

Palestine art on show

The first museum dedicated to contemporary Palestinian art in Europe is in Edinburgh. The new museum, in the New Town will occupy a roughly 1,100-square-foot space in an 1810 building on Dundas Street, formerly the Arusha Gallery.

It will be part of the [Palestine Museum US](#), founded by Palestinian American businessman Faisal Saleh. Located in Woodbridge, Connecticut, the museum opened its doors in 2018, becoming the first in the Americas devoted to Palestinian art.

Saleh was born in El-Bireh (Ramallah), to a refugee family from the pre-1948 Palestinian village of Salameh (Jaffa). Arriving in the United States in 1969 at age 17, he earned a BA in Economics and an MBA in Business Management and founded several companies.

Saleh said: “We chose Scotland as the first European location for our museum expansion because of the strong support provided by the Palestine solidarity movement. Many Scottish volunteers have stepped forward to welcome our new presence and offer to help manage and promote our programming. We are grateful for this support and look forward to collaborating with Scottish artists and cultural organisations.

“Palestinian artists have long faced challenges in exhibiting

their works in the Western world. We are determined to tell the Palestinian story to a global audience. If that means creating our own museums to do so, then so be it”.

Saleh hopes the museum will challenge dominant narratives and showcase the rich cultural heritage of Palestine. He also believes the museum is “crucial in the face of Western media’s persistent negative coverage of Palestine and the alarming cancellations of Palestinian events”.

The first show will feature Palestinian art of the past decade in a variety of media by artists from different generations. This includes 81-year-old Nabil Anani, who is regarded as a key founder of the contemporary Palestinian art movement, Sana Farah Bishara, a Nazareth-born sculptor based in Haifa, and Samia Halaby, who won a special mention at last year’s Venice Biennale. Recent works by Gaza-based artists, among them Mohammed Alhaj and Maisara Baroud will also be shown.

Saleh said: “It is heart warming to experience the Scottish hospitality. Edinburgh, with its rich cultural heritage and international art scene, is the perfect location for our expansion. The city’s August festivals provides a unique opportunity to showcase Palestinian arts and culture to a global audience”.

“We believe that our presence in Edinburgh will not only promote Palestinian arts and culture but also contribute to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Palestinian narrative. We look forward to working with our Scottish partners and friends to make this vision a reality.”

Fundraising event on 1 May at 7pm at Augustine United Church,
41 George IV Bridge

Palestine Museum Scotland opens on 17 May at 13a Dundas Street.

