

JUNETEENTH-TIRGAN

Weekend at Kavi Gupta



Photo Credit: Daniel Nguyen

June 20, 2026

Reception June 20, 2026, 4 - 7 pm

Kavi Gupta, Crust Fund Pizza, and Zaryab Art Labs are thrilled to announce a unique, immersive cultural and culinary event taking place on Saturday, June 20th, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The event will be hosted at the Kavi Gupta Gallery, located at 835 W. Washington Blvd. in Chicago's historic West Loop.

This special collaboration will feature specialty pizzas prepared by John Carruthers of Crust Fund Pizza, an initiative that has been proudly "slinging alley pizzas" since 2020 to raise money for the people and organizations who make Chicago a better place to live.

Complementing the pizza, guests will enjoy Shiraz Wine and Pomegranate Sangria as well as appetizers crafted by Narimon Safavi, an Iranian-American entrepreneur and the visionary founder of Zaryab Art Labs. Safavi's culinary offerings will also offer a timely celebration of Tirgan, an ancient Persian mid-summer festival honoring the longest day of the year, which falls on the same weekend, June 21st.

Safavi's involvement reflects Zaryab Art Labs' mission to incubate cultural entrepreneurship and foster positive social impact.

Beyond the culinary delights, attendees will receive a highly exclusive, personal VIP tour of Kavi Gupta's private art collection and guests will also have access to the beautiful rooftop sculpture patio garden.

Guests will also be invited to explore several powerful exhibitions currently on display at the gallery: *MENASA+: Thresholds of Representation*, Haya Zaidi: *Up Against, Continuing Resistance: A Century of Black Liberation (1925-2025)*, and Gerald Williams: *Screaming at the Sky*. With the highly anticipated opening of Gerald Williams' show the day prior on Friday, June 19th, this event will serve as a perfect opportunity to be among the very first to see this new exhibition.

Gerald Williams

Screaming at the Sky



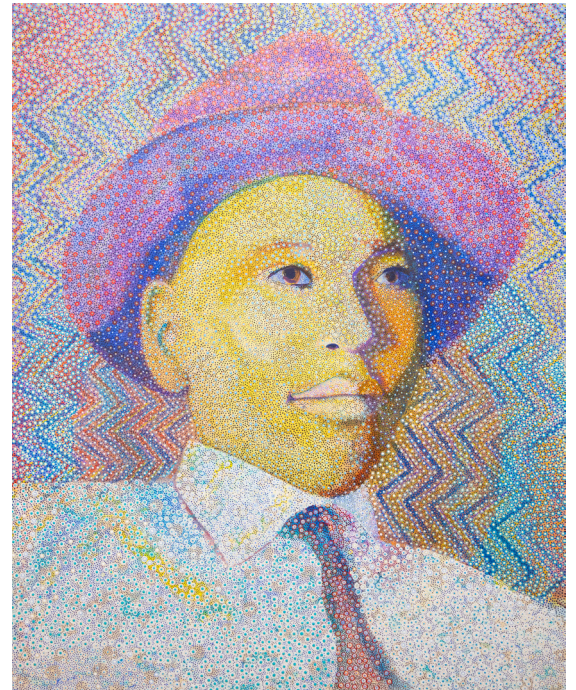
Gerald Williams b. 1941; *Sun Setting Over the Horizon (Screaming at the Sky)*, 2026; Acrylic on canvas; 30 x 30 in.; (76.2 x 76.2 cm)

June 19 – August 15, 2026

Opening Reception June 19, 2026, 5 – 7 pm

Kavi Gupta proudly presents *Screaming at the Sky* a landmark solo exhibition by Gerald Williams, co-founder of AfriCOBRA and a pivotal figure in the history of Black American art. The exhibition presents a new body of paintings that expands Williams' lifelong exploration of what he describes as "mimesis at midpoint." Neither wholly representational nor fully abstract, these works unfold within a liminal space between what can be seen and described objectively and what must be understood through intuition, memory, and feeling.

Presented during a historic moment for Chicago's cultural landscape, *Screaming at the Sky* affirms Williams' enduring belief in art's capacity to illuminate both personal and collective histories. The exhibition stands as a testament to a practice that continues to evolve while remaining rooted in the foundational principles that have guided the artist's work for generations: visibility, dignity, imagination, and freedom.



Gerald Williams b. 1941; *Emmett Till*, 2026; Acrylic on canvas; 60 x 48 in.; (152.4 x 121.92 cm)

MENASA+

Thresholds of Representation



*Alemeh Bagherian b.1984; I Will Never Reach You, 2021; Oil on canvas
47 1/2 x 39 1/2 in. (120.65 x 100.33 cm)*

February 14 - June 20, 2026

Opening Reception February 14, 2026, 5 - 7 pm

This presentation extends the gallery's commitment to amplifying global voices that shape the contemporary moment. It brings together artists from across the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Asian diaspora—artists whose lived experiences of migration, hybridity, gender, and belonging redefine what global contemporary art can be. This curatorial framework positions MENASA+ and Asian diasporic dialogues not as categories, but as interconnected conditions of making, translation, survival, inheritance, reinvention, and resistance. It reflects a belief that identity in art is not fixed but continuously negotiated across borders, languages, and histories of gendered power.

At a time when geopolitics continues to compress complex identities into binaries of “us” and “them,” the art world has mirrored similar patterns of exclusion and invisibility. This presentation resists that logic. It centers practitioners—particularly female and femme-identifying artists from MENASA+ and Asian regions—whose voices have emerged from unforgiving cultural and political contexts, yet continue to embody resilience, autonomy, and creative power.

This exhibition was made possible with curatorial assistance from Narimon Safavi, an Iranian-American entrepreneur and cultural commentator; and Rosa Matinfar, curator and writer whose work focuses on contemporary art from the MENASA region.

Narimon Safavi is a social entrepreneur and a media personality/arts commentator with appearances at WBEZ-NPR CHICAGO, BBC, PBS, El Diario Vasco and Telecinco. He's the founder of Zaryab Art Labs, an innovation artcenter focused on the intersection of art and technology to be located at a historic building in downtown Chicago and to open in Feb 2027.

Nari attended Illinois State University studying Chemistry and Philosophy with a keen interest in Philosophy of sciences. His current area of exploration is the epistemology of creativity and innovation. His community engagements have included board memberships at Siskel Film Center (Art Institute of Chicago), Harris School of Public Policy at University of Chicago, Latino Film Festival of Chicago and a stint as a panelist at National Endowment for the Arts of USA for the approval of grants.

Narimon speaks English and Persian languages fluently and is conversant in Spanish and Azari Turkish.

Rosa Matinfar is an art curator, advisor, and critic whose practice bridges scholarly research, institutional engagement, and cultural strategy. She holds a Master's degree in Art Studies from the University of Tehran, where her thesis examined the role of museums in legitimizing political ideology, and brings an interdisciplinary methodology shaped by earlier training in Molecular Biology. Matinfar has held curatorial and advisory roles across museums, galleries, and private collections, including the Carpet Museum of Iran, where in 2025 she curated an exhibition integrating digital art with traditional carpet motifs, as well as ongoing consultancy work with the Anthropology Museum of Nowshahr and the National Carpet Museum of Iran. Her gallery experience includes curatorial and advisory positions at Ragadid Gallery, Nian Art Gallery, and Idea Gallery, where she has developed exhibitions, conducted art-historical and market research, and advised collectors on acquisition and collection-building. She has curated and co-curated international exhibition projects, and is currently developing Chel-Negar: Unity in Multiplicity for the National Museum of Iranian Art.

Alongside her curatorial practice, Matinfar is an active art critic and researcher, publishing widely on contemporary and Middle Eastern art and contributing to institutional discourse through writing, research, and jury service.

Kavi Gupta amplifies voices of diverse and underrepresented artists to expand the canon of art history. Through innovative and ambitious exhibitions, multimedia programming, and rigorous publications, we foster an evolving conversation among international communities about art and ideas.

Works by Michael Joo, Alemeh Bagherian, Haya Zaidi Sara Rahanjam, Shahpari Rahmani, Karim Abu Shakra, Gordon Cheung, Manish Nai and the Rewind Collective



Haya Zaidi b. 1993; *The Devotees*, 2025; Acrylics, textiles and teawash on canvas; 34 x 45 in. (86.4 x 114.3 cm)