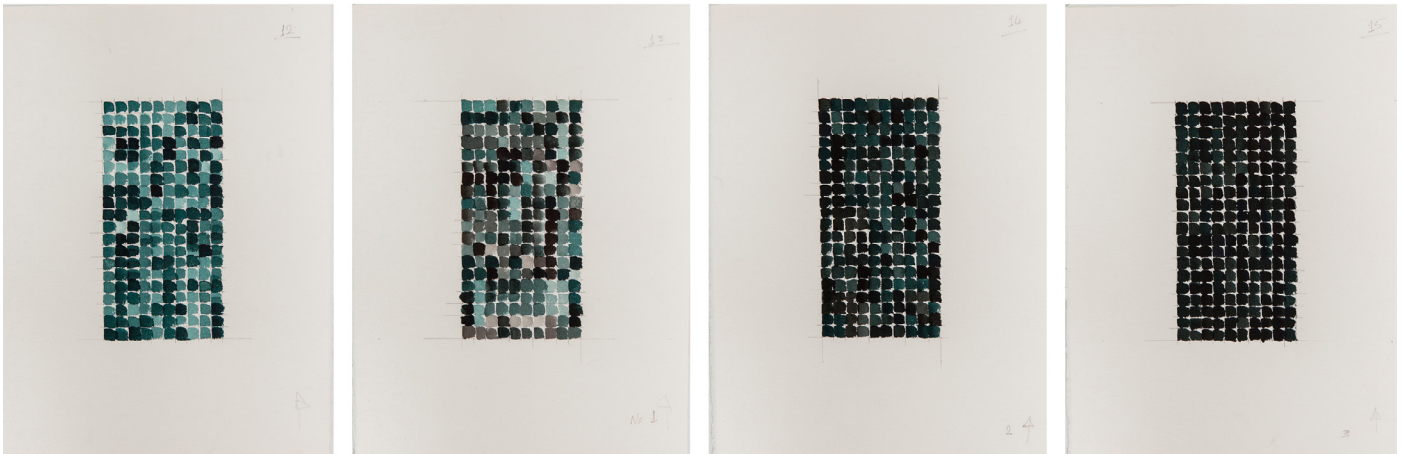


**Haleh Redjaian
Hassan Sharif**

Booth C39
Art Genève, Palexpo
1 - 4 February 2018



Images: Hassan Sharif, *Experiment - Watercolour*, 2009, Set of 4 works, Watercolour and pencil on paper, 38.3 x 28.4 cm each

The booth highlights late Emirati artist **Hassan Sharif** and German-Iranian artist **Haleh Redjaian**'s critical approach of using the grid as a measurement tool and foundation for their compositions, allowing for chance and repetition.

Redjaian's drawings on ready-made or hand-drawn grids as well as her spatial installations that require pulling threads across the surface of the wall sprouts a practice of attentive yet intuitive geometric elaborations. The artist allows irregularities and deviations within order. In doing so, she acknowledges the ever-present and unforeseen surprises that make up our incomprehensible lives, where the grid serves as a metaphor for a transitional life that has irregular narratives and makes you understand this asymmetrical logic. **Redjaian**'s minimal but playful use of pen, ink, gold leaf and thread can take the shape of lithographs, carpets, works on paper, murals and three-dimensional installations.

On the other hand, **Sharif**'s *Semi-Systems* are determined by numerical equations whose outcomes are not predetermined. Conceived with arbitrary self-imposed mathematical rules or instructions that are often outlined in accompanying draft papers, the artist embraces rebellions within these frameworks, breaking rules and inverting formulas.

Having studied art in London in the early 1980s, Sharif was particularly drawn to British Constructivism, and theorist Kenneth Martin's analysis of the movement's 'systemised constructive process governed by chance and order' served more as a catalyst than a path. These ideas have accompanied him throughout his extensive career including the *Semi-Systems* and also towards the creation of his *Objects*, *Performances* and *Experiments*. Art historian Paulina Kolczynska writes, **Sharif** "wanted to remain at the fringes of the system in order to retain space for the creation of his own constructivist process... it was through his coined description of "semi-systems" that he made an important statement, signaling that he was taking some distance from the original systematic agenda."

**Artists' Biographies
Hassan Sharif**

Hassan Sharif (1951–2016, Dubai) made a vital contribution to conceptual art and experimental practice in the Middle East through 40 years of performances, installations, drawing, painting, and assemblage. In his early artistic maturation, Sharif rejected calligraphic abstraction, which was becoming the predominant art discourse in the region in the 1970s. Instead, he pursued a pointedly contemporary art vocabulary, drawing on the non-elitism and intermedia of Fluxus and the potential in British

Constructivism's systemic processes of making. In 1984, Sharif graduated from the Byam Shaw School of Art, London, and returned to the UAE shortly after. He set about staging interventions and the first exhibitions of contemporary art in Sharjah, as well as translating art historical texts and manifestos in Arabic, in order to provoke a local audience to engage with the contemporary art discourse. In addition to his own practice, he also encouraged and supported several generations of artists in the Emirates. He was a founding member of the Emirates Fine Arts Society (founded in 1980) and the Art Atelier in the Youth Theatre and Arts in Dubai. In 2007, he was one of the four artists to establish The Flying House, a Dubai institution for promoting contemporary Emirati artists. His works are held in the collections of the Sharjah Art Foundation; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate, London; Guggenheim New York and Abu Dhabi; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah and M+ Museum, Hong Kong, among others. In 2017, a major retrospective of his works, entitled *Hassan Sharif: I am the Single Work Artist*, curated by Hoor Al Qasimi was held at Sharjah Art Foundation.

Haleh Redjaian

Haleh Redjaian (born 1971, Frankfurt) lives and works in Berlin. She completed a Postgraduate degree in Fine Art from HISK, Antwerp. Her works on paper, textiles and site-specific wall installations are grounded in geometry, but she uses its rules to reshape and retrace the apparent order of angles and lines. Her compositions subtly belie their own errors and form what she calls a 'natural abstract language'. Redjaian believes that these works, nimble yet systematic, refer in part to the manner in which people create, adapt to and deviate from order in their lives. She will often base her drawings on a precise background, such as grid paper, and weave graphite into its rigid structures with rough shadings and free-radical lines. Conversely, Redjaian may overlay two pieces of grid paper, drawing directly onto their discordant lines, creating a paradoxical order in the result. A similar approach can be seen in the artist's textiles, for which she appropriates carpets made in Kerman and lightly stitches patterns onto them. She has participated in several group and solo exhibitions including *in sequence I and II* in Bregenz and Munich (2016), *Out of Office* at Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt (2017) and Stadtische Galerie, Bietigheim-Bissingen (2018), *in-between spaces* at Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde, Dubai (2015) and *Up on the toe, the air is thinner* at Arratia Beer, Berlin (2015), among others. She will present her second solo exhibition at the gallery from 19 March - 3 May 2018.