

ALIA ZAAL (b.1989, Dubai, UAE)

Lives and works in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Alia Zaal is a visual artist based in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, her work explores memory, perception, and the emotional resonance of images. Her practice moves fluidly between painting and photography, often beginning with photographs sourced from archives or personal collections. These images are transformed through layers of distortion, repetition, and reworking, becoming fragmented reflections of lived experience rather than fixed representations. Working across multiple media, Alia Zaal investigates how images carry emotional weight and how they shift through memory, translation, and time. Influenced by visual culture and cinematic language, her work engages with themes of memory and perception. Through recurring gestures, layered surfaces, and a sensitivity to light and atmosphere, she creates spaces where images appear suspended between recognition and transformation. Her work draws from both personal and collective memory, questioning the reliability of visual information while exploring the psychological dimensions of seeing. Rooted in experimentation and material exploration, Alia Zaal's practice reflects an ongoing dialogue between image and interpretation, where painting becomes a way of translating what photography cannot fully contain. Her work is shaped by an interest in how images circulate and persist, as well as by the tension between visibility and obscurity. Across her practice, she approaches image-making as an act of reconstruction, where memory, sensation, and perception continuously overlap and evolve.

EDUCATION

BA in Fine Arts from the University of Sharjah

MA in Art History and Museum Studies from Paris-Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, in collaboration with the École du Louvre

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2026 *In Plain Sight*, Gallery Isabelle, Dubai, UAE

2022 *I Saw Time Passing (I)*, Foundry art space in Dubai, UAE

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026 *In Dialogue: At Another Meeting Point*, Mohammed Kazem and Alia Zaal, curated by Dirwaza Curatorial Lab, Frieze Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, UAE (Upcoming)

Our Collective Memory, organized by SF Projects, Haus Vischer Weber (a private residence), Basel, Switzerland

2024 *I Wish to be Happy, I Want to be Yellow*, curated by Jad Karam, Gallery Isabelle, Dubai, UAE

2022 *Pathways*, Hunna Art, Raffles The Palm Dubai, UAE

RESIDENCIES

2021 Claude Monet's house in Vétheuil