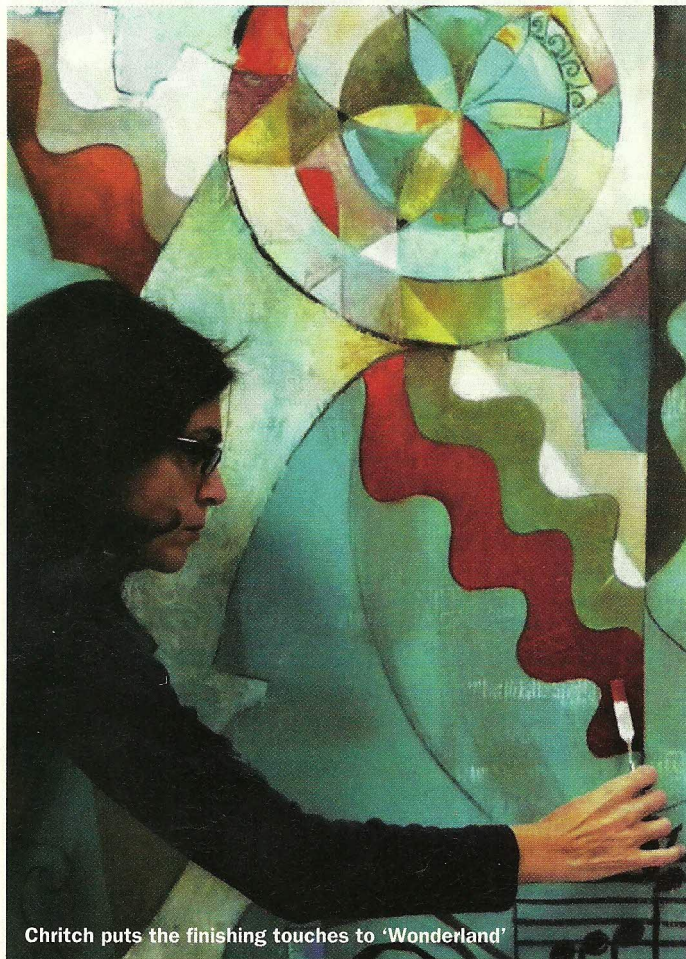
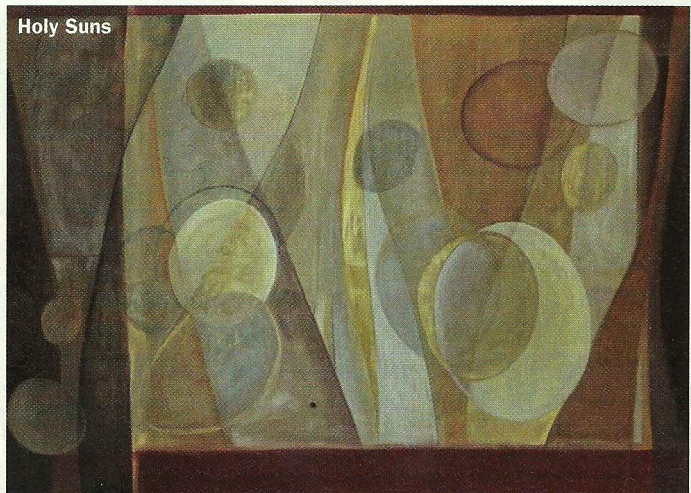


## Abou Dabi, je t'aime



Chritch puts the finishing touches to 'Wonderland'



Holy Suns

### Virginie Troit

Since she moved to the UAE five years ago, photographer Virginie has been fascinated by the speed of the urban development surrounding her. 'On my first day in the Emirates, I went on to the roof of a tower in Dubai Marina,' she says. 'I was surrounded by cranes and concrete, and from the beginning I was shocked by the immense growth. It's quite a unique thing to witness the birth of a city.' This idea of an emerging city has since become dominant in her work, nowhere more so than in 'DXB So Fast', a piece of abstract photography printed on to aluminium.

'I really wanted to communicate to the public that each of us has our own unique life to live in the Emirates, and each of us has our own emotions and sensations. When you see the pictures, you feel this sensation, of growth, of speed, questions of capitalism.' She's also keen to point out that, unlike many digital artists, her images come straight out of the camera. 'This is not a montage. I haven't used photo editing software. I

A new exhibition at the National Theatre brings together some of the UAE's most intriguing French artists. *David Clack* finds out a little more about them

From an outside perspective, the UAE can be a baffling, overwhelming place. But for the city's migrant artists, it's a goldmine, with cultural contrasts, urban development and widespread commercialism all ripe topics for creative expression. Bringing together six of the Emirates' most prominent

next week, we spoke to the curator, Karine de Labouchere, and some of the artists involved.

### Chritch

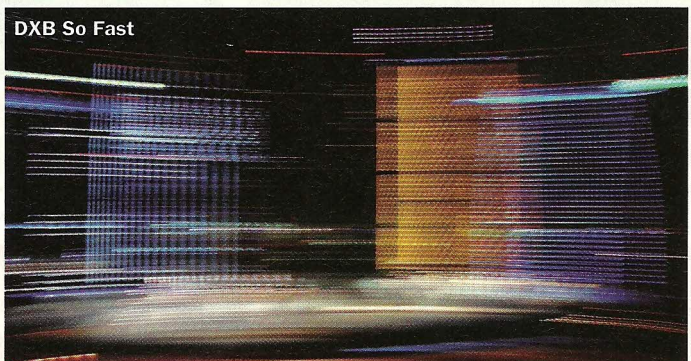
Having been in the UAE for more than eight years, Chritch has seen the city evolve from a building site-strewn sandpit to the bustling metropolis it is today. Curiously, her work has evolved at a similar pace. 'I've started to make collages with sand, flowers, things like that,' she tells us. 'The longer I've been here, the more natural materials have become part of my work. Also, my work used to be very smooth, but I've started to add more layers over time.'

'Wonderland', a large diptych set to be one of the show's centrepieces, is one of Chritch's latest works. 'It's a very abstract piece – just like Abu

Dhabi,' she explains. 'When we first hear about these exciting projects happening in the city, it feels abstract, but when you see them finished you realise you're not in a wonderland, that it's reality.'

### 'It's quite a unique thing to witness the birth of a city'

French artists, new show *Regard Sur Les Emirats* represents a collective reaction to the people, landscapes and lifestyle of our unique nation. Ahead of the exhibition's opening



DXB So Fast



Atmospheric Dubai

alter the colour slightly and crop, but otherwise, what the camera takes, the eyes see.'

### Benedicte Gimonet

With only 18 months of Abu Dhabi life under her belt, Benedicte is relatively new in town. Still, in this short time the painter's work has apparently seen many changes. 'Her colours and the forms have changed a lot, become more abstract,' says exhibition curator Karine de Labouchere. 'Her style is really different now to when she arrived.' Her piece 'Holy Suns' is one to look out for, with metallic-coloured curves bringing to mind the shifting Arabian desert landscapes.

### Karine Roche

Inspired mainly by experiences in Dubai, highlighting the contrast of traditional and modern ideals within the UAE seems to be at the core of Karine's work. 'Atmospheric Dubai' - part of a diptych - depicts a small mosque dwarfed by colossal skyscrapers, so lofty that they defy the edges of her canvas. 'I want to speak about the mixture of modernity and tradition,' Karine tells us. 'The painting shows that, despite the modern developments, the traditional aspects of the city are still here, still very strong.'

Karine's work, too, has seen many changes since her arrival in the city 12 months ago. 'The light here is so strong, so the colours tend to be less dense and my paintings have a lighter feel.'

*Regard Sur Les Emirats runs from May 15-25 at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development (corner of Muroor Road and Mohamed Bin Khalifa Street, close to the National Theatre) (02 446 6145). Throughout the exhibition, artists will be holding creative demonstrations. For more information, contact Karine de Labouchere, kdelabouchere@hotmail.com (050 441 0560)*



'Esthetiques Emiriennes' by Benoit Rondard

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Alliance Française Abu Dhabi  
French Alliance Abu Dhabi  
الرابطة الثقافية الفرنسية أبو ظبي



New language session starts 2<sup>nd</sup> of May.  
Registration from 17<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> of April.  
DELFI - DALF exams: session on 21<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of May.  
Registration from 10<sup>th</sup> of April to 12<sup>th</sup> of May.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> of May at 8pm: Europe Day concert-Franz Liszt Celebration  
At Paris Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi Auditorium  
Preceded by a pre-concert talk by Dr. Ronald Perwitz at 7pm  
Tickets 100 AED (adults), 20 AED (students) on sale on  
[www.timeouttickets.com](http://www.timeouttickets.com), Abu Dhabi classics box office (Emirates Palace) and at the French Alliance Abu Dhabi.

Mondays 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, from 4 pm to 6 pm  
Painting workshops with Karine Roche:  
Two workshops at 250 AED (for members) and 300 AED (for non-members). Children from 8 to 12 years.  
Registration at the French Alliance, limited places.

The French Alliance will present its cultural projects and its different language classes proposals on 10<sup>th</sup> of May at the Abu Dhabi University during the "Global Day".  
The French Alliance will also be present the 11<sup>th</sup> of May at the Sorbonne University for the "Astrolabe 2011" event: a career fair.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> of May at 9 pm : Trigo trio in concert  
for a gypsy jazz evening.  
Splash garden, aLoft hotel, Abu Dhabi, ADNEC  
Tickets 175 AED on sale on [www.timeouttickets.com](http://www.timeouttickets.com),  
[www.virginmegastore.me](http://www.virginmegastore.me) and at the French Alliance Abu Dhabi

Thursdays 12, 19 and 26<sup>th</sup> of May, from 4 pm to 5.30 pm  
Scrabble tournament for French Alliance and Sorbonne University students, with French level from A2 to B2.  
Participation 50 AED.  
Registration at the French Alliance before the 9<sup>th</sup> of May.

Saturdays 14 and 21<sup>st</sup> of May, from 2 pm to 4.30 pm  
Cinema workshops ; discover techniques of movie making.  
Average level of French required (A2) : From 12 to 16 years.  
125 AED on sale on [www.timeouttickets.com](http://www.timeouttickets.com) and  
at the French Alliance. Limited places.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> of May from 6pm to 8pm : For the International day of museums, free artistic workshops.  
Registration at the French Alliance before the 15<sup>th</sup> of May.  
Workshops at the French Alliance.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> of May at 11 am: Children movie club  
Moko enfant du monde : les Amériques (3 years old and more)  
Free animation; for members and students only.

To become a member visit us  
khalidiya - Choitram bldg Floor O  
or call us.  
02 666 62 32 or [events@allfr.ae](mailto:events@allfr.ae)  
[www.af-aboudabi.net](http://www.af-aboudabi.net)  
[facebook.com/Alliance.Francaise.Abu.Dhabi](https://facebook.com/Alliance.Francaise.Abu.Dhabi)  
[netvibes.com/alliancefrancaiseabudhabi](http://netvibes.com/alliancefrancaiseabudhabi)