

BEHIND THE LINES

CONTEMPORARY SYRIAN ART

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A partnership between the Penticton Art Gallery & the Cyrrus Gallery Damascus

Curated by: Paul Crawford and Humam Alsalm

Against the backdrop of a conflict that has gripped the entire world, *Behind the Lines: Contemporary Syrian Art* is a travelling exhibition featuring more than 100 paintings, photographs, videos, and sculptures created by 20 contemporary Syrian artists. This exhibition had its genesis online when Paul Crawford, the Director/Curator of the Penticton Art Gallery, reached out to Humam Alsalm, a young Syrian architect and founding member of SYRIA-ART and co-founder of the Cyrrus Gallery based in Damascus, Syria.

This powerful exhibition provides a unique window into the lives and minds of those affected by the devastating civil war through their art. When this exhibition was first being planned, all but five of the artists were still living in Syria, residing in Damascus, Aleppo, and Homs: communities made familiar to so many here in North America through the evening news.

The artworks on display all reference the devastating situation in Syria or are informed by it. The *Cultural Beheading* series by Humam Alsalm and Rami Bakhos mourns and rages against both literal and metaphorical destruction. The body parts depicted in Omran Younis's paintings are a graphic reminder of the horrors of war. The figures in Lina Malki's *Displaced* series have a palpable sorrow. Fadi al-Hamwi's large paintings of x-rayed cow hybrids point to the brutality of war and expose the dark side of humanity. Khaled Dawwa's clay sculptures that appear to be vandalized or corroded by time are informed by his own experience, having been injured in a 2013 bombing, then arrested, imprisoned, and tortured before going into exile. Khaled Youssef's photographs of bubbles appear childlike, yet tragic in their fragility.

This exhibition is not for the faint of heart, yet it affirms the incredible capacity of the human spirit to not only survive the most unimaginable circumstances but thrive. For those still living in Syria there are few opportunities to exhibit; as a result, they have nothing left to lose and are making art just for the sake of art. Individually and collectively their powerful work stands as a testament to their existence and I hope will inspire similar voices not only in Syria but also here in Canada for generations to come. This exhibition is meant to build a greater understanding of the Syrian people, their art, rich culture, history, and the turmoil their country is going through. This exhibition remains as relevant now as when it first opened at the Penticton Art Gallery in 2016, as the tragedy and horror of war shows no signs of ending.

In an effort to further help these artists, these artworks are available for sale, provided they are able to continue to travel as part of the exhibition tour, currently scheduled into 2020.

If you are interested in a particular artist or their work, please contact:

Paul Crawford: curator@pentictonartgallery.com

Humam Alsalm: syria-art@outlook.com

Finally I would like to thank all those who have come out to see this exhibition and I ask that you please take a moment to reach out and connect with the artists whose work moves you, using their contact info provided here in this catalogue. In doing so you let them know that someone on the other side of the world is paying attention and as a result you are now invested in their situation, having connected with someone whose life is impacted on a daily basis by this senseless tragedy. It's a small investment of your time, but one I promise will enrich your life in so many ways, as it has mine.

- Paul Crawford, Director/Curator, Penticton Art Gallery

خلف خطوط النار: الفن السوري المعاصر

“ خلف خطوط النار: الفن السوري المعاصر ” هو معرض فني متجول يعرض ما يقرب من مئة لوحة فنية وصور وافلام ومنحوتات قدمها عشرين فنان سوري معاصر. ويفتح هذا المعرض الضخم نافذة فريدة من نوعها على حياة وعقول هؤلاء الذين اثرت بهم الحرب المدمرة وذلك من خلال فنهم.

وتعكس او تشير الاعمال الفنية في هذا المعرض الى الوضع المدمر في سوريا. وهذا المعرض ليس لضعاف القلوب بل يعكس ويشدد على القدرة الفائقة التي تتمتع بها الروح البشرية ليس فقط في البقاء في ظل اوضاع لا يمكن تصورها بل في النجاح كذلك. اما هؤلاء الذين مازالوا يعيشون في سوريا فليس لديهم فرص كافية لعرض عملهم الفني كما وان ليس لديهم ما يخسروه حيث اصبح هدفهم عرض الفن من اجل الفن فقط. فعملهم الفني الفائق يقف كعهد لوجودهم ومن المؤمل ان يلهم اصوات متشابهة ليس فقط في سوريا ولكن هنا في كندا كذلك ولاجيال قادمة. ويرمي المعرض لبناء فهم واسع للشعب السوري وفنهم وثقافتهم الغنية وتاريخهم وكذلك للفوضى التي يمر بها بلدهم. وبما ان المعرض بدأ في قاعة المعرض الفني لمدينة بنتكتن في عام 2016 فانه متصل بالاحداث وللأسف ليس هناك علامات تشير الى قرب نهاية مأساة ورعب الحرب.

وفي محاولة لمساعدة هؤلاء الفنانين، فقد وضعت اعمالهم الفنية للبيع على ان يستمروا في السفر والتنقل كجزء من متطلبات المعرض وماتبقى من الجولة. وفي الوقت الحاضر المعرض مفتوح حتى عام 2020 .

واذا كان لديك اهتمام بفنان معين او باعمالهم الرجاء الاتصال ببول كروفورد في قاعة المعرض الفني لمدينة بنتكتن على الايميل:

curator@pentictionartgallery.com

او الاتصال بهمام سليم على الايميل التالي:

syria-art@outlook.com

شكرا لكل شخص زار المعرض. واطلب منكم ان تجدوا بعض الوقت لكي تتواصلوا مع اي من الفنانين الذين اثر بكم عملهم وذلك باستخدام معلومات الاتصال الموجودة في هذا الفهرس. وبعملكم هذا تخبروهم بان هناك اناس في الجانب الاخر لهذا العالم يعيرونهم الاهتمام ونتيجة لذلك فانك تستثمر في وضعهم وذلك من خلال الاتصال بشخص اثرت بحياته وبشكل يومي تلك الماساة التي ليس لها معنى. انه استثمار لا يذكر من وقتك ولكني اؤكد لك بانه سيغني حياتك بالكثير كما اغناني.

بول كروفورد

مدير وامين المعرض الفني لمدينة بنتكتن



Reem Tarraf, *Untitled* (detail), 2016, acrylic on canvas, 66 x 61 in

INTRODUCTION

The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford is proud to be hosting the touring exhibition *Behind the Lines: Contemporary Syrian Art*. Since its inaugural presentation at the Penticton Art Gallery in 2016, *Behind the Lines* has been quietly touring around British Columbia, with small selections of work from the overall exhibition displayed in schools, museums, churches, and community centres in places like Victoria, Vancouver, Duncan, Nanaimo, Salt Spring Island, Mill Bay, and Grand Forks. The exhibition has also travelled outside of the province, to the Yukon Arts Centre in Dawson City and the Military Museums in Calgary. Now, more than two years after the works in *Behind the Lines* were first spirited out of Syria and shipped to Canada, The Reach is pleased to be able to dedicate the majority of our Great Hall gallery to displaying the exhibition again in its entirety. We're also delighted to be able to further invigorate the exhibition by adding new work that has not been previously shown, and to update and expand upon the previous exhibition brochure with the publication of this catalogue, including the inclusion of Arabic language translations of key texts.

In 2016, Canada welcomed 25,000 Syrian refugees into the country, several hundred of whom were settled in our community here in Abbotsford and surrounding areas. More recently, it was announced that Canada will resettle a number of the Syrian volunteer rescue workers known as the White Helmets, who were themselves rescued and evacuated from Syria in June, 2018. Clearly, *Behind the Lines* remains as relevant and timely as it was when Paul Crawford, Director/Curator of the Penticton Art Gallery first reached out to Humam Alsalim, Director of the Cyrrus Gallery, Damascus. We at The Reach hope that by hosting this exhibition we are able to contribute to making our Syrian neighbours feel welcome and celebrated in their new home, while also educating the rest of the community about the rich cultural and artistic contributions that our Syrian newcomers bring with them to Canada.

We extend our thanks to the Penticton Art Gallery, Cyrrus Gallery, and especially to all the artists in *Behind the Lines* for sharing this moving body of work with us.

- Laura Schneider, Executive Director, The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford

يفتخر متحف معرض ريج (التواصل) الفني في مدينة ابنتسفورد باستضافة المعرض الجوال **خلف خطوط النار: الفن السوري المعاصر**. فمُنذ حفل افتتاحه في قاعة المعرض الفني لمدينة بنتكتن في عام 2016 والمعرض يتجول بهدوء في مقاطعة البريتش كولومبيا وبجعبته مجموعة صغيرة من الاعمال مأخوذة من الاعمال الفنية للمعرض بشكل عام والتي تم عرضها في المدارس والمتاحف والكنائس ومراكز المجتمع المحلي في مناطق مثل فكتوريا، فانكوفر، دنكان، نانايمو، جزيرة سولت سبرنك، خليج ميل وغراند فوركس. وتجول المعرض كذلك خارج المقاطعة حيث ذهب الى مركز فنون يوكان في مدينة داوسن وكذلك الى المتاحف العسكرية في مدينة كالغاري. والان وبعد مرور اكثر من سنتين على خروج الاعمال الفنية لمعرض **خلف خطوط النار: الفن السوري المعاصر** من سوريا وانتقالها الى كندا يعلن متحف معرض ريج (التواصل) الفني عن سعادة بتخصيص القسم الاعظم من معرض القاعة الكبرى وذلك لعرض كل اعمال المعرض كاملة مرة اخرى. ونحن سعداء بان نكون قادرين على تعزيز المعرض وذلك من خلال اضافة اعمال فنية جديدة لم يتم عرضها سابقا وكذلك من خلال تحديث وتوسيع الكتيب السابق للمعرض باضافة فهرست يحتوي ترجمة باللغة العربية للنصوص الاساسية.

استقبلت كندا 25000 لاجئ سوري في عام 2016 حيث تم توطين المئات منهم في مجتمعنا هنا في ابنتسفورد والمناطق المجاورة. واُعلن حديثا بان كندا ستعيد توطين عددا من المتطوعين من عمال الاغاثة السوريين والمعروفين باسم **الخوذ البيضاء** والذين تم انقاذهم واخراجهم من سوريا في شهر حزيران عام 2018. وجلياً يبقى معرض **خلف خطوط النار** ملائم ومناسب كما كان في السابق عندما حاول بول كروفورد مدير وامين المعرض الفني في مدينة بنتكتن ان يتواصل مع همام السالم مدير معرض سايرس في دمشق، فنحن، في متحف معرض ريج (التواصل) الفني نأمل من خلال استضافة هذا المعرض ان نكون قادرين على جعل جيراننا السوريين يشعرون بالترحاب والحفاوة في موطنهم الجديد. والى جانب ذلك نقوم كذلك بتوعية بقية افراد المجتمع حول المساهمات الثقافية والفنية الغنية التي جلبها القادمون الجدد من سوريا الى كندا. نقدم شكرنا الى المعرض الفني في مدينة بنتكتن وخصوصا لفناني معرض **خلف خطوط النار** للمشاركة باعمالهم الفنية معنا.

لورا شنايد

المديرة التنفيذية لمتحف معرض ريج (التواصل) الفني في مدينة

ابنتسفورد

KHALED AKIL



BORN: March 14, 1986

FROM: Aleppo, Syria

RESIDES: Istanbul, Turkey

WEB: www.facebook.com/khaledyoussefakil

www.khaledakil.com

E-MAIL: khaledakil@gmail.com



Khaled Akil was born in 1986 in Aleppo, Syria, into an artistic and political family. He is the son of the noted painter Youssef Akil, and his great-grandfather was the Syrian author and historical figure Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi. In 2009 he graduated with a bachelor's degree in law and political science from Beirut Arab University. After graduating, the self-taught photographer returned to Syria just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. There, he sought to discuss the nation's complexities through his artwork. While living in Aleppo he ran his own gallery and organized photography workshops and art exhibitions for other artists, before the situation forced him to set up temporary residence in Istanbul.

Khaled's work boldly examines some of the most difficult issues facing contemporary Middle Eastern society. In particular, his work addresses social, political, and sexual contradictions. His work is a "hybrid of photography and painting" and is filled with layers of ancient scripts and symbols, exemplifying the intricacies of modern-day Syria. Since 2009, Akil has held several solo shows in Syria and abroad in London (2012), Istanbul (2013), and Stanford, California (2016). His work can be found in many public and private collections including the collections of the Barjeel Art Foundation and The World Bank.

ARTIST STATEMENT

"This series was originally created as a prayer for a friend I lost in Syria in 2014, who was killed for being an animal activist and a true lover of peace. While I created this series as a tribute to her, I later realized that her tragedy symbolizes the calamity that faces all Syrians, and Syria itself. That's why I named this series *Requiem for Syria*. With the Turkish Sufi performer Alper Akcay and a white pigeon, I shot the photos for this series in 2014. It took me a year to finish all the six works of this series. During the photoshoots, Alper entered a state of trance in which he freely redefined the series. The technique used in the series is a hybrid between photography and painting. It starts with drawing the sketches of the artwork, then taking the photograph that will be the centre of the artwork. When this is completed, I then draw the textured layers and the Arabic calligraphy, if needed. This process might be executed on the photograph itself or separately. Finally, I scan everything and flatten all the layers digitally to make the final printed result. *Requiem for Syria* is not about war, it is about peace. Peace is the way of nature, war is manmade. This series portrays the minimalism and impartiality of Sufism and nature, and above all, of humanity. The project can be described as a last, lone breath of a drowning man."

خالد عقل

ولد خالد عقل في عائلة ذو حس فني وثقافي كبير. درس القانون والعلوم السياسية في الجامعة العربية في بيروت قبل ان يعود الى سوريا. وهناك فتح هذا المصور الفوتوغرافي الذي علم نفسه ذاتيا فتح معرضا حيث نظم فيه ورش للعمل ووضع فيه المعارضات قبل ان ترغمة الظروف على الرحيل الى اسطنبول. وتعكس صور عقل الفوتوغرافية الكثير من القضايا الصعبة التي يواجهها المجتمع.

مقولة الفنان: " لقد كانت المجموعة في الاساس صلاة على صديقة فقدتها في سوريا عام 2014. وبما اني خلقت هذه المجموعة كثناء لها الا انني ادركت لاحقا بان مأساتها ترمز للكارثة التي يواجهها كل السوريين وسوريا نفسها. فالمجموعة الفنية ليست حول الحرب بل حول السلام."



ALI ALMEER



BORN: July 9, 1991

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: <https://www.facebook.com/ali.almeer.9>



Ali Almeer was born in 1991 in Damascus, Syria. He graduated in 2013 from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus obtaining his bachelor's degree from the sculpture department. "My works show psychological issues that we are suffering from now in our country. The children's attitude and the old people... and also the youth who are stuck in their places with no future and just confused."

Ali currently works at the J-Bee Art Centre in Damascus, a public art program that offers free educational programming in painting and handicrafts, designed to

give children new creative outlets and experience while building their self-confidence. This process enables the participants to gain a better understanding of the world around them and to express their views through art.

Ali also works with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, an independent humanitarian organization committed to the Geneva Convention and the seven basic principles of the International Movement of Red Cross and Red Crescent: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

علي المير

ولد علي المير في دمشق حيث اكمل دراسته الجامعية هنال وتخرج في عام 2013 من قسم الفنون الجميلة متخصصا في النحت. وهو يعمل الآن في دمشق حيث يوفر للاطفال برامج دراسية مجانية في الرسم والمهارات اليدوية والفنون الاخرى. ويعمل علي كذلك في جمعية الهلال الاحمر العربية السورية وهي منظمة انسانية مستقلة.

مقولة الفنان: " يظهر عملي قضايا نفسية نعاني منها في مجتمعنا الان. فكبار السن والشباب عالقين ومشوشين في اماكنهم من غير مستقبل".

HUMAM ALSALIM & RAMI BAKHOS



BORN: July 2, 1992
FROM: Homs, Syria
RESIDES: Berlin, Germany
WEB: <https://en.syriaartasso.com>
<https://humamalsalm.com>
<https://www.facebook.com/humam.sal>
EMAIL: Syria-art@outlook.com



BORN: January 17, 1993
FROM: Damascus, Syria
RESIDES: Offenbach, Germany
WEB: www.behance.net/Rami-bakho40fc
www.facebook.com/rami.bakhos
EMAIL: Rami-bakhos@hotmail.com

Humam Alsalm and Rami Bakhos are two young architects who entered adulthood during the war period that began in 2011. While showing great sensitivity, depth, and dedication to the events occurring in their country, they remain fully concerned with and connected to the universal problems of the world.

Reacting to the actions of the Islamic State (IS) in the destruction of Palmyra in 2015, Humam Alsalm and Rami Bakhos have created their *Cultural Beheading* series to highlight the graveness of the destruction. These works were made by digitizing, and then augmenting, images of the decimated urban landscape. "When the remnants of culture fall into the hands of savages, stones and cultural heritage can be decapitated too," they say.

Known as the 'Pearl of the Desert,' the oasis town of Palmyra is situated about 210 kilometres northeast of Damascus and became famous as a stopping point for caravans travelling on the Silk Road. As it expanded across Iraq and Syria, IS destroyed many archaeological sites, looting them for profit and damaging some to gain international attention. IS, which has controlled Palmyra since May 2015, has razed many of the ancient

structures, targeting various places of worship and ancient historical artefacts.

The systematic destruction of cultural symbols embodying Syrian cultural diversity is deliberately intended to deprive the Syrian people of its identity, memory, and history. IS is killing people and destroying sites, but cannot silence history and will ultimately fail to erase this great culture from the memory of the world. Despite obstacles and fanaticism, human creativity will prevail, buildings and sites will be rehabilitated, and some will be rebuilt.

In the spring of 2017 Humam Alsalm was granted a student visa to continue his studies in Germany, moving to Frankfurt and later Berlin, where he is the owner and Vice-President of the website Cyrrus Gallery, which is dedicated to the promotion of contemporary Syrian artists.

Rami Bakhos chose to study architecture because he believes it relates to all aspects of human life, and because of his passion for form, shape, light, and shadow in art. He is currently living in Germany where he works as an editor and social media and content editor for arts related news and media websites.





همام السالم ورامي باخوس

هؤلاء مهندسين معماريين شباب عملوا سوية لتقديم سلسلة صور فوتوغرافية بأسم "النحر الاجتماعي". وجاءت هذه السلسلة ردا على الدمار الذي الحقته الدولة الاسلامية (داعش) في الباميرا. وقد قامت الدولة الاسلامية (داعش) بتدمير ممنهج للمواقع الاجتماعية والتاريخية التي تحوي التنوع الثقافي السوري. وكان الغرض من ذلك هو لتجريد الشعب السوري من هويته وذاكرته وتاريخه.

انتقل همام السالم الى مدينة فرانكفورت في المانيا للاستمرار في دراسته. وهو المؤسس لمعرض سايروس ونائب رئيس معرض فن سوريا. والغرض من هذين المعرضين هو لتشجيع عمل الفنانين السوريين المعاصرين.

تخرج رامي باخوس حديثا من جامعة دمشق متخصصا في الفن المعماري. كان يرغب في دراسة الهندسة المعمارية لانه يؤمن بان الفن المعماري له علاقة بحياة الانسان في كل نواحيها وكذلك لشغفة بالصيغ والاشكال والضوء والظل. عمل رامي مع همام لخلق مجموعتهم الفنية "النحر الاجتماعي" استجابة للدمار الذي الحقته الدولة الاسلامية (داعش) بباميرا والنمرود. ولكي يتم خلق هذه الصور الرقمية فقد اخذوا صور لمناظر طبيعية مندثرة وجعلوها رقمية ومن ثم تكبيرها .

ويعيش رامي حاليا في المانيا حيث مازال يعمل في الفن المعماري والفنون الجميلة.



Juhayda AlBitar, *Untitled 4* (detail), 2015, acrylic on canvas, 51 x 62.5 in





JUHAYDA ALBITAR



BORN: September 29, 1991

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: www.facebook.com/juhayda.albitar

EMAIL: juhaydabitar@gmail.com



Juhayda ALBitar was born in 1991 in Damascus, completing a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Faculty of Fine Arts in 2013, and a master's degree on the topic of "Byzantine painting's impact on contemporary Syrian painting," also from Damascus University. She had her first solo exhibition at Art House in Damascus in 2015, and has participated in many group exhibitions in other countries including Lebanon, Albania, Italy, and Canada.

The figures in Juhayda's paintings represent masked creatures and the false identities created by those who delude each other;

when left alone, these fictions and masks fade away, showing an underlying truth. Some of these figures are desperate and empty inside, others disappear into the masks they create, becoming clowns in the parade of their lives. Juhayda lives with the characters she creates, her characters are based on people she has met, but she abstracts their details to focus on their most important characteristics. Symbols sometimes appear in Juhayda's work and there is an obvious tendency towards expressionism, especially when she addresses an inherent evil within her characters.

جوهيدا البيطار

ولدت جوهيدا البيطار في دمشق وحصلت على شهادة البكالوريوس والماجستير في الاداب من جامعة دمشق. وقد تم نشر عملها الفني في معارض في لبنان ، البانيا، ايطاليا، وكندا. وغالبا ما تظهر لوحاتها اشخاص مقنعين او اشخاص يظهرون هويات زائفة للعالم والناس الاخرين . والاشكال التي ترسمها غالبا ماتكون مبنية على اشكال اناس حقيقيين التقتهم هيه ولكنها تزيل مظهرهم وتركز على صفاتهم الداخلية.

MAHMOOD AL DAUD



BORN: May 6, 1987

FROM: Homs, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

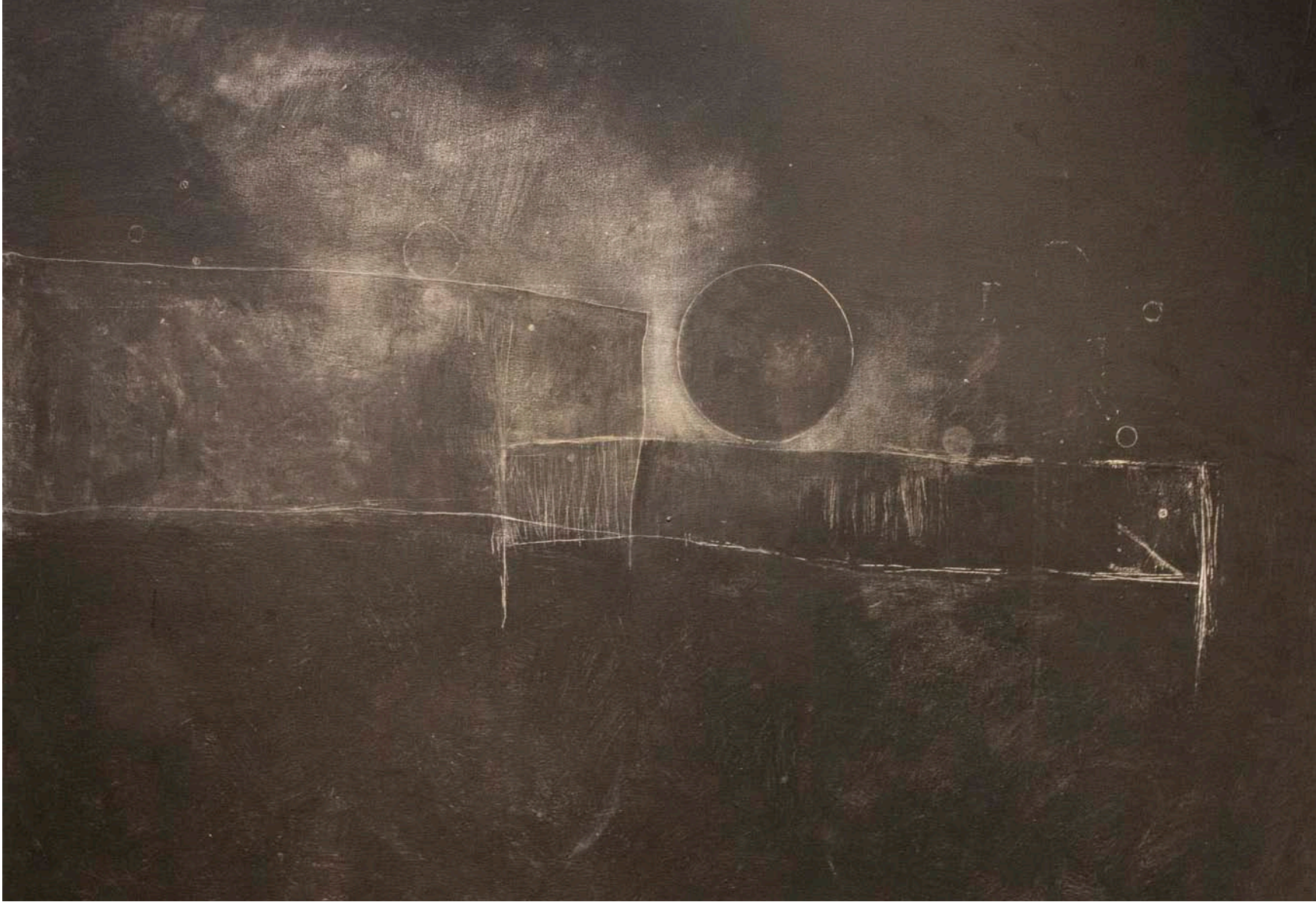
WEB: www.facebook.com/mahmooodaoud.art

EMAIL: mahmooodaoud.art@hotmail.com

Mahmood Al Daoud was born in 1987 in Homs, Syria. In 2011, he obtained a License in Plastic Arts from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Aleppo University. For Mahmood, painting represents the struggle to get an inner concept onto the canvas. He has experimented with a technique of color-mixing that does not require traditional brush strokes, and has applied this to both paper and canvas. In his works, Mahmood endeavours to create unique colours that communicate the general scope of the painting. In addition to the richness of colors, he also searches for a variation of shapes and different layers to give each painting the impression of a world with multiple dimensions. The creatures he creates are composed of overlapping ranges of colors and elaborate textures, and seem to be representations of beings-in-the-making. The artist has a disillusioned, somewhat cynical vision of humanity; he expresses the materiality of man, his primary and animal instincts, the existential desert, the void that surrounds us.

Artist Statement

"My main artistic focus, during this last period of my career, has been space in the artwork. I study its dimensions in relation to abstract elements and their placement inside it, and then the relationship of this whole with static nature. Together, this relationship forms a texture in my mind, and gives a vision of the integration of the elements of my painting into space, and their compatibility with the air and the dimensions of this space. In my new works, I study the relationship between line and space, and their confluence with moving elements. Within this set, the moving elements depend on the movement of air, until exiting altogether the frame of the art work and joining with the external space that was previously unacknowledged. The existence of a consistent element in the painting, such as a table, is a sign of an acknowledged and unstable existence that is in constant movement, born out of the silent background space and combined with it, to occupy a place full of animated movement with the existing elements."



محمود الداود

ولد محمود الداود في حمص في سوريا واكمل دراسة الفنون الجميلة في جامعة حلب. الرسم بالنسبة لمحمود يعكس صراعا من اجل وضع المفهوم الداخلي على لوحة الرسم. ويحاول محمود ان يخلق الوان فريدة من نوعها وفراغات ونسيج مختلف في لوحاته وذلك لايصال حس لهذا العالم بابعاد متعددة.

مقولة الفنان: "التركيز الفني الرئيسي لي هو فحص الفراغ في داخل العمل الفني. وفي عملي الفني الجديد ، ادرس العلاقة بين الخطوط والفراغ والطريقة التي يعملان بها سوية مع العناصر المتحركة."

KHALED DAWWA



BORN: May 9, 1985

FROM: Masyaf, Syria

RESIDES: Paris, France

WEB: <https://www.facebook.com/clayandknife>
<http://khaleddawwa.com>

E-MAIL: khaled.dawwa@gmail.com

Khaled Dawwa was born in 1985 in Masyaf, Syria, and graduated with a specialization in sculpture from the School of Fine Arts in Damascus in 2007. Since his early childhood, Khaled has been interested in the concepts of mass and dimension, and has experimented with the use of available tools. He typically works with clay, and his sculptures reflect the Syrian people: fragile, brittle, malleable, but still alive.

The start of the Syrian conflict was the source of a rupture, indeed radical change, in Khaled's work. His language and work underwent a palpable metamorphosis, his tools and materials evolved by necessity to be lighter, more "clandestine." His sculptures in turn have sought to express, to say something more.

In mid-2013, the neighbourhood where Khaled's studio was located was bombed and he was badly injured. Arrested and imprisoned, he was then delivered to the Army and ordered to render mandatory military service. Refusing to do so, Khaled deserted the Army and fled to Lebanon, where he lived for a year in hiding before relocating to France, where he has been based since October 2014. He has been deeply impacted by this long journey of a year and a half, which took him from hospital, to prison, to the military, and finally into exile.



Artist Statement (written to accompany the sculpture series *Compressed*)

I'm going to explode, everything inside of me is about to explode.
Close your eyes and imagine you're completely enclosed within an area of half a square meter.
Surrounded by a load of human beings, in this half-meter by two surface area.
Imagine you are witnessing all the daily details, meals, drinks, cold, pain, nostalgia, games, illness, singing, sleeping, delirium,
painting, hunger, insults, death, just in this area,
Compressed ... And I can't escape
In this square, I no longer have any contours of my own
The bodies of the others are mine.
A hand moves, perhaps it's mine, perhaps it's his or hers, perhaps it's ours
"Don't move" ... you're not allowed to move.
Compressed
And I want to sleep ... "Learn to sleep standing up"
I want to shout or maybe even cry ... "You can, as long as you don't scream"
Compressed ...
The man near me is dead... we're all dying.
Imagine yourself there...
What day is it?
I want to know the time... I want to be deaf.
I don't remember their faces... I want my mother... one day I saw her in a dream.
I want to get out... I will marry every woman when I get out.
Compressed
You're here, now
Someone else is over there
Thousands of others are over there, probably for eternity... over here.

خالد داوا

ولد خالد داوا في مدينة مصياف في سورية وتخرج من مدرسة الفنون الجميلة في دمشق متخصصا بالنحت وذلك في عام 2007. وفي عام 2013 قصف الحي الذي يسكن فيه خالد مما ادى الى اصابته بجروح. وبعد ذلك تم القاء القبض عليه وسجنه ومن ثم تسليمه للجيش لاداء الخدمة العسكرية الاجبارية. وبعد ذلك ترك الجيش وهرب من سوريا متجها الى لبنان التي سكن فيها لمدة سنة قبل ان يغادرها متجها الى فرنسا في شهر اكتوبر عام 2014. وقد تأثر بشكل كبير بهذه الرحلة الطويلة التي اخذت من الوقت سنة ونصف متنقلا فيها من المستشفى الى السجن وبعدها الى الجيش لينتهي به المطاف في المنفى.



AMR FAHED



BORN: January 28, 1982

FROM: Al-Suwaida, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: <https://www.facebook.com/amr4art>

EMAIL: amr4art@hotmail.com



Amr Fahed graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, with a specialization in sculpture, from Damascus University in 2007. A versatile artist, he works in a variety of different media including painting, photography, and digital art. He has received recent attention for his digital images that focus on the narrative of Syrian children trapped in war.

In one of his digital series, the artist reworked photos taken in Syria: the black and white images were scraped and scratched so that faces disappear, birds are transformed into planes, grids evoke the rain of shells and shots, and everything leads us into a timeless universe that is somewhere between life and death. He later shifted his focus to the depiction of

Syrian children in refugee camps in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. This work convinced Amr Fahed to leave Sharjah where he had taken refuge, and to return to Syria in 2014.

He recently worked on a project related to Syrian children entitled "Syrian Children in the Crossfire." His goal was to depict, through his art, the unfathomable sadness that can be detected in the eyes of Syrian children, and to communicate this to the world. His inspiration comes from the indescribable look in their eyes: a look of sadness and happiness, a unique combination of conflicting emotions. The artist wants the world to be aware of the immeasurable damage being done to these children.

عمر فهد

تخرج عمر فهد من كلية الفنون الجميلة في جامعة دمشق عام 2007. وكفنان متعدد المواهب، يعمل عمر في مختلف وسائل الاعلام وبضمنها الرسم والتصوير الفوتوغرافي والفن الرقمي. وانتج بعض الاعمال حول الاطفال السوريين في مخيم للاجئين في الامارات العربية المتحدة وهذا الامر جعله يعود الى سوريا عام 2014. وموخرًا عمل في مشروع يسمى "اطفال سوريا في مهب النيران". وكان يهدف من ذلك العمل ان يظهر الحزن العميق الذي يمكن رؤيته في عيون الاطفال السوريين. ويرغب الفنان في ان يظهر تلك الصور للعالم ويريد العالم ان يكون اكثر وعيا للدمار الواسع الذي خلقتة الحرب بالنسبة لهؤلاء الاطفال.



Fadi Al-Hamwi, *Bathroom Mirror* (detail), 2014, oil on canvas, 58 x 58.5 in



FADI AL-HAMWI



BORN: November 19, 1986

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Berlin, Germany

WEB: www.facebook.com/fadi.alhamwi.52
www.fadialhamwi.com

EMAIL: alhamwi.fadi@gmail.com

Fadi Al-Hamwi was born in Damascus in 1986. In 2010 he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art, with a major in oil & mural painting, from Damascus University. Al-Hamwi is a painter, sculptor, and video and installation artist who has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Damascus and Beirut. He has also shown his artwork internationally in Italy, Germany, France, Denmark, the UK, USA, and Canada. His work is largely concerned with translating the human experience of war.

Artist Statement

"My work employs sarcasm as a tool to criticize social traditions, beliefs, and superstitions. Sarcasm triggers the viewer's attention and curiosity through critically addressing comic-tragic realities. Humor allows the viewer to enter the space of criticism without directly activating defense mechanisms.

I use techniques, such as x-ray, to go beyond the obvious and into the unseen of the individual form. This takes the concept of addressing human social nature to instinctual animal physicality and psychological human states of mind. The "x-ray" technique exposes layers and realities that add a harsh element to human nature. It expresses the animal-human relationship through symbolism and the connection of bones; the recurring human jaw element allows the viewer to connect to the animal container and receive it as his own, regardless of its challenging cruelty. The works portray imperceptible thoughts of violence and brutal instincts of killing, and how war provokes them by manifesting the dark side of humanity. My work shifted from a wide social perspective in the early works of 2010-2012 to an uncensored scrutiny of psychosomatic dimensions in 2013-2014, and recently to the marriage of both."

فادي الحموي

ولد فادي الحموي في دمشق في سوريا وحاليا يعيش في برلين في ألمانيا. تخرج من جامعة دمشق عام 2010 وحصل على شهادة البكالوريوس في الفنون الجميلة متخصصا باللوحات الجدارية الزيتية. وقد انتج لوحات وافلام وتركيبات نحتية. وتم عرض اعماله في معارض كثيرة في دمشق وبيروت وكذلك في المعارض الجماعية في كندا والولايات المتحدة وانكلترا وألمانيا والدنمارك.

مقولة الفنان: "يعتمد عملي على السخرية كأداة لنقد تقاليد وعادات وخرافات المجتمع. وتظهر تقنية الأشعة السينية الطبقات والحقائق التي تضيف عنصر قاسي لطبيعة الانسان. وتعتبر تلك الأشعة عن العلاقة بين الانسان والحيوان من خلال رمزية وإرتباط العظام.





AMMART KHADOUR



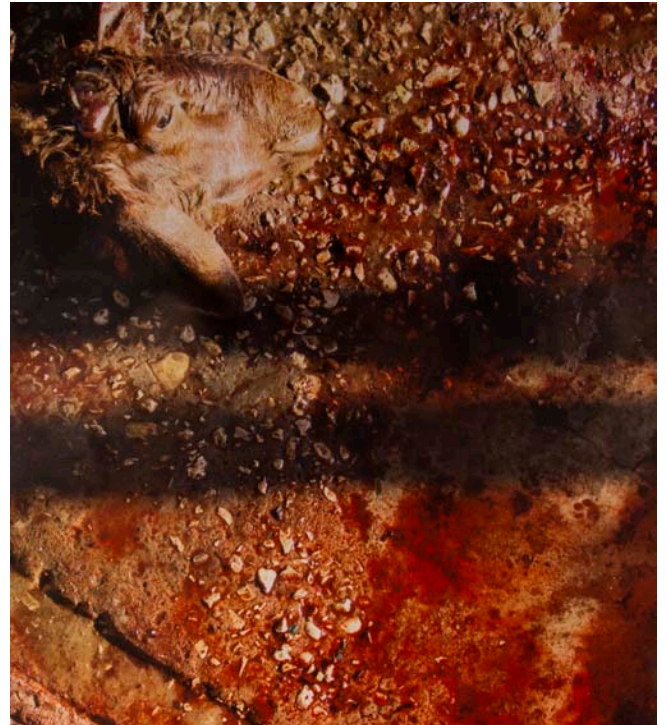
BORN: September 15, 1991

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Vienna, Austria

WEB: www.facebook.com/Ammart.Photography
www.facebook.com/ammart.khadour

E-MAIL: ammart.kh.ph@gmail.com



Ammart Khadour was born in 1991 in Damascus. He studied law at Damascus University before dedicating himself to photography. In November 2017, he was invited by the Kulturvermittlung Steiermark to reside in Graz, Austria as an “artist in exile.” Beginning in autumn 2018, Ammart will be studying at the Photographic Department of the University of Applied Arts in Vienna.

Whether in Damascus, Graz, or Vienna, Ammart’s photography deals with the streets and alleyways of the urban landscape. He often photographs purely abstract parts of walls, age-worn and weather-damaged. Patterns emerge from cracks of old paint and graffiti, ancient inscriptions and remnants of painted signs, half-torn posters, political slogans, rust stains: all overlapping to create something that resembles an abstract painting. Ammart’s images introduce the viewer to a world of unsuspected urban poetry. In his photographs, the walls of public spaces reveal a myriad of stories, secrets, and snippets of human lives.

Artist statement

“Time passing, the accumulation of coincidences on a wall... rusty metal, advertisements, torn death announcements, posters, and perhaps some erased opposing political slogans or even the allowed ones. A line which has been painted on purpose, curses which have been removed or covered by different colors. These combine to create a variety of forms, structures, and textures on an abandoned wall or metal surface, which ends up taking the form of an unframed artwork. At this point my camera enters, as a tool to sort these factors into a photo with dimensions and a specific identity, allowing it to be an abstract work in a public place that nobody noticed before.”

امارت خضور

ولد امارت خضور في دمشق وحاليا يسكن في النمسا. درس القانون في جامعة دمشق ولكنه سرعان ما عمل كمصور فوتوغرافي. صور العاصمة السورية عادة ما تركز على التكوين التجريدي الموجود على الجدران والتي تبدو وكأن انحلال وتعفن الصيغ وكذلك السطوح والمواد قد خلقه بشكل عفوي. وفي عام 2017 تمت دعوتة الى مدينة كراز في النمسا ليكون “فنان من المنفى“. وفي خريف عام 2018 سيبدأ دراسته في القسم الفوتوغرافي لجامعة الفنون التطبيقية في فينا، النمسا.





LINA MALKI



BORN: September 23, 1991

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: www.facebook.com/lina.malki.9

EMAIL: linamalki00@gmail.com



Lina Malki is an emerging artist on the Syrian art scene, gifted with undeniable talent. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus, with a specialization in painting. She currently works at the International University of Science and Technology in Damascus.

As a figurative painter Lina Malki uses expressionism to highlight the concerns that lie dormant in her and in each of us. She composes her paintings starting with the idea that figuration creates emotion and feeling. Technical and chromatic research is a constant in her work, which is dominated by a subtle and nuanced range of ochre, blue, fuchsia, and gray. Through her paintings, she addresses the humanitarian crisis and the injustice of the Syrian War, creating a space for the viewer to be subsumed within a vivid emotion of empathy.

لينا مالكي

لينا مالكي فنانة واعدة تتمتع بموهوبة متميزة. حصلت على بكالوريوس في الفنون الجميلة من قسم الفنون الجميلة في دمشق بتخصص في الرسم. لينا رسامة رمزية فعملها يخاطب الهواجس الهاجعة فينا. وتخاطب لينا من خلال لوحاتها الازمة الانسانية والظلم الذي خلفته الحرب في سوريا حيث تخلق علاقة مع الناظر بمشاعر عطف حية.

MAIESAM MALLISHO



BORN: July 13, 1988

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: www.facebook.com/maiesam.mallisho

Maiesam Mallisho was born in Damascus, Syria, in 1988. He earned both his Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts degrees in Damascus, with a specialization in sculpture. He is currently an art teacher at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus University, and he has also worked as an art teacher in Lebanon. He works both in Damascus and Lebanon.

Selected Exhibitions:

2015: Group exhibition at Salat Al Shaaeb Gallery, Damascus

2014: Group exhibition at Building Culture Institute, Damascus

2012: Group exhibition at the Educational Center for the Arts, Damascus

2010: Group Exhibition at Goethe Institute, "Direction of Light," Damascus

Workshops:

2015: Silkscreen workshop at The National Center for Visual Arts, Damascus

2010: "Direction of Light" installation workshop at Goethe Institute, Damascus

Lectures/Artist Talks:

2014: Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus University

2011: Adham Ismail Institute of Fine Arts with Fritz Best, Damascus

Education:

2014 - 2016: Master of Fine Arts, Sculpture Department, Damascus University

2008 - 2013: Bachelor of Fine Arts, Sculpture Department, Damascus University

ميسام ماليشو

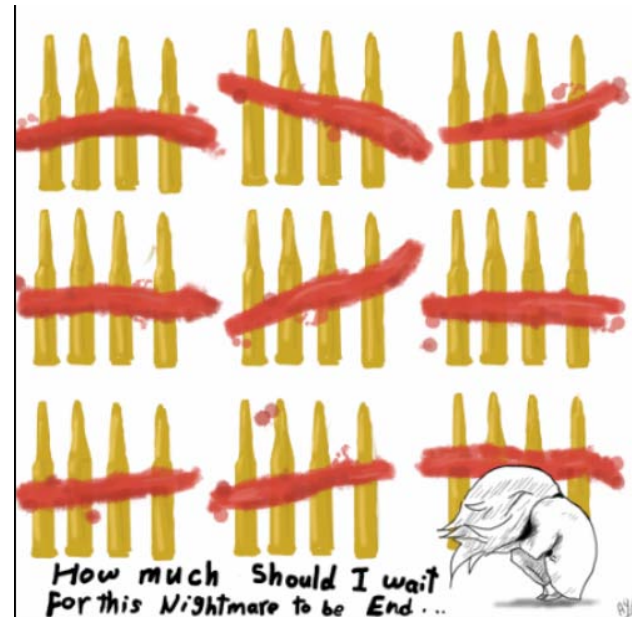
ولد ميسام في دمشق حيث مازال يعمل ويعيش هناك. حصل على شهادة البكالوريوس والماجستير في الفنون الجميلة من دمشق وبتخصص في النحت. ويعمل حاليا مدرسا في كلية الفنون الجميلة في جامعة دمشق وكان قد عمل كذلك مدرسا للفنون في لبنان.



AYA AL MEDANI



BORN: February 18, 1995
FROM: Damascus, Syria
RESIDES: Damascus, Syria
WEB: www.facebook.com/aya.almedani
E-MAIL: aya-brightstar@hotmail.co.uk



Artist Statement

“My name is Aya Al Medani, I am a Syrian girl. I was born in Damascus and have lived my whole life here. I studied accounting at Damascus University. Aside from studying accounting, as a volunteer I write articles in a website called “Syrian Researches,” and in a magazine that talks about environmental issues. I love reading so much, books are my best friends. Since I was a little girl, I loved to draw, my passion for drawing started when I was three... a little girl who loves to play with pens and colours. I spend my free time sketching and reading. Reading gives me inspiration and enriches my imagination.

About my everyday life. Since we’ve been living in a war, it’s like being trapped in a nightmare with no end. It’s impossible to describe how we live here, as I’m living in the capital it’s still ‘normal’ compared to other parts of Syria. I have a deep feeling of sorrow, that I can’t change, stop, or fix anything.

I can only do some sketching, to show glances of war, the suffering and pain that comes from it. The suffering of people who still live without the simplest necessities of life, the dreadful experience that refugees face to reach a peaceful place, because death is surrounding them they’re still trying to run from it, whatever it takes, even if it’s not safe. Those who suffer most are kids, they are living in extremely bad circumstances. The ones who survive have lost many precious things, they’ve had their dreams killed, and their rights have become dreams.

We really need to help kids and save childhood, to let them live, to let them dream, and make their innocent dreams come true. Syria is a beautiful place, I don’t want people to think about it as an awful one. I want people around the world to understand the suffering and sadness that are made by war so we can build a world without wars.”

اية الميداني

ولدت اية الميداني وترعرعت في دمشق. وعشقها يكمن في جانبين القراءة والرسم.

مقولتها: ” بما اننا نعيش في حالة حرب، فالامر يبدو وكأننا محاصرين في كابوس ليس له نهاية. لدي شعور عميق بالحنن ولايمكنني ان اغير او اوقف او ان اصلح اي شي. ما استطيع فعله هو فقط الرسم لاطهار لمحات الحرب: المعانات والالم الناتج عنها، معانات الناس الذين مازالوا يعيشون هناك من دون حتى ابسط ضروريات الحياة، التجربة المرعبة التي يمر بها اللاجئين من اجل الوصول الى مكان فية سلام، واريد من العالم ان يفهم المعانات والحنن الذي خلفته الحرب لكي نبني عالم من دون حروب.



Alaa Sharabi, *Untitled 2 (detail)*, 2016, acrylic on canvas, 53 x 52.5 in





ALAA SHARABI



BORN: May 28, 1988

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: www.facebook.com/ala.sharabi

EMAIL: ala.sharabi.workart@gmail.com



Alaa Sharabi was born in Damascus in 1988. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts with a specialization in printmaking from Damascus University in 2011. He was appointed as assistant professor soon after his graduation.

Alaa Sharabi describes his goals as an artist as follows: "Finding oneself. Taking a tortuous path to find one's own language, a unique form of communication and expression. Disregarding aesthetics, trivialities, to focus on the essential. Being open to everything, absorbing knowledge, understanding the notion of being in order to finally remove oneself from the noise of others, and give into the lethargy of introspection. Go deeper. Break with the established order, and persevere."

Alaa Sharabi's bold paintings combine a chromatic richness with frenetic lines and complex compositions. There is a predominance of delicate but vigorous, often black, strokes. Entangled and twisted, sometimes almost cubist, his human and animal figures convey a sense of chaotic confusion, balanced by a palette of deep, warm hues, sometimes bright and playful and at other times dark with the base canvas often a brilliant black.

There is a tension between the artist's tendency towards order and discipline, and the chaotic forms of his unconsciousness. Mixing the modern with something intrinsically intimate, his experiments with different materials have led to a body of work that combines both painting and printmaking.

علاء شربي

ولد علاء شربي في دمشق حيث مازال يسكنها ويعيد تخرجه من قسم الفنون الجميلة في 2011 أصبح استاذاً مساعداً في جامعة دمشق. وتجمع لوحاته الجريئة ثراءً زاهياً بالألوان بخطوط مفعمّة بالحياة مع تراكيب معقدة. وتنعكس اشكالية ارتباطك فوضوي. وهدفه كفنّان : "جد نفسك. اخذ طريق ملتوي لمعرفة لغة الشخص يعد اسلوب نادر في الاتصال والتعبير."

HUDA TAKRITI



BORN: April 11, 1990

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Vienna, Austria

WEB: www.facebook.com/huda.takriti.1

EMAIL: hudatakriti@hotmail.com

Huda Takriti was born in Damascus, Syria in 1990. In 2012 she graduated from the Drawing and Painting Department at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus. Huda Takriti was an Artist-in-Residence-scholarship holder from February to April 2016, doing her master's degree studies at the Trans Arts Department at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna, Austria. From May 2016 onwards, she became the artist-in-exile of the cultural exchange in Styria, Austria, within the framework of the International House of Authors in Graz.

Takriti works with many types of media including painting, printmaking, installation, and film. She has also participated in many exhibitions, festivals, and workshops in Syria, Lebanon, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Austria. Her recent works discuss the relationship between humans, memories, cities, war, and destruction. She explores how this relationship can influence and change a person and their perception of

themselves and their community. She asks herself how media can influence our reality and how can we release the tension of the current stage we are living in.

Artist Statement

"*Black Night Sky*, 2016 is a part of a series of collages that I have worked on in cooperation with the Syrian musician Ali Asaad, in an attempt to investigate the effect his music could have during the process of my work. In my work I usually try to explore the links between reality, imagination, and narrative. Moreover, in this series I have found myself searching for more possibilities to break down forms and shapes in a way that these forms cannot be completed as they are torn apart and unexpectedly interrupted. Shapes and lines swimming in an absorbing field of black, floating in the empty space which surrounds them, suggesting a poetic image in an attempt to depict the expression that exists in the simplest elements of all."

هدى تكريتي

ولدت هدى تكريتي في دمشق وتسكن حالياً في فيينا في النمسا. تخرجت من قسم الرسم والتخطيط في كلية الفنون الجميلة. تعمل في معترك الرسم والطباعة والنحت والافلام. ويبحث عملها الفني الحديث العلاقة بين ابناء البشر، الذكريات، المدن، الحرب والدمار. مقولتها: " سماء الليل الحالكة هي جزء من سلسلة من الملتصقات عملت عليها انا بالتعاون مع الموسيقار علي اسعد وذلك من اجل التحري في مدى تأثير موسيقاه في عملي. وعادةً ما احاول ان اكتشف في عملي الروابط بين الواقع والخيال والقصة.



An aerial photograph of a city, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous buildings and trees. The image is somewhat desaturated and has a grainy texture. The word "NOISE" is overlaid in the center in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The background is a hazy, light blue-grey sky.

NOISE

REEM TARRAF



BORN: 1974

FROM: Damascus, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: www.facebook.com/reem.tarraf.7
www.facebook.com/Reem-Tarraf-Art-work-1888598488053472/



Reem Tarraf was born in 1974 in Damascus. She has both an undergraduate and a master's degree in fine art. She won third prize in the third Exhibition of Emerging Artists in Paris and has exhibited extensively throughout the Middle East and across Europe.

Artist Statement

"The memory: what's the most meaningful to me in art is freeing shapes and cancelling what's visible in front of one's soul and transforming it into visual language by simple shapes and the power of colours. I come back to my memory and remember the compensation of light with shadow and make musical spaces, and what happens to the viewer by finding rhythmic relationships from the lines, spaces, and shapes has an artistic value in itself. I work in formation of shadows above shadows, the deepness of the painting's softness and the brush's sensitivity. A memory that is more of a dream that keeps coming to me."

ريم ترف

ولدت ريم ترف في دمشق حيث تعيش الان. اكملت دراستها الجامعية وحصلت على ماجستير في الفنون الجميلة. وشاركت في اعمالها على نطاق واسع في الشرق الوسط واوربا. ويتواجد عملها الفني في المجموعات الفنية العامة والخاصة في العالم. مقولتها: " اعود الى ذاكرتي واتذكر الضوء والظل واقوم بخلق مساحات موسيقية. ما يحدث للمشاهد من خلال ايجاد علاقة ايقاعية هو بحد ذاته قيمة فنية. والذاكرة التي هي اكثر من كونها حلم تستمر بقدمها لي."





Omran Younis, *Untitled 2* (detail), 2016, acrylic on canvas, 61 x 70.5 in





عمران يونس

يعد عمران يونس نشطا في الفن العربي المعاصر منذ اواخر التسعينات. ولد في الحسكة في سوريا عام 1971. واكمل دراسته الجامعية وحصل على ماجستير في الفنون الجميلة في دمشق، المدينة التي مازال يعيش فيها. عملة الفني موجود وبشكل واسع عالميا وكذلك يوجد في مجاميع فنية منتشرة في العالم العربي. ويجمع اسلوبه في الرسم تعليق اجتماعي جري مع ملاحظة ثابتة لموضوع الانسان.

مقولته: " من انت ياموت، حتى تحوم فوق رؤوسنا ، لتأخذ كل شئ حي؟ هؤلاء اطفال بلدي وانا عاجز تماما. الموت يدمر كل ثانية في كل دقيقة . اسمع نحيبي ووقف القتل في بلدي."

OMRAN YOUNIS



BORN: April 10, 1971

FROM: Al-Hasakah, Syria

RESIDES: Damascus, Syria

WEB: www.facebook.com/omran.younis.7

<https://en.syriaartasso.com/artists/omran-younis>



Omran Younis has been active in the Arab art scene since the late 1990s. After graduating from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus in 1998, he went on to obtain a Master of Fine Arts in 2000. He has been featured in exhibitions throughout the Middle East and in the US, and he is the recipient of several awards. Today his work is housed in collections across the Arab world.

Omran Younis's large canvases are distinguished by detailed investigations into human subjects. His continual explorations of various styles of expressionist painting have culminated in a noticeable pursuit of elevating his art to its highest form. Belonging to a group of artists that emerged amidst the legacy of Syrian modernism, Omran Younis has sought to further the accomplishments of his predecessors while fashioning his own path through the visual language of contemporary art. The result has been a brand of painting that mixes bold social commentary with an acute sense of observation and a confident command of medium and technique.

Artist Statement

"The energy of the line, the precise moment between life and death ... this is this question I try to answer. Between what is graphic—in the perspective of the arrangement of space—and what is related to the force of the line, how these lines that range from black to white may not be spontaneous as they are intermingled within you, breathe life into your forms and your surfaces, record the movement inside the form and work on them so as to render the lines perennial?"

In terms of theme and treatment, I end up with the murderer in the same room. It is as if we were fighting on the white canvas and thick lines were all deep wounds. It is as if I were working surfaces with a knife. This is my injury, my grief, and the murderer, full of hatred, continues to draw gunfire. What is this truth in front of me? So much blood, so many shootings, so many deaths! Their screams never leave me, the terrible moment of death turns into a nightmare in my dreams. Who are you, O Death, so to float above our heads, to seize all that is alive? These are the children of my country and I am totally helpless! Death destroys every second of every minute. I am caught between Edvard Munch's *Scream* and Goya's *Nightmares*. Hear my cry: Stop the killings in my country!"

KHALED YOUSSEF



BORN: August 19, 1975

FROM: Damas, Dimashq, Syria

RESIDES: Nice, France

WEB: www.facebook.com/khalounet
www.khaled-youssef.com

EMAIL: y_khaled@hotmail.com

Khaled Youssef was born in Damascus in 1975. He studied medicine at Damascus University before moving to France, where he became a surgeon. He is also a co-founder of the not-for-profit organization SYRIA.ART, which is dedicated to the promotion of Syrian artists.

Khaled calls his art practice “poetography”: a combination of his loves of poetry and photography. He sees writing poetry as a way to escape to a better world, and to imagine a place full of hope and dreams. He notes that some moments in our lives can also seem like dreams, and this is why photos offers us the possibility to keep dreaming and see beauty everywhere.

Khaled started by capturing reflections in the water after the rainy days, and searching for interesting details in a wall or a simple scene of life. Bubbles are short-lived and are always free to escape and fly away, like our thoughts and ideas, our good moments, or our dreams. They are also fragile like relationships between people, and transparent as we should be between each other to avoid conflict. These are the reasons why Khaled creates bubbles, follows them and tries to catch them with his camera.

Following the July 14, 2016 terrorist attack in Nice, Paul Crawford, Director/ Curator of the Penticton Art Gallery received the following Facebook message from Khaled: “Hi Paul, The attack in Nice was 200 metres from my place, I was in a terrace in the street of the old town and I saw people running and pushing. At first we did not understand what is happening, I came back home with some confused information and I saw 20 persons trying to find a refuge in our building next to the sea. They explained to me, I asked everybody to come home... There were children and old people and they needed a rest, there were Tunisians, French, and people from Brussels... many mixed couples. We put the children in my bed, I refused to put on the TV, we opened a bottle of wine and we had a drink with a cheers to life and we talked till 2:00 in the morning when they could finally leave safely. We smiled about the idea that they were “refugees in a Syrian house.” Life is strange... But it’s a chance, a dream and we will wake up one day. Have a good and peaceful day, ~ Khaled”



خالد يوسف

ولد خالد يوسف في دمشق ودرس الطب في جامعة دمشق قبل السفر الى فرنسا التي اصبح فيها جراح. ويعد شريكا مؤسساً لمعرض فن سوريا والذي يعد منظمة غير ربحية هدفها الاساسي تعزيز عمل الفنانين السوريين. وبتصويره الفوتوغرافي بدأ بأسر تصوير الانعكاسات في الماء بعد ايام ممطرة وبدأ يبحث عن تفاصيل ممتعة في حائط ما او في مشهد بسيط ماخوذ من الحياة. له متعة في الفقاعات لانها تعيش لفترة قصيرة وغالبا ماتحاول ان تهرب وتظير بعيدا مثل افكارنا وذكرياتنا الجميلة او احلامنا.

MOHAMMAD ZAZA



BORN: April 3, 1987

FROM: Hama, Syria

RESIDES: Brussels, Belgium

WEB: www.facebook.com/mohammad.zaza.92
www.mohammadzaza.com

EMAIL: write.to.zaza@gmail.com



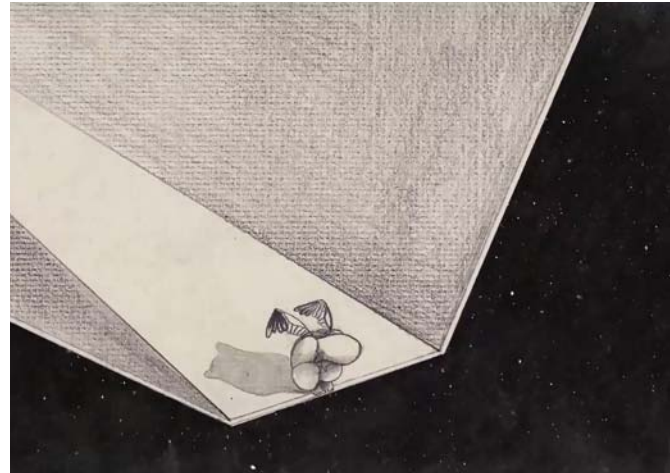
Mohammad Zaza grew up in an artistic family, and he started drawing and painting at an early age. After completing high school in Saudi Arabia, he moved to Syria in 2006 to study at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Aleppo University. He held his first solo exhibition in 2008. After his graduation in 2010, Zaza was appointed as a painting teacher assistant at the university, a post he held until 2012. Besides painting on large canvases, Zaza also works on illustrations and animations. Mohammad has held 10 solo exhibitions across Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, in addition to his participation in many group shows and international art fairs.

In his artworks, Mohammad Zaza focuses on the movement that lies behind fixed scenes, enhancing the subject in order to open new scopes of reality. His paintings aspire to work as a window to another dimension of life, and his shapes emphasize the unity of the source of thoughts. He redefines the preconceptions of form by removing the link between shape and function. While everything in the universe is held together by a gravitational force deriving its energy from a greater whole, he boldly challenges these limitations by imagining his creations as amorphous and detached from context. He breaks down other boundaries in his art: those between past and future, light and dark, and even between us and others. Each of his paintings offers an individual experience for viewers who find a unique connection to his art.

Mohammad Zaza now lives between Lausanne, Switzerland and Brussels, Belgium.

محمد زازا

ولد محمد زازا في الرياض في المملكة العربية السعودية من ابوين سوريين. انتقل الى سوريا عام 2006 من اجل الدراسة في كلية الفنون الجميلة في جامعة حلب. وتخرج منها في عام 2010 وتم تعيينه كمدرس مساعد للرسم في الجامعة. واستمر في منصبه هذا حتى عام 2012. ويرسم محمد لوحات كبيرة ولكنها يعمل كذلك في مقياس اصغر في معتزك الافلام المتحركة. ويركز في عمله على الحركة التي تقع خلف المشاهد الثابتة. وحاليا يعيش متنقلا بين لوزان في سويسرا وبروكسل في بلجيكا.





OBAIDAH ZORIK

BORN: October 1, 1990

FROM: Masyaf, Syria

RESIDES: Bremen, Germany

WEB: www.facebook.com/obaidah.zorik

<https://syriancreativehavens.com/portfolio/syrian-artist-obaidah-zorik>

www.facebook.com/Obaidah-Zorik-Artwork

EMAIL: obaidahzorik@gmail.com



Obaidah Zorik was born in 1990 in Masyaf, Syria. He joined the Faculty of Fine Arts in 2008 and graduated from the Drawing and Painting Department in 2012. Obaidah was a drawing tutor in 2013/14 for the department of Interior Design in the same faculty. Towards the end of 2015, he moved to Bremen, Germany, to pursue further studies in the arts.

Obaidah is inspired by his personal experiences and, as a result, he appears in many of his own artworks. He is also inspired by the environment around him to produce artworks with colors that are full of freedom, and lines full of courage and challenge. He draws his inspiration for his creations from deep within himself, from

childhood memories, from experiences, and uses his creative energy to bring life and expression to his paintings. Immersed in an introspective universe, the artist rewrites the definition of feeling and emotion, and invents his own language accentuated by dynamic lines, colours, rhythm, and movement. The colours are intense and free, the lines bold and defiant. His universe bears the hallmarks of Kafkaesque singularity, expressed in his work by returning to the original, the intimate, where the combination of light and shadow, brightness and darkness, immerses us in the complexities of the subconscious and mysticism, revealing secrets both tangible and intangible on the canvas.

عبيدة زورك

ولد عبيدة زورك في مدينة مصياف في سوريا ويعيش حاليا في مدينة برلين الألمانية ودرس في كلية الفنون الجميلة وتخرج من قسم الرسم والتخطيط في عام 2012. ويعد عبيدة رسام تعبيرى تلهمه تجاربه الشخصية. ولهذا فقد ظهر كموضوع في العديد من لوحاته. والهمته البيئية لينتج عمل فني الوانه مفعمة بالحرية وخطوطه مليئة بالشجاعة والتحدى.

LIST OF WORKS

Khaled Akil

Requiem for Syria 1, 2015
digital art
edition of 4 plus 1 artist proof
dimensions variable

Requiem for Syria 2, 2015
digital art
edition of 4 plus 1 artist proof
dimensions variable

Requiem for Syria 3, 2015
digital art
edition of 4 plus 1 artist proof
dimensions variable

Requiem for Syria 4, 2015
digital art
edition of 4 plus 1 artist proof
dimensions variable

Requiem for Syria 5, 2015
digital art
edition of 4 plus 1 artist proof
dimensions variable

Requiem for Syria 6, 2015
digital art
edition of 4 plus 1 artist proof
dimensions variable

Note: these works are presented as a video slide show

Ali Almeer

Life and Inanimate, 2014
carved wood
15 x 7.4 x 7.5 in

Game of Life, 2015
cast resin
19 x 7.5 x 7.5 in

Vase from Syria, 2015
cast resin
11.5 x 7 x 7 in

Humam Alsalm & Rami Bakhos

Cultural Beheading 1, 2015
digital print
8.25 x 11.75 in

Cultural Beheading 2, 2015
digital print
15.25 x 7 in

Cultural Beheading 3, 2015
digital print
5 x 6.5 in

Cultural Beheading 4, 2015
digital print
6 x 5.5 in

Cultural Beheading 5, 2015
digital print
5 x 15 in

Cultural Beheading 6, 2015
digital print
13.75 x 8.75 in

Juhayda Al Bitar

Untitled 1, 2015
acrylic on canvas
47 x 35.25 in
Collection of Darci Squarey, Chilliwack, BC

Untitled 2, 2015
acrylic on canvas
47 x 35.25 in

Untitled 3, 2015
acrylic on canvas
47 x 35 in

Untitled 4, 2015
acrylic on canvas
51 x 62.5 in

Mahmood Al Daoud

Untitled 1, 2016
mixed media on canvas
35.5 x 35.5 in

Untitled 2, 2016
mixed media on canvas
35.5 x 35.5 in

Untitled 3, 2016
mixed media on canvas
39 x 47.25 in

Untitled 4, 2016
mixed media on canvas
39 x 47.25 in

Untitled 5, 2016
mixed media on canvas
35.5 x 35.5 in

Khaled Dawwa

Fragility, 2014
cast bronze
9 x 9 x 6 in

Untitled, 2015
cast bronze
9 x 6 x 6.5 in

Amr Fahed

After the Bombing 1, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

After the Bombing 2, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Aleppo After the Bombing, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

The Camp's Angels 1, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

The Camp's Angels 2, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Collage Under the Rubble, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Displacement 1, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Displacement 2, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

The Green Bus, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Short Displacement 1, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Short Displacement 2, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Short Displacement 3, 2018
digital art
dimensions variable

Note: these works are presented as a
video slide show

Fadi Al-Hamwi

Gloating, 2014
oil on canvas
62 x 62.5 in

Self Portrait, 2014
oil on canvas
58.25 x 58.5 in

Sacrifice, 2014
oil on canvas
47 x 59 in

Birth, 2014
acrylic on canvas
29 x 39.5 in

Bathroom Mirror, 2014
oil on canvas
58 x 58.5 in

Bathroom Mirror III, 2015
oil on canvas
58.5 x 78.25 in

Artificial Sugar, 2015
single-channel video
2 minutes, 43 seconds

Dysfunction, 2015
charcoal on paper
60 x 74 in

Study for Bathroom Mirror, 2016
charcoal on paper
59.5 x 86 in

Ammart Khadour

Animal 1, 2015
digital photograph
11 x 8 in

Animal 2, 2015
digital photograph
10 x 8 in

Animal 3, 2015
digital photograph
10 x 8 in

Wall 1, 2015
digital photograph
11.5 x 8.5 in

Wall 2, 2015
digital photograph
8.5 x 11.5 in

Wall 3, 2015
digital photograph
11.5 x 8.5 in

Lina Malki

Displaced 2, 2016
mixed media on canvas
39 x 27.5 in

Displaced 3, 2016
mixed media on canvas
23.5 x 23.5 in

Displaced 4, 2016
oil on canvas
38.75 x 54.75 in

Displaced 5, 2016
oil on canvas
55 x 78 in

Maiesam Mallisho

Bang, Bang, 2016
mixed media on canvas
58.5 x 59 in

Nothing to be Done Here, 2016
mixed media on canvas
47 x 47 in

Orgasm, 2016
mixed media on canvas
55.5 x 55.5 in

Untitled, 2016
mixed media on canvas
59 x 46 in

Aya Al Medani

My Only Dream, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Untitled, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Spread Love, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Death Boats, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Peace for Syria 2, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Untitled, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

No Place for Our Kite, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Peace for Syria 1, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Pink Dreams 1, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Pink Dreams 2, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Pink Dreams 3, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Pink Dreams 4, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

How Much Should I Wait?, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

War, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Untitled, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Untitled, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Even Dreams Sink, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

What War Hides, 2016
digital drawing
9.5 x 7.75 in

Alaa Sharabi

Untitled 1, 2016
acrylic on canvas
31.25 x 31 in

Untitled 2, 2016
acrylic on canvas
53 x 52.5 in

Untitled 3, 2016
acrylic on canvas
39 x 39 in

Untitled 4, 2016
acrylic on canvas
39.25 x 39 in
Collection of Shelly McMillan,
Calgary, Alberta

Untitled 5, 2016
acrylic on canvas
39 x 39 in

Huda Takriti

Black Night Sky 1, 2016
collage
9 x 12 in

Black Night Sky 2, 2016
collage
9 x 12 in

Black Night Sky 3, 2016
collage
12.5 x 9 in

Black Night Sky 4, 2016
collage
13 x 9 in

Black Night Sky 5, 2016
collage
13 x 9 in

Black Night Sky 6, 2016
collage
12.75 x 8.75 in

Black Night Sky 7, 2016
collage
12.75 x 8.75 in

A storytelling: I only wish I could be there..., 2016
single-channel video
9 minutes, 26 seconds

NOISE, 2016
single-channel vide
1 minute, 19 seconds

Reem Tarraf

Untitled, 2016
acrylic on canvas
66 x 61 in

Untitled 1, 2016
acrylic on canvas
68 x 62 in

Untitled 2, 2016
acrylic on canvas
64 x 59.5 in

Untitled 4, 2016
acrylic on canvas
65 x 59 in

Untitled 5, 2016
acrylic on canvas
69.5 x 61.5 in

Omran Younis

Untitled, 2016
acrylic on canvas
59 x 69.6 in

Untitled 1, 2016
acrylic on canvas
60 x 70.5 in

Untitled 2, 2016
acrylic on canvas
61 x 70.25 in

Untitled 4, 2016
acrylic on canvas
60.75 x 44.5 in

Untitled 5, 2016
acrylic on canvas
60 x 70 in

Khaled Youssef

Oran (Algeria), 2015
digital photograph on paper
23 x 17 in

Untitled, 2015
digital photograph on paper
23 x 17 in

Brussels, 2015
digital photograph on paper
17 x 23 in

Barcelona, 2015
digital photograph on paper
17 x 23 in

Dubai, 2015
digital photograph on paper
17 x 23 in

Untitled, 2015
digital photograph on paper
17 x 23 in

Mohammad Zaza

Solo, 2014
digital print, edition of 10
20.5 x 27 in

The Face of the Machine IV, 2014
acrylic on canvas
59 x 67 in
Collection of Shelly McMillan,
Calgary, Alberta

The Photographer, 2016
acrylic on canvas
47 x 33.5 in

Saif, 2013
single-channel video animation
4 minutes, 12 seconds

Whirling Birds Ceremony, 2014
single-channel video animation
4 minutes, 47 seconds

Obaidah Zorik

Untitled, 2016
acrylic on canvas
51 x 35 in

Untitled, 2016
acrylic on canvas
51 x 35 in

Untitled, 2016
acrylic on canvas
51 x 35 in

Untitled, 2016
acrylic on canvas
59.25 x 43 in



thereach



Omran Younis, *Untitled 2 (detail)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 61 x 70 in