

**MERI HELMI SÄRKKÄ**  
**(Formerly known as Mariam Haji)**  
**www.merihelmisarkka.com**

**UPCOMING**

- 2024 Solo at Grand Culture House, Porvoo
- 2024 Solo at Suomenlinna Cathedral (UNESCO world heritage site), Helsinki, Finland
- 2024 Group Exhibition, Luckan, Helsinki
- 2025. Residency Fish Factory, Iceland

**Ongoing:**

- 2024 50<sup>th</sup> Bahrain Annual Fine Art Exhibition (January – April), National Museum of Bahrain, Bahrain

**Founded:**

- 2021 – now 'Here I am' Collective
- 2019 - 2020 'Roihu studios' Arts, Performance and Dance studio in Helsinki, Finland

**Education:**

- 2006 - 2008 BA Fine Art (Drawing), RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
- 2004 – 2005 Visual Arts Diploma, TAFE, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
- 2002 – 2003 Introductory Course in Art and Design, Dundee College, Dundee, Scotland

**Solo Exhibitions:**

- 2022 Solo show, Luckan – Center for Finnish-Swedish Culture, Helsinki, Finland
- 2022 'UNTIL' Helsinki Cathedral, Helsinki, Finland
- 2019 'Taking a chance on Love', Le Pave D'orsay, Paris, France
- 2016 'Hummus Reflections', Third Space Gallery, Helsinki, Finland
- 2012 'Premonition', Bin Mattar House Museum, Muharraq, Bahrain
- 2009 'Army of Mariam', Spring of Culture Festival, El Bareh Gallery, Bahrain
- 2008 'The Unlovely', First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

**Selected Group Exhibitions:**

- 2022 'Baytuna' National Museum of Finland, Publics, Gloria, Museum of Central Finland (Traveling Pop up)
- 2022 'As we gaze upon her' Banat collective, Warehouse421, Abu Dhabi
- 2021 'To Err is Human', Mänttä XXV Art Festival, Finland
- 2020 'Becoming a Target', Myymälä2 Gallery, Helsinki, Finland
- 2020 'Becoming a Target', Casa della Musica di Cervignano del Friuli, Italy
- 2019 'Square' STOA cultural center, Helsinki, Finland
- 2018 'Rasi637' Kouta Gallery - Kouvola Art Museum Poikilo, Kouvola, Finland
- 2018 'KHAHLIL GIBRAN: A Guide for Our Times', Sotheby's, London, UK
- 2018 'Liberty' Gallery Kruetz, Porvoo, Finland
- 2017 'Femme' Exhibition on Bahraini female artists, UNESCO, Paris
- 2016 'RCA secret', Royal College Of Art, London, UK
- 2015 'Göteborg poetry festival', Sweden
- 2015 'Women On Walls – WOW Unchained' American University Cairo, Cairo, Egypt
- 2015 'Postlude Vol.1: The Post Oriental Odyssey, The Mine Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2015 '41<sup>st</sup> Annual Fine Art Exhibition Bahrain', Bahrain National Theater, Bahrain
- 2014 'She Views Her Self', Gallery 6 Mandeln, Paris, France
- 2014 'Women On Walls' Ras Al Ain Gallery, Amman, Jordan
- 2012 'Bahrain 38th Annual Fine Art Exhibition', Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain 2012
- 2011 'Spaces and the in-between', Riwaq gallery, Bahrain 2010
- 2010 'Dekakeen' Manama Souq, Spring of Culture Festival, Bahrain
- 2010 'The View from Here – 19 Perspectives on feminism', Next Wave Festival, Melbourne, Australia
- 2010 'As the Land Expands', Riwaq Gallery, Bahrain
- 2009 'Scattered in a Monument' Elham Arts Festival, Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain
- 2008 'Humming a New Dysphonia' Blind Side Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

**Awards:**

- 2012 First Prize in the 38th Bahrain Annual Fine Art Award, Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain
- 2008 Prize Finalist of '6 Degrees' for 'Human Landscape: The Cult of Personality' Frankston Art Centre, Melbourne, Australia

**International Art Biennials:**

- 2013 'A world of your own' Kingdom of Bahrain Pavilion, Venice Biennale, Curator Melissa Enders Bhatia, Venice, Italy
- 2009 'Across the Gulf' Curator Dr. Irene Barberis, Brisbane Arc Biennial, Australia

**Grants & Scholarships:**

- 2013 Research, production and travel grant for the Bahrain Pavilion, Venice Biennale, Ministry Of Culture, Bahrain.
- 2012 Shaikh Ebrahim Center for Culture and Research grant for the exhibition 'Premonition' at the Bin Mattar House Museum, Bahrain
- 2008 –
- 2009 Scholarship for research, Metasenta Projects, Melbourne, Australia

**Publications:**

- 2023 "As we gaze upon her" Banat collective in collaboration with Warehouse42, Abu Dhabi  
2015 "33 Artists...33 Islands a Kingdom of Art" written by French author and art critic Mr. Renaud Siegmann  
2013 "A world of your own" Pavilion of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Venice biennale. Issued by the Ministry of Culture, Kingdom of Bahrain.  
2010 "the view from here 19 perspectives on Feminism" Victoria Bennet and Claire Rae  
2009 "Across the Gulf" Written and produced by Irene Barberis and Keith Winter

**Collections:**

- 2019 "Davanti al Trono" Private collection of AG Behbehani, Kuwait  
2015 "Voice of Rain" Permanent collection of the Ministry of Culture, Beijing, China  
2013 "Victory" Personal collection of her Excellency Shaikha Mai Al Khalifa, Minister of Culture, The Kingdom of Bahrain and a permanent display at the National Theater of Bahrain.  
2012 "Freedom from the Muse" Permanent Collection at the National Museum of Bahrain

**Presentations / Artist Talks:**

- 2023 Culture Current, Artist talk, Yö Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
2023 'Woke or Broke' GAP art summit, Luckan Helsinki  
2023 'The Evolution of Identity in an artists practice' Taidekoulu Maa, Suomenlinna, Finland  
2022 Children's literature mediation workshop in the Arabic Language, National Museum of Finland, Helsinki, Finland  
2022 Children's literature mediation workshop in the Arabic Language, Oodi Library, Helsinki, Finland  
2022 Christian Art History in Europe and it's influence on the UNTIL Exhibit - Art tour, Helsinki Cathedral, Helsinki, Finland  
2021 Podcast interview, Intercult, Helsinki, FI  
2019 "Nationalism" Migration Memory Encounters, Museum of Movement, Malmo, Sweden  
2015 "Artist Encounters – What it means to be a Gulf Artist" Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar  
2014 "The Business of Art in the Arabian Gulf" Third Space Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
2014 "What is Contemporary Art in the Arabian Gulf?" Corner College, Zurich, Switzerland  
2010 "What is feminism in western art and how do Middle Eastern feminists incorporate Western ideas in to their practice", Royal University for Women, Bahrain.  
2010 "Introduction to current Middle Eastern contemporary practices", Macgregor State High School, Brisbane, Australia.  
2009 'Differences between Western art history & Middle Eastern art history and its current effects on contemporary art in the Middle East', Riwaq Gallery, Bahrain  
2009 'Across the Gulf' Brisbane Arc Biennale, Pecha Kucha, Powerhouse, Brisbane, Australia  
2009 'Army of Mariam' Tashkeel, Dubai, UAE

**Teacher / Instructor:**

- 2021 -  
2023 Freelance drawing teacher, HIV Point, Helsinki, Finland  
2020 'Colour theory', Africa Care, Helsinki, Finland  
2015 'Mentorship program – Artist Encounters', Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar  
2015 'Mathaf Education: Idea development' Qatar Academy, Doha, Qatar  
2015 'Life Drawing', Redbull Creative Space, Amwaj, Bahrain  
2014 'Contemporary Drawing', Anamil Gallery, Bahrain  
2012 'Drawing for adults', Ministry of Culture, Bahrain  
2012 'Drawing for children', Ministry of Culture, Bahrain  
2010 Teacher Intensive Drawing Workshop, Riwaq Gallery, Bahrain  
2010 Studio Assistant and Ceramic Painting Instructor, Studio Ceramic, Bahrain

**Membership with Artist Associations:**

- Porvoo Visual Artists Association  
HIAA Helsinki International Artist Association, Finland  
SKJL Suomen Kuvataidejärjestöjen Liito, Finland  
Catalysti Transcultural Artist Association of Finland  
GAP Global Art Point Finland  
BAS Bahrain Art society  
BCAS Bahrain Contemporary Art society