes Bady Dalloul’s habit of reflecting on his own life in his work, either by portraying himself or through other figures he identifies with, going in and out of character throughout the works. In particular, many artworks created in Japan are moving portraits of individuals he encountered, who offered a mirror to his own migration experience, and address representations of Arabs and South and West Asians in Japanese popular culture.

Bady Dalloul’s years in Japan gave the artist a chance to reevaluate his connection to Japanese culture and aesthetics. Growing up, Japan was distant, an “otherness” from far away that his family couldn’t even imagine visiting. Coming of age as an artist in Paris, Dalloul was eager to create conversations between non-Western cultures without the lens of Europe—here, his own Arab background and the Japan he observed from afar. The artist admits that before his years there, Japanese motifs in his work felt more distant, taking abstracted elements of a culture that seemed suspended in time. Moving to Japan later in life made the relationship real, these links concrete, and the subjects of Dalloul’s works became more everyday, tactile and playful, shifting to focus on daily life and friends.

Bady Dalloul's meticulously handcrafted books brim with collages, writing and drawings that reimagine global politics and the fates of those caught in history's web. Much of his art traces back to a childhood game of inventing countries—complete with borders, cultures and political histories—echoing historical events that deeply affected his home country and family history. Many works refer to the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement and the subsequent dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. These events led to the creation of new nation-states—Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria—whose borders aligned with the colonial interests of France and the United Kingdom, betraying promises made to Hussein bin Ali al-Hashimi, who had led the Great Arab Revolt during World War I. Many of Dalloul's works, notably *Ordonator*, follow and reinterpret the histories of Hussein's sons. Faisal briefly served as King of Syria before a French invasion ousted him; he later became king of the newly created Iraq.

Dalloul is particularly fascinated by how family stories intersect with politics, and how personal itineraries are often thrown into the throes of history, usually in rigged games decided by distant powers. The artist's work mirrors reality but distorts it with subtle dissonance, using humour and fiction to unsettle the making of truth and history.

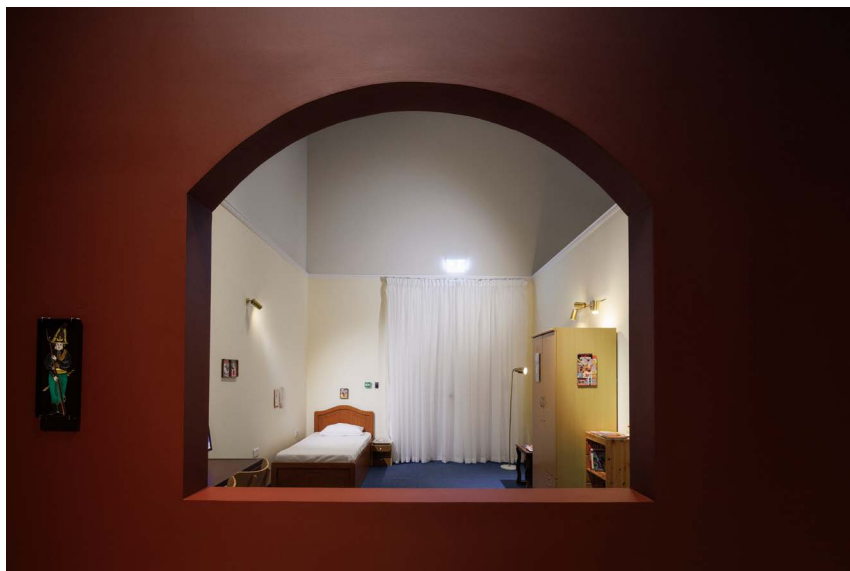
ABOUT THE ARTIST

Bady Dalloul (b. 1986) is a multimedia artist whose work entwines historical events, personal facts and fiction. His works are imbued with sociological and historical reflections on his heritage and issues of global migration. Reflecting on territorial demarcations, Dalloul questions Western-centric historiography and knowledge production. Through drawing, video and objects, Dalloul engages a dialogue between the imagined and the real by questioning the logic of writing history.

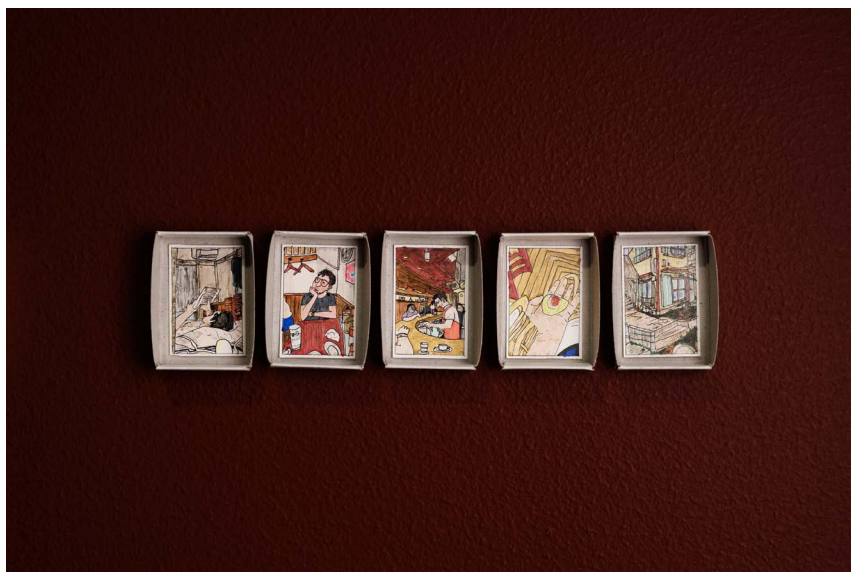
Bady Dalloul has had solo exhibitions at Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2025); Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha (2022); and Darat al Funun, Amman (2019).



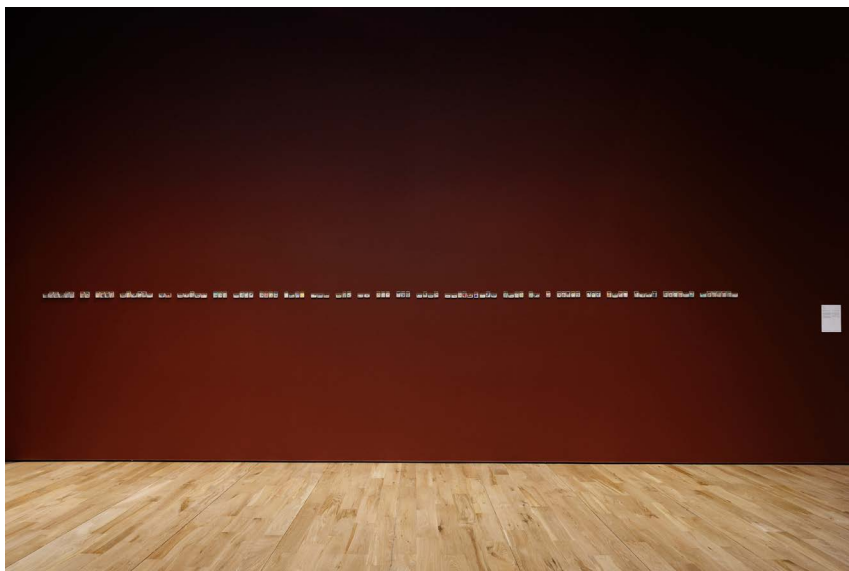
Installation view, Bady Dalloul: Self-portrait with a cat I don't have, Jameel Arts Centre, 2025. Image courtesy of Art Jameel. Photography by Daniella Baptista.



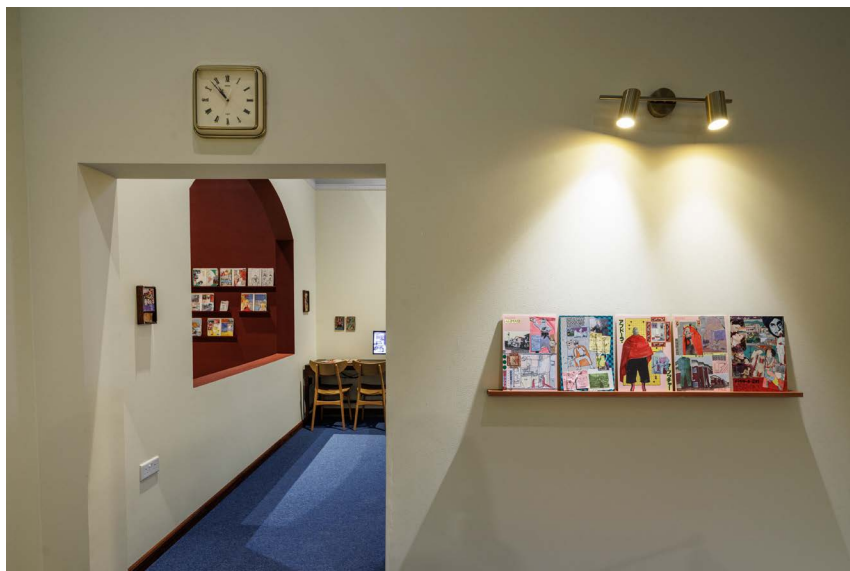
Installation view, Bady Dalloul: Self-portrait with a cat I don't have, Jameel Arts Centre, 2025.
Image courtesy of Art Jameel. Photography by Daniella Baptista.



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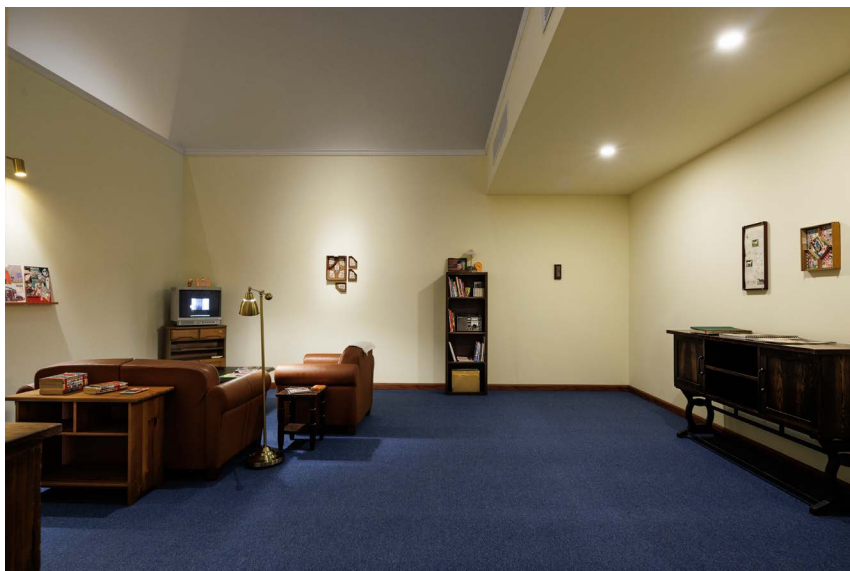
Installation view, Bady Dalloul: Self-portrait with a cat I don't have, Jameel Arts Centre, 2025.
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Image courtesy of Art Jameel. Photography by Daniella Baptista.



Badland Notebooks (Jadland-Badland, vol. 4 & 5)

Writing, drawing and collage on paper

21 × 15 × 2.5 cm

Collection of the artist

Bady Dalloul and his brother Jad created these notebooks in a childhood game. They imagined themselves as kings of fictional countries, 'Jadland' and 'Badland,' named after them, during long summer visits to family in Damascus, Syria.

Dalloul and his brother used their grandfather's old diaries to create "real, fake books." With leather covers and golden-edged pages, the stationery gave the fictional content a serious appearance, making it seem more believable. Inside, the brothers composed their imagined countries, filling the book with detailed drawings of their distinctive elements, like flags, currency, street maps, car plates and TV programmes.

The content reflects the boys' observations of adult concerns and daily life in Syria and the Levant. They drew from what they saw in newspapers, magazines, books and television to make their invented countries feel real. Some of the writing, in French, is now described by the artist as "awful," "very violent," or "nonsensical," as it reflects the perspective of teenage boys trying to make sense of a turbulent region, marked, at the time of making, by the Second Intifada in Palestine and the invasion of Iraq.

Today, in his artistic work, Bady Dalloul often returns to the invention of countries, observing a striking parallel between his childhood game and how the borders and nation-states of the Middle East were similarly carved out by colonial powers in the 20th century.

BADY DALLOUL



Age of Empires

2025

Ink, crayon and collage on board and wood

2025

Ink and collage on wood

Dimensions variable

Series of 53

Commissioned by Art Jameel

This new series, titled after a famous video game where one builds a civilisation to conquer others, examines the life and death of imperial power. Dalloul's visual narrative traces a long history of power, from ancient Sumer and Babylon to the British, French and Japanese empires that peaked in the 20th century and largely shaped today's world map.

To create this piece, the artist disassembled and reinterpreted a mid-19th-century Japanese astrology book, *onmyōdō*, connecting individual historical paths to greater forces. The story is presented as an open book, each two-page spread forming a unique vignette. Within wooden frames, six characters are placed throughout the open pages, witnessing history as it unfolds.



Age of Empires (The Disguised Foreigner)

2025

Ink and collage on wood

11 × 14.5 × 2 cm

Commissioned by Art Jameel



Age of Empires (The Bright Woman)

2025

Ink and collage on wood

11 × 14.5 × 2 cm

Commissioned by Art Jameel



Age of Empires (The Guest)

2025

Ink and collage on wood

12 × 16 × 2.2 cm

Commissioned by Art Jameel



Age of Empires (The Young Diver)

2025

Ink and collage on wood

14 × 17.5 × 2.2 cm

Commissioned by Art Jameel



Age of Empires (Soldiers - Red & Green)

2025

Ink and collage on wood

12 × 39 cm; 15 × 39 cm

Commissioned by Art Jameel



Matchboxes

2025

Ball pen drawing, marker pen on Bristol board,
framed in matchboxes

4.1 × 2.7 cm each

Series of 168

Since 2016, Bady Dalloul has created hundreds of minuscule drawings, each pasted in a matchbox. At first, these small works mostly showed scenes from the Syrian civil war, reflecting what the artist saw of his war-torn country through screens and news broadcasts.

Now, Dalloul uses the matchboxes as diaries. He records quiet scenes from his daily life in Japan and the United Arab Emirates over the years, mixed with ever-present images of conflict and brutality.



The War Within

2020

Ink on paper

55.5 × 29 cm



Self-portrait with self-money

2025

Mixed media

21.5 × 24 cm



Taxi Man and Fernando Pessoa

2024

Ink and collage on wood, mixed media

19.6 × 27.2 × 2.2 cm

Production supported by Cnap

This artwork is made from a box and colourful building blocks, part of a child's wooden construction set. The piece stems from a personal anecdote: during a taxi ride in Tokyo, the driver, who was once an artist, reminded Dalloul of the Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa, who worked as a bookkeeper, wrote in his spare time, and received public recognition only after his death.

Dalloul also includes an image of The Sheik, a well-known 20th-century wrestler, who portrayed himself as a villainous and threatening Arab man with a knife in his teeth. Dalloul sometimes feels he is perceived in a similar light.



Mashallah Ninja

2023

Ink and collage on book, mixed media

12.8 × 18.2 × 1.4 cm (closed)

The work layers images from cut-out posters onto a Japanese book on ninja history, which the artist partially translated. The piece was sparked by Dalloul's interest in an Indonesian judo club in Tokyo's Okachimachi district, part of a small Indonesian enclave dotted with mosques and restaurants.



Parking Man Dream

2024

Ink, crayon and collage on book

13.2 × 9.4 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Dalloul's *Parking Man Dream* reinterprets a children's book featuring samurai, powerful warriors of feudal Japan, celebrated for their martial skill and honour. Here, the artist replaces the swordsmen with *keibiin*, the uniformed men who tirelessly control traffic on the streets and parking lots of Tokyo. These workers are present everywhere in urban space and are often elderly; their long hours supplement modest pensions and address Japan's chronic labour shortage.



The Pumpman

2024

Ink and collage on notebook

12.5 × 8.5 cm

Production supported by Cnap

This collage uses a magazine image of a South Asian gas station attendant. Despite growing migrant visibility, such representations are rare in Japanese media, which rarely shows non-Japanese individuals as part of Japanese society.



Kamen Rider Dislocation

2023

Collage on book

20.5 × 17 × 3 cm (closed)

Production supported by Cnap

In this book, Dalloul draws a visual story about a South Asian migrant arriving in and living in Tokyo, inspired by the real-life story of a Pakistani acquaintance.



Timeshift Struggle

2024

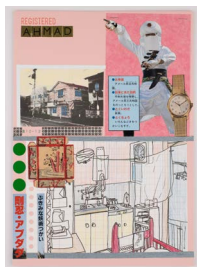
Ink and collage on book, mixed media

11.5 × 8.5 cm

Production supported by Cnap

This artwork reinterprets a book about a samurai, a figure whose adventures exemplify bravery and honour. Dalloul replaces the samurai with everyday workers like garbage collectors, parking valets and window cleaners—ordinary, arduous professions seen throughout the city and essential to its functioning.

The title, *Timeshift Struggle*, refers to working hours and the ongoing struggle of employees, playing with words to transform a sci-fi term into a real-world issue. These workers continue their fight until the end of the book, suggesting that the struggle itself has no foreseeable conclusion.



Gounin Abda

2021

Ink, crayon and collage on paper

21.5 × 30.5 cm



The Messenger from the Moon

2021

Ink, crayon and collage on paper

21.5 × 30.5 cm



Abdullah the Butcher

2021

Ink, crayon and collage on paper

21.5 × 30.5 cm



The Sheik of Taitō Ward

2021

Ink, crayon and collage on paper

21.5 × 30.5 cm

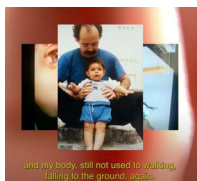


The Baghdad Thief

2021

Ink, crayon and collage on paper

21.5 × 30.5 cm



Ahmad the Japanese

2021

Video, colour, sound, 45 min.

French with alternate English and Arabic subtitles

Production supported by Villa Kujoyama, Institut français du Japon, Tokyo Arts and Space (TOKAS) and the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture

Ahmad the Japanese is the outcome of a year-long residency at Villa Kujoyama in Kyoto, where Bady Dalloul looked at the lives of Arab migrants in Japan. This was particularly significant in Japan, a society that views itself as highly homogeneous and where such stories are uncommon.

He created an imaginary character, Ahmad al-Yabani, by combining stories from four people he met during his time in Japan. Making the film and meeting these friends started a new direction in the artist's work, focusing more on individual stories and specific moments, which is reflected in the many portraits and books displayed in this room.

On the wall, five collages present Dalloul's first attempts to storyboard the film. They show movie stars, imagined superheroes and real-life wrestlers known for their exaggerated, stereotypical Orientalist traits. The character's name "al-Yabani" means "the Japanese" in Arabic. It refers to the common practice of giving someone a surname after where they're from or where they live, making their name carry their history. The name also honours another archetypal character: the Palestinian exile Ahmad al-Za'tar, or Ahmad al-Arabi, from a poem by Mahmoud Darwish.



King of the System

2020

Ink, bone and collage on wood

26 × 30 × 5 cm

King of the System looks at the small, everyday decisions and frustrations of people who dream of being in charge of their fate, especially when they face unfair or violent situations that leave them powerless.

The artwork repurposes a wooden box from a traditional French board game (*nain jaune*). The artist covered the game's original motifs with collages that depict life as a complex board game. Everyday situations and political dilemmas are drawn on game tokens. In the centre of the work, a *jinn*—a malevolent spirit drawn after a miniature painting—silently witnesses the unfolding events.



Inner Child

2022

Ink, collage on wood, plastic ear, recording device

15.9 × 23.9 × 3 cm

16 × 9.5 cm

Production supported by Atami Art Grant and KADIST

This collage, placed inside an inkwell box, depicts a child's fresh perspective upon arriving in Japan. It highlights the heightened senses of a newcomer in an unfamiliar environment.

This interactive plastic ear invites you to listen. Fitted with a microphone and earpiece, it allows you to hear ambient sounds through two channels: the artwork and yourself.



Eating Life

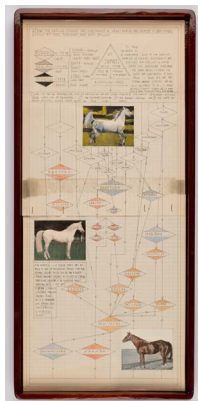
2024

Ink and replica teeth, mixed media

8.4 × 18.5 × 2.3 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Eating Life shows scenes of daily life drawn on replica teeth. Glimpses of dumplings, faces, glasses of water, suits and ties appear on the fake teeth, their distorted curved perspective mimicking the viewpoint from a door peephole.



How the various strains and substrains of Arab horses are related to each other

2019

Ink, crayon and collage on paper

48.5 × 21.5 cm

Dalloul is fascinated by figures of disguised foreigners and self-proclaimed experts, such as the famous T. E. Lawrence, also known as Lawrence of Arabia. Lawrence's dramatised stories shaped cultural representations of Arabs in Europe and America for generations.

In this seemingly scientific schematic, Dalloul copied a page from Carl Raswan's 1935 book *Black Tents of Arabia*. Raswan was a German horse breeder who lived with nomadic Bedouin tribes for years. He is credited with making Arabian horses popular in the West and even changed his last name, Schmidt, to Raswan, after an Arabian stallion. Amused by Raswan's elaborate drawings, Dalloul inserted fiction in the original text and embraced the opportunity to draw horses.



Ever Given, Ever Waiting

2023

Pencil and crayon on paper, wood

28.4 × 24 cm

Commissioned by Art Jameel

Art Jameel Collection

Bady Dalloul took interest in the story of the *Ever Given*, a ship that ran aground and notoriously blocked the Suez Canal for six days in March 2021. In this work, he focuses on the predicament of the sailors manning the vessel, stranded in limbo for months while the incident was investigated. The *Ever Given* incident led Dalloul to explore similar narratives of sailors trapped by the intricate and often opaque systems governing the ownership and regulation of shipping vessels—individuals who, in most cases, solely bear the consequences of the machinery of global trade going awry.



Ordonator

2019-2020

32 × 25 cm

Book, drawing and collage on paper

Ordonator derives its title from the accounting ledger that the artist used to reinterpret two major epics: the Persian *Shahnameh* and the Japanese *Kojiki*.

The *Shahnameh*, or *Book of Kings*, is a 10th-century epic poem by Persian poet Abul-Qâsem Ferdowsi. It aimed to reconcile Muslim history with myths on the creation of the world and is a significant part of Iranian national identity. The *Kojiki*, a compilation of myths and stories dating to the 8th century, has a similar importance in Japan.

Dalloul employed the narrative structure of the *Shahnameh* to imagine the creation story of a single room that becomes a country, with its legends, heroes, villains, and even the creation of time and weather. The artist wove in historical and personal events, such as the fall of the King of Iraq in 1958—around the time Dalloul's own family left Iraq—and depicts conflicts with “neighbours who have another room.” The story blurs the lines between historical and fictional characters, and the imagined state created by the book ends up torn and fragmented.



To Understand Each Other

2023

Mixed media

23 × 31 × 4 cm



Gamal Abdel Nasser Mask

2024

Wood, mixed media

23 × 14 cm

Commissioned by Institut français and Villa Kujoyama

This artwork shows a Nō wooden mask of Gamal Abdel Nasser, Egypt's second President, who was a profoundly influential champion of pan-Arabism and anti-imperialism. In traditional Nō theatre, masks are central: actors remain silent, while lighting, on-stage musicians and black-clad stagehands set the scene. Masks lend a sacred quality to the performance, sometimes highlighted by sacred ropes that mark consecrated areas on stage. Through this mask, Dalloul imagines he can reconnect with Nasser's aura by making him a part of his everyday surroundings.

This piece was crafted with Kyoto artisan Mitsue Nakamura, one of Japan's last twenty No mask makers, highlighting the rich tradition behind the artwork.



Dry-cleaning Problem

2024

Ink, crayon and collage on wood

21 × 11 cm

Production supported by Cnap

In this work that features dry-cleaning receipts, Bady Dalloul reflects on the extensive labour behind maintaining the crisp, impeccable suits of the many businessmen he sees on the street. The artwork features an Oni, an evil spirit from Japanese folklore, traditionally cast out by throwing roasted beans at its face during the Setsubun festival. Dalloul is interested in the similarities he observed with customs in Islam, such as the symbolic stoning of the devil during Hajj, where objects are thrown to ward off evil.



Male Gaze

2024

Ink and collage on wood, mixed media

30 × 18.4 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Male Gaze and *Trophy Wife* consider the social expectations placed on men and women to perform and conform to specific gender identities. *Male Gaze* contrasts the idealised images of masculine, dominant fighters with the upkeep needed to maintain them, such as hair darkening lotions and cosmetic interventions. Meanwhile, *Trophy Wife* highlights expectations imposed upon women.



Le Japon des Samouraï et des robots

2021

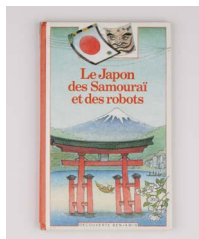
17.4 × 13 cm

Ink and collage on notebook

This work is based on the first book that Bady Dalloul's mother gave him about Japan. For him and his family in the 1990s, Japan seemed distant, expensive and out of reach. The book introduced the young Dalloul to a radical otherness, with unfamiliar customs and cultures as if from a science-fiction novel.

Years later, Dalloul found the book again and realised how much of his visual representations of Japan, now a familiar country, stemmed from its pages. Here, Dalloul recreates the book using his own references, reinterpreting almost every page and element, with slight changes, yet maintaining much of the original format.

LAURENCE OTTENHEIMER



Le Japon des Samouraï et des robots

1984

18 × 11 cm

Book



Stand up Please

2024

Ink, crayon and collage on wood

26 × 20 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Drawings of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and fedayeen in training, typical of 1970s political imagery, are overlaid with symbols of Japan's postwar economic boom and consumer culture, like the iconic Shinkansen bullet train. Together, they evoke the stark contrast between parallel societies facing wildly different struggles and how this affects individuals caught between disparate historical paths.



Scrapbook

2015

Ink and collage on book, video, sound, colour

30.4 × 21.8 cm

48 min. 39 sec.

One of the earliest works presented here, *Scrapbook* is one of Dalloul's first attempts to shift the way Middle Eastern history is understood by connecting it to other non-Western narratives, in this case, the complex and painful history of Japan. The artist's book centres on the 20th century, in the aftermath of the fall of the Ottoman Empire, focusing on events in Syria and the Levant. Dalloul links these, at times poetically, at times materially, to the tragic expansion and fall of the Japanese Empire.

Dalloul started the book after visiting Hiroshima. He was deeply moved by the story of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese schoolgirl who died of irradiation ten years after the atomic bombing of her city by the United States. Her story is well known in Japan, and she is one of the most famous *hibakusha*—survivors of the 1945 bombings who suffered from radiation sickness. As she lay in the hospital, she began folding hundreds of origami cranes, following an ancient legend that folding 1,000 would grant a wish.



Khalidun the Arabian Champion

2023

Ink and collage on book, mixed media

17.5 × 12.2 × 0.5 cm

Production supported by Cnap



Najib the Astroboy

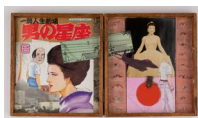
2024

Ink and collage on book, mixed media

18 × 11 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Najib, a news anchor for Dubai TV and France 24, whom the artist met in Japan, also appears in the *Matchboxes* series and *Ahmad the Japanese*. On the cover of this Astro Boy comic, Dalloul imagines Najib as a hero raising his family in a faraway place.



A Man's Fate

2023

Ink and collage on wood, mixed media

17 × 31 × 1.7 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Khaldun the Arabian Champion and *A Man's Fate* feature Khaldun, an acquaintance of Bady who set up a press agency in Japan in the 1990s. Both works explore his aspirations towards a particular manifestation of masculinity.

In *Arabian Champion*, Khaldun tries to live up to, and struggles with, the gendered expectations of strength, decisiveness and heroism placed upon him. *A Man's Fate* evokes a story from Khaldun's love life, where he was tormented by his feelings for a woman he loved and idealised. As in many of Bady Dalloul's works, collaged elements hint at how distant wars and violence overshadow his character's daily life.



TV Watcher Dreams

2024

Ink and collage on wood, mixed media

28.5 × 17.5 cm

Production supported by Cnap



Trophy Wife

2024

Ink and collage on wood, mixed media

23 × 15.5 cm

Production supported by Cnap



Love in rural context

2024

Ink, crayon and collage on wood

20 × 16.5 cm

Production supported by Cnap

In 2019, Japan introduced the “specified skilled worker” visa. It let rural workers from countries such as Vietnam, India and Indonesia move to Japan, as the country faces a critical shortage of young workers. Amidst this demographic change, Dalloul imagines a soap-opera-like love story between an immigrant woman and a local worker wearing stereotypical Japanese farm work attire.



Kintsugi Champions

2025

Ink and collage on book

18 × 12.7 cm



Self-portrait with a cat I don't have

2023

Mixed media on wood

20 × 11.2 × 3 cm

Production supported by Cnap

In this repurposed box, Bady Dalloul reimagines *A Man and a Cat*, a 1956 painting by Egyptian surrealist Abdel Hadi El Gazzar, originally a portrait of art critic Aimé Azar with a dark blue cat. Instead of Azar, Dalloul paints himself into the painting, making it a self-portrait. The piece also includes scenes of everyday life in Tokyo, like trains and the metro—spaces where people observe and are observed by others.

The painting was featured on the cover of the 1992 French edition of Hussein Al-Barghouti's autobiographical novel, *The Blue Light*. Dalloul saw the Palestinian writer's narrative—a story of his years spent abroad in America after growing up in Palestine and Lebanon—as a reflection of his own experience.

In the background, Dalloul reinterpreted a 1895 woodblock print of a war scene from the First Sino-Japanese War, a popular illustration found in many textbooks. The scene accentuates a dissonance between the quietly melancholic portrait and the turmoil of a violent world.



Ali Baba

2024

Ink and collage on book

25.8 × 18.3 × 1.6 cm (closed)

Production supported by Cnap

To create *Ali Baba*, Bady Dalloul repurposed the migration leaflet distributed by Japanese authorities to newcomers. The book tells the story of an Arab man who comes to work in Tokyo. The first pages show items brought in his suitcase, like Advil boxes written in Arabic, and portray the man experiencing culture shock, sadness and isolation, struggling with various odd jobs, and feeling watched and surveilled. Meanwhile, he pretends to everyone at home that everything is fine. Eventually, at the end of the book, his daughter succeeds in fulfilling his dreams.



Role Models

2024

Ink, crayon and collage on board

30 × 15 cm

Production supported by Cnap

Men in work attire dream of being cowboys, samurai or movie villains—characters who can punch their problems away and easily evade the frustrations of everyday life.

SELF-PORTRAIT WITH A CAT I DON'T HAVE, 2023



