



10 Contemporary Art Galleries in Beirut You Should Visit

Beirut is an excellent choice for art lovers who wish to discover what's new in contemporary art from the Middle East. Thanks to its geographical position, the Lebanese capital acts as a gateway to the region, with galleries in Beirut exhibiting works by Lebanese, Syrian, Iranian and Arab artists. These ten must-visit contemporary art galleries provide a fascinating insight into modern art and culture in the Middle East.



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Beirut Art Center

The [Beirut Art Center](#) is a lively centre for the promotion of contemporary art, and without a doubt one of the leading cultural voices of Beirut and Lebanon. Located in a 1,500 square metre, two-floor building, the BAC has an exhibition space for local and international artists working with a range of artistic forms, but above all photography and

<http://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/lebanon/articles/10-contemporary-art-galleries-in-beirut>

video. There also is an auditorium room for screenings, concerts and performance shows. Visitors here can deepen their knowledge of art in the library or the *mediatheque*, which grants access to a unique archive of digital, art-related media. Educational workshops, conferences, lectures and guided tours are also offered on a regular basis.

[Beirut Art Center, Jisr El Wati, off Corniche an Nahr, Building 13, Street 97, Zone 66 Adlieh, Beirut, Lebanon, +961 1 397 018](#)



© [Beirut Art Center](#)



Beirut Exhibition Center

A 1,200 square metre building in Beirut's Waterfront District – covered with mirror aluminium panels which reflect the surrounding landscape – is home to the [Beirut Exhibition Center](#). Inaugurated in June 2010, the BEC was founded to provide art museum, galleries and artist collectives from across the country with a space to present their artworks to a wider public. Eager to promote the Middle Eastern artists whose work fills its halls, the BEC also collaborates with important international cultural institutions at home and abroad. In the past, the gallery has presented solo exhibitions, as well as a number of collective shows exploring the history of Eastern art, such as *Journey Through Our Heritage*, an insight into Lebanese modern art, *Art in Iraq Today* and *Arabicity*.

[Beirut Exhibition Center, Minet Al Hosn, Beirut, Lebanon](#), +961 1 962 000



© [Beirut Exhibition Center](#)



Art Factum Gallery

Located in what was once a steel factory in Beirut's industrial Quarantine District, [Art Factum Gallery](#) is a contemporary art and design gallery. At the heart of its mission, Art Factum strives to connect Beirut with the international art scene, bringing to the city artists from around the world and networking with professionals through participation in high-profile international art fairs. All art forms can call Art Factum home: from illustration to painting, from photography to video. When it comes to the gallery's interest in product design, Art Factum supports and fosters local talents, especially those who work with local materials. Represented designers include Marc Baroud and Karim Chaya, among others.

[Art Factum Gallery, Rehban Street, Alley 204, Building 13, Medawar District, Quarantine, Beirut, Lebanon, + 961 1 443 263](#)



[© Art Factum Gallery](#)

Art On 56th

The [Art On 56th](#) gallery is housed in a beautiful and historical building in Gemmayzeh, an up-and-coming neighbourhood popular with the hip crowds of East Beirut. Although the space is open to all art forms, the main focus of Art On 56th has been, so far, on contemporary painters. But this might change: the gallery only opened in November 2012, making it a young yet ambitious and enthusiastic addition to Beirut's art scene. Despite its young age, Art On 56th has already exhibited some outstanding work, such as Rana Raouda's vibrant paintings, and Naim Doumit's wooden sculptures. Art On 56th represents both local and international artists, and in so doing attempts to spark a dialogue between Beirut and the world.

[Art On 56th, 56th Youssef Hayeck Street, Gemmayzeh, Beirut, Lebanon, +961 1 570 331](#)



© [Art On 56th](#)



Janine Rubeiz Gallery

For a gallery that is Lebanese through and through, visitors should stop by [Janine Rubeiz Gallery](#). The exhibition space was opened in 1993 by Nadine Begdache; the name pays homage to Nadine's mother Janine, a woman who was actively involved in the promotion of Lebanese art in the 1970s. The gallery displays modern and contemporary Lebanese art by the masters as well as emerging talent, and actively celebrates the jewels of the past while fostering the development of new art. All mediums are welcome at Janine Rubeiz, from painting to sculpture, from photography to video, from installation to design. The gallery is also active in the promotion of Lebanese art abroad by participating in international art fairs throughout the year.

[Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Majdalani Building, 1 Avenue Charles de Gaulle, Raouche, Beirut, Lebanon, +961 1 868 290](#)



[© Janine Rubeiz Gallery](#)

Karen Chekerdjian Studio

Karen Chekerdjian is a talented industrial designer who studied design in Milan, and returned to Beirut in 2001 only to realise that all she had learnt had to be adjusted and rewired to different working conditions: the materials and the skilled manufacturers she had found in Italy were scarce in Lebanon. But this did not stop her, as she was prompted to design products made with easier-to-find ceramics, wood, glass and metal, and experiment with production techniques. The [Karen Chekerdjian Studio](#) in Beirut Port is where she showcases her works, which include a vast range of furniture items, tableware and jewellery. In a country which has only in recent years taken steps into the world of modern industrial design, Karen's studio is blazing trails. A must visit for design lovers.

[*Karen Chekerdjian Studio, Fayad Building, Derviche Haddad Street, Beirut Port, Beirut, Lebanon, +961 1 570 572*](#)



[© Karen Chekerdjian Studio](#)

Mark Hachem Gallery

After setting up galleries in Paris in 1996 and New York in 2007, collector [Mark Hachem](#) created his personal art trinity by adding an exhibition space in Beirut. Hachem had realised that the Lebanese capital is the perfect place to enter the Middle Eastern art market; and, to date, the gallery has displayed the work of artists such as Lebanese photographer Samer Mohdad and painter Mona Trad Dabaji, and Syrian artists Ahmad Moualla, Sabhan Adam and Yasser Safi. The exhibition programme is a true testament to Hachem's intention of positioning his space in Beirut as a prominent showcase of both renowned and emerging Eastern artists. And the sister galleries in Paris and New York can certainly lend a helping hand.

[*Mark Hachem Gallery, Capital Gardens, Salloum Street, Mine El Hosn, Beirut, Lebanon,*](#)
+ 961 1 999 313



[© Mark Hachem Gallery](#)

ARTLAB

Although 'art' is the main focus at ARTLAB, the 'lab' also carries an important meaning. For the public, [ARTLAB](#) is a place to nurture a passion for art, but for the artists the gallery is but the final step of a creative process that requires hard work, trial and error. ARTLAB boasts a 100 square metre exhibition space on the ground floor of a historical building that dates back to the 1950s; but, more importantly, it presents a permanent collection of artworks by over 20 artists, most of them Syrian. Ever since the civil war broke out in Syria, many of the country's artists crossed the border and found shelter in art centres in Lebanon, and Beirut in particular. Among them, ARTLAB is one of the best venues to keep up with the evolution of Syria's contemporary art.

[ARTLAB, Gouraud Street, Jemmayzeh, Beirut, Lebanon](#), +961 3 244 577



© [ARTLAB](#)

Ayyam Gallery

Collectors (and cousins) Khaled and Hisham Samawi started their adventure with commercial art in 2006, when they opened [Ayyam Gallery](#) in Damascus, Syria. With time, they used their expertise to branch out both in Beirut and Dubai. Ayyam Gallery Beirut aims to provide visitors with an overview of some of the best contemporary artists from the Middle East. Despite its status as an independent gallery, Ayyam sounds a lot like a museum in its profound commitment to education, so much so that a publishing house was founded in collaboration with the gallery, with the task of releasing monographs of the showcased artists. Art appreciation is also promoted through the Young Collectors Auction, an array of artworks sold at affordable prices, aimed at newcomers to the world of art collecting.

[Ayyam Gallery, Beirut Tower, Ground Floor, Zeitoune Street, Beirut, Lebanon](#), +961 1 374 450



© [Ayyam Gallery](#)



Sfeir-Semler Gallery

Presenting shows of video installations, minimalist sculptures and small-scale drawings and prints, Sfeir-Semler is a must-see in Beirut. Founder Andrée Sfeir-Semler, born in Beirut, actually opened her first [Sfeir-Semler Gallery](#) in 1985 in Hamburg, Germany; twenty years later, she decided to launch a branch in her hometown as well. The gallery is a meeting point for local and international artists, and features an exciting programme of solo exhibitions dotted with collective shows curated around a given theme. Past examples include *Out of Place*, an exhibition of works by emerging Egyptian artists, *Au Delà des Images*, and *HomeWorks*, a regular series of talks about contemporary art held in Beirut.

[Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Tannous Building, Quarantine, Beirut, Lebanon](#), + 961 1 566 550



© [Sfeir-Semler Gallery](#)