

# ARNOLFINI

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## PRESS RELEASE

**Mounira Al Solh: *A land as big as her skin***

Arnolfini, Bristol

28 February – 24 May 2026



Arnolfini presents *A land as big as her skin* by Lebanese artist Mounira Al Solh, featuring the UK debut of *A Dance with her Myth* (2024), Al Solh's Venice Biennale pavilion installation — a radical feminist retelling of the myth of Europa that asks who gets to shape the story of Europe.

At a time when questions of borders, migration and belonging continue to dominate political debate, Al Solh revisits the Phoenician tale of a princess abducted and carried across the sea, reframing it through contemporary histories of displacement and female agency.

Born in Beirut and now living between Lebanon and the Netherlands, Al Solh grew up during the Lebanese civil war. Her work moves between personal memory and political history, weaving together ancient mythology and lived experience. Working across installation, painting, textiles and film, she explores migration, trauma, inequality and gender with irrepressible humour and visual intensity.

At the heart of the exhibition is a life-size skeletal boat, accompanied by film, paintings, drawings and masks. In *A Dance with her Myth*, Al Solh subverts the male-authored myth of Europa to reclaim female agency and recast displacement not as victimhood, but as endurance and transformation.

The installation is presented alongside new works including *Elissa's Room* and *Europa's Bedroom* (2025), which further explore the intertwined fates of Princess Europa and Queen Elissa, founder of Carthage. Together, these works treat folklore as a living, regenerative force — a means of healing collective trauma and illuminating the present.

Describing herself as a “collector of stories”, Al Solh draws on oral histories, embroidery, music and dance — forms that endure even in times of conflict. As she reflects:

*“I remembered the power of embroidery, and the power of myths and ancient history in Lebanon, used as a regenerative tool, to heal our traumas and reconnect us with our past, even though it is perhaps a partially reconstructed past, like much of our history.”*

**Mounira Al Solh**



*A land as big as her skin* is organised in collaboration with Bonnefanten (Maastricht, The Netherlands), in association with Sharjah Art Foundation, and made possible by Mondriaan Fund and Ammodo Art.

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- Ends -

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

### For press enquiries and image requests, contact:

Alexia Moldovan, Marketing Officer [alexia.moldovan@arnolfini.org.uk](mailto:alexia.moldovan@arnolfini.org.uk)

Jane Faram, Communications Manager (freelance) [jane.faram@arnolfini.org.uk](mailto:jane.faram@arnolfini.org.uk)

[www.arnolfini.org.uk](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk) | Instagram / Facebook / LinkedIn: @arnolfiniarts

### Image credits:

Mounira Al Solh, *Silicone, Poppies, and a Couple of Invisible Deffs*, 2022, oil and collage on canvas, 230 x 206 cm. Collection Bonnefanten, acquired with the support of the VriendenLoterij. Photograph courtesy Gert Jan van Rooij.

Exhibition view: Mounira Al Solh: *A land as big as her skin*, installation *A Dance with her Myth*, Bonnefanten, Maastricht, Netherlands, 2025. Photograph courtesy Gert Jan van Rooij.

### About Mounira Al Solh

Mounira Al Solh (b. 1978, Beirut) lives and works between Beirut and Amsterdam. Working across installation, painting, film, textiles and performance, she weaves together personal testimony and mythology to explore migration, memory and resistance. Drawing on oral histories and collaborative practices, her work reclaims stories shaped by conflict and displacement with humour, tenderness and political urgency.

Al Solh represented Lebanon at the Venice Biennale (2024) and has exhibited internationally at institutions including Bonnefanten, Maastricht; Serralves Museum, Porto; BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; and The Art Institute of Chicago. She participated in Documenta 14 and multiple international biennials. Al Solh is represented by Sfeir-Semler Gallery.

### About Arnolfini

Founded in 1961, Arnolfini is Bristol's international centre for contemporary arts, presenting an ambitious programme of visual art, performance, dance, film and music. A pioneering public space for arts and learning, Arnolfini is committed to offering innovative, inclusive and engaging experiences for all.

**In 2026, Arnolfini marks 50 years at Bush House, its home on Bristol's harbourside** — a prominent 19th-century former warehouse at the heart of the city's cultural life.

Arnolfini is an independent charity (CIO), part of UWE Bristol's City Campus, and is supported by Arts Council England and the Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust.

[www.arnolfini.org.uk](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk)



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