



PRESS RELEASE

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Saint-Gobain goes on display at the Louvre Abu Dhabi by creating a sophisticated glass artwork with an Emirati artist

Saint-Gobain is taking part in “Co-Lab,”* a temporary exhibition that recently opened at the Louvre Abu Dhabi. The exhibition displays works by four artists living in the United Arab Emirates, produced in collaboration with four renowned French manufacturers, including Saint-Gobain’s Verrerie de Saint-Just glassworks. The art-glass plant worked with the Emirati artist Zeinab Alhashemi to create together a unique artwork entitled *Méta-Morphic*.

The “Co-Lab: contemporary art and savoir-faire” project is being presented to coincide with the first temporary exhibition at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which pairs the creativity of Emirati artists with French savoir-faire. The project allowed the Emirati artist Zeinab Alhashemi to work with the Saint-Just art-glass plant, and to discover the material and glasswork. The collaboration led to the creation of *Méta-Morphic*, an abstract representation of the duality of humans and nature that symbolically simulates the speed at which our planet is changing.

“Working with the glassmakers at Saint-Just was an experimental discovery, a new perspective on what can be created with glass, from the mix of pigments to reflective glass with a mirror effect and prism effects,” says Alhashemi. “A lot of major French artists have worked with Saint-Just. It’s a fantastic accomplishment for me to be the first artist from the Emirates to work with institution.”

Located near the French city of Saint-Etienne, the Saint-Just glassworks has been producing mouth-blown sheets of colored glass since 1865, which have been used by the greatest glassmakers and artists - including Marc Chagall, Fernand Léger, Henri Matisse and Georges Rouault - for stained-glass works. Today the Saint-Just glass plant works internationally with artists such as Alessandro de Santillana, who use glass in original and novel ways to create astonishing artworks. The glassworks also partners with world-renowned architects and designers such as Philippe Starck and Peter Marino, who reinvent this unique material through modern creations, such as colored mirror walls, clear and glowing partitions. The French government has awarded the site the *Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant* label, a mark of excellence in traditional and industrial expertise.

* The exhibition forms part of the Emirati-French Cultural Program – In dialogue with the Louvre Abu Dhabi -, organized by the Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority and, in France, by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for Culture and Communication, and Institut français.

Zeinab Alhashemi was born in Dubai and works in the city as a conceptual artist and designer specialized in site-specific installations, spatial art and public sculpture. She often experiments with new materials and techniques to create works that interpret the symbols and traditions of Emirati culture in new ways. Alhashemi describes her artistic process as a journey that connects a glorious past with a fantastic present.

Méta-Morphic in the artist's own words: *Méta-Morphic* is an abstract representation of the duality of humans and nature that symbolically simulates the speed at which our planet is changing. Geography has been evolving constantly since the dawn of time due to environmental shifts and human interference. *Méta-Morphic* decontextualizes these geographic forms to create abstract forms that depict the accelerating pace of change in nature visually. The metal mesh used in construction keeps the elements of nature in a confined shape. *Méta-Morphic* serves a reminder that during their time on earth, humans have an influence on how our landscapes change; the maps that we have today may not exist in the future."

ABOUT SAINT-GOBAIN

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