

Keep an eye on Houston's visual arts scene

By Molly Glentzer | September 13, 2017 | Updated: October 10, 2017 8:40pm

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Photo: Courtesy Of Oscar De La Renta, LLC

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"The Glamour and Romance of Oscar de la Renta," a presentation of nearly 70 extraordinary creations by the late fashion designer Oscar de la Renta, will be on view at Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Oct. 8-Jan. ... [more](#)



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The Oscars, please

The couture fashion crowd (and plenty of others who don't usually spend \$3,000 on day dresses), are excited about "The Glamour and Romance of Oscar de la Renta," on view Oct. 8-Jan. 28 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

The museum has yet to establish a costume institute, despite the urging of Houston Chronicle Best-Dressed Hall of Fame icons who've wanted to see that happen for years. With the huge popularity of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's annual fashion extravaganzas, however, and an MFAH director who launched his career there, hems may be rustling. The museum has shown signs of acquiescing in recent years. (Remember the glorious 19th-century gowns of 2015's Habsburg Dynasty blowout?)

The de la Renta show, presenting nearly 70 extraordinary creations by a legendary designer whose love of the tropics and superb craftsmanship have long made him a local favorite, is the museum's first fully fashion-themed show in recent memory.

Open arms

Everyone will be talking about art by Middle Eastern talent, too.

The Beirut-born, Palestinian contemporary master Mona Hatoum, who was a resident at Rice University's Moody Center for the Arts last spring, steps into a broader spotlight Oct. 13-Feb. 25 with "Terra Infirma," a major survey that will span all of the Menil Collection's temporary show galleries. (Permanent collection rooms will remain intact.)

This is as big as it sounds, for multiple reasons: Hatoum hasn't had a major solo exhibition in the U.S. in more than 20 years. "Terra Infirma" will explore her signature themes of placelessness and the fragility of home in a turbulent world. Among the 50 or so sculptures, installations and works on paper, don't miss "Homebound," an assemblage of ordinary household objects and furniture threaded together by a crackling wire of live electricity, and "La grande broyeuse (Mouli-Julienne x 17)," a steel sculpture that imagines a monstrously sized "vegetable slicer" as a menacing creature.

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Keep an eye on Houston's visual arts scene

With the terrific summer show "Rebel, Jester, Mystic, Poet: Contemporary Persians" up through Sept. 24, the MFAH will celebrate the 10th anniversary of its Art of the Islamic Worlds initiative into the new season. The doors open first on "Bestowing Beauty: Masterpieces From Persian Lands," a show drawn from one of the most significant private collections of Islamic art in the world that will feature 150 works ranging from textiles and manuscripts to paintings and jeweled objects. Plan to catch it Nov. 19-Feb. 11.

Asia Society Texas Center contributes to the conversation Sept. 21-Feb. 25 with "Wondrous Worlds: Art & Islam Through Time & Place," a show of more than 100 works showcasing the history and diversity of Islamic art.

Local heroes

We're always happy to see Houston talents celebrated beyond the walls of commercial galleries.

Trenton Doyle Hancock has had plenty of that action lately, but you can still expect surprises with "Texas: 1997-2017," a survey organized by the Art League Houston, honoring Hancock as its 2017 Texas Artist of the Year. The league's Montrose building suffered roof damage during Hurricane Harvey that will keep it closed at least through October, but visual arts director Jennie Ash is negotiating a new venue TBD, tentatively Sept. 22-Nov. 11.

The Houston Museum of African American Culture will shine a light on an artist who deserves more attention than he's received in a while. Don't miss his survey, "The Telling and The Told: The Art of David McGee," Oct. 21-Dec. 16. McGee also has a solo show right now at Texas Gallery: "Urban Dread and The Complications of Water" is on view through Oct. 21.

Homeward bound

"HOME - So Different, So Appealing," a major collaboration between the MFAH and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, will feature U.S. Latino and Latin American artists from the late 1950s to the

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