



ART CAIRO
فن القاهرة®

10 - 14 February 2023

Grand Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Egypt

ABD KASHA

Abd Kasha (b. 1997) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Syria. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Tishreen University in Latakia, Syria (2020), he began his career as a photographer but quickly expanded his artistic practice to include a range of media. His recent paintings, drawings, and sculptures reflect the use of expressionist figuration as a starting point for broader sociocultural explorations. This approach has characterized Syrian art for decades, which is deeply familiar to Kasha, whose father is the prominent Syrian sculptor Jamil Kasha. Abd, however, has forged a distinct path, with works that effectively describe the challenges of navigating war and conflict with biting social commentary. Puppets serve as stand-ins for human models and are depicted in desolate scenes that are at once timeless and haunting. Combining riotous brushwork with a warm palette that accentuates his two and three-dimensional figures, he unearths the sense of anxiety that underwrites an unstable environment and the psychic weight of loss and destruction that taints everyday life under such precarious conditions.

Kasha has participated in solo and collective exhibitions throughout the Arab World, including the National Center for Visual Arts at the University of Damascus. His works are held in private collections in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates.



Abd Kasha, Untitled
2022, mixed media on canvas, 130 x 150 cm
USD 4,000



Abd Kasha, Untitled
2022, mixed media on canvas, 140 x 120 cm
USD 3,360

AHMAD KASHA

Ahmad Kasha (b. 1997) is an artist and curator whose upbringing in a notable family of artists nurtured a life-long passion for art. Kasha and his twin brother, Abd, are both practicing artists who grew up surrounded by several generations of Syrian artists. After graduating from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Damascus, Ahmad studied privately with leading Syrian modernist Leila Nseir between 2016 and 2021. The influence of this mentorship can be found in Kasha's allegorical approach to addressing social issues, a conceptual thread that distinguished Nseir's artistic practice. Since then, Kasha has developed a singular expressionist style that manifests in paintings, drawings, and sculptures. His depictions of reality with a raw and vivid display of emotion spark a visceral experience in the viewer, as labored brushwork and a bold palette describe moments of vulnerability and large-scale violence.

An award-winning artist, Kasha has participated in solo and collective exhibitions in Syria, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. His works are housed in public and private collections throughout the Arab world and in Europe. As a curator and research archivist of Syrian art, he has collaborated on exhibitions at leading regional arts organizations, including the Barjeel Art Foundation (UAE), the Atassi Foundation (Syria; UAE), and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Qatar).

Ahmad Kasha lives and works in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



Ahmad Kasha, Untitled
2021, acrylic on canvas, 130 x 80 cm
USD 2,000



Ahmad Kasha, Untitled
2022, acrylic on canvas, 110 x 150 cm
USD 3,300

HOUSSAM BALLAN

Figurative painter Houssam Ballan's canvases are informed by his accomplished technical abilities and through his extensive academic and research endeavour. As an artist, Ballan's frequent experimentation informs the growth in his work as he works intuitively. In his earlier paintings, Ballan's young protagonists are executed with close attention to detail, a form of realism that relies on painterly effects and meticulous line work to create a sculptural sense of figuration. As the bodies of his subjects are given dimensionality, the artist renders their clothes as lines, patterns, and evident brushstrokes with a stylisation that alludes to the passage of time and the presence of an ongoing narrative.

At the centre of his work is the idea that representation cannot solely be based on what one sees, but the understanding of what one is seeing and the feelings it invokes in a person - be it through looking at it from different angles, touching it, allowing it to move you subconsciously, as well as other experiential interactions. Drawing upon the idea that when one tries to remember a person or a specific incident, that person or incident is not remembered in concrete shapes and lines and colours, but blurred into an overall multi-dimensional feeling, the artist minimalises the detail in his work.

Ballan's paintings are reminiscent of icons - the figures are usually situated in the centre of the canvas, adding light to his work without painting any shadows on their faces. The artist minimalises the size of the figures bodies, ignoring original dimensions, also characteristic of icons. Ballan explains that 'when painting an icon, Christian painters didn't care more about the sacred story or idea than other aspects of the work.'

HOUSSAM BALLAN (CONT.)

In his latest collection, *Alternative*, the artist takes a minimalist approach, using only a few elements and colour groups that have become the most prominent in his work as of late. At times, he utilizes the same element repeatedly, offering different perspectives on one shape by altering its size.

In the end, each form is a visual message speaking through the language of colour, space, and composition. The work, which is symbolic, also serves as a psychological depiction of the artist's life.

We do not know where the characters in these paintings live for that connection has been severed. Each piece is a poetic formula — intentionally rhetorical and brief.

Ballan was a tutor and member of the Teacher's Association at the University of Damascus. The artist was part of the 13th Cairo Biennale, Cairo (2019). In 2020, the artist collaborated on a workshop with Berlin based non-profit, CoCulture e.V. Ballan has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions including MENART, Brussels, Belgium (2023); Fann A Porter, Dubai, UAE (2023, 2022, 2020, 2019, 2018); Agial Gallery Beirut, Lebanon (2022); MADS Gallery, Milan, Italy (2021); Azad Art Gallery, Cairo, Egypt (2021); Litehouse Gallery, London, UK (2020); Egypt Art Fair / Art Cairo (2022, 2021, 2020); BBA Gallery, Berlin, Germany (2019); Hafez Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (2019); Fann A Porter Amman, Jordan (2019); Atelier Stories, Paris, France (2018); Mark Hachem Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon (2014); Arab Cultural Centre (2010, 2007, and 2005); Ayyam Gallery, Damascus, Syria (2006); French Cultural Centre, Damascus, Syria, (2004); among others. His works can be found in numerous private and public collections.



Houssam Ballan, *When I Was Beautiful* | عندما كنت جميلا

Alternative series, 2022, oil on canvas, 130 x 150

USD 10,000

JAMIL KASHA

Influenced by the natural elements around him, Jamil Kasha sculpts in tune with the organic form of the material itself. He explains: “My relationship with a stone could last many years and I cannot work on a piece of stone unless I love it. Then I start playing with it and reshaping it in my hands, trying to escalate its visual state to reach the result I want... I am not concerned about the way to deal with the material, but I work instinctively and interact with it without preconditions. Restrictions limit creativity, and the most important thing is to communicate with the sculptural work to reach the real value that gives it importance.”

Born in Jisr Al Shughour, Jamil Kasha (1958) graduated from the Department of Sculpture, Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus University in 1985. Using raw materials in his sculptures, Kasha sculpts busts of figures – mostly women and elements from his environment such as fish, birds, and mountain beetles. Abstract and symbolic, the work takes on a primitive form reminiscent of a hybrid between artworks from early civilizations and abstract contemporary work.

Kasha has exhibited throughout Syria at venues such as the National Museum of Aleppo and Damascus National Museum, showing internationally in Lebanon, Kuwait, and the Netherlands



Jamil Kasha, پورتر، یہ
2020, natural stone and brass sculpture, 18 x 10 x 10 cm
USD 1,800



Jamil Kasha, الجبلي
2022, natural stone and turquoise gemstone sculpture, 30 x 50 x 10 cm
USD 4,000



Jamil Kasha, وجه صغير
2022, natural stone sculpture, 12 x 6 x 6 cm
USD 1,300



Jamil Kasha، الجالسة
2022, natural stone and brass sculpture, 35 x 11.5 x 11 cm
USD 2,500



Jamil Kasha, المقاتل
2022, natural stone, brass and turquoise gemstone sculpture, 20 x 11 x 7 cm
USD 1,800



Jamil Kasha, ثور
2022, mixed media sculpture with corals, pearls and semi precious stone sculpture, 16 x 20 x 13 cm
USD 4,000



Jamil Kasha, وجه
2022, mixed media sculpture with corals, pearls and semi precious stone sculpture, 24 x 10 x 8 cm
USD 1,800

MAJD KURDIEH

Artist Majd Kurdieh's practice incorporates painting, drawing, and literature using recurring figures that stand to tell a story, usually carrying a strong moral and positive reinforcement that the artist projects into the world.

Kurdieh's childlike paintings incorporates strong literary and story-telling techniques. He paints recurring whimsical characters that seem to narrate a story. Over the last several years, the artist has created a 'cast of characters', the two main ones being the Fasaeen (Arabic for 'tiny ones'). The stories told through the representation of these figures are not specific stories that the artist references but rather ones that could apply to any viewer, leaving room for personal interpretation. The Fasaeen, one boy (Fasoon) and one girl (Fasoneh), always smiling despite the fact their world is filled with hardships, are usually accompanied by animal characters.

The group of characters comes together to make what the artist calls 'The Very Scary Butterfly Gang'. Using the paradox of a butterfly and it being very scary, Kurdieh touches upon harsh topics with immense gentleness. He explains that 'when the fragility of a butterfly scares you, you become indifferent to the roars of a monster, you will busy yourself defending the rights of people to maintain their humanity'. At the essence of all his work is a strong sense of human protection and need to shed light on basic human rights and needs. The gang carries out small optimistic tasks like removing thorns from the land and replacing them with flowers, or talking to the sun and the moon, where the sun itself rises and sets at its own caprice, projecting a sense of freedom to the viewer.

At first glance, the works seem cartoon-like and simple, however, upon further investigation, the viewer is drawn into a complex world that the artist has been able to simplify, almost with a childlike innocence.

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MAJD KURDIEH (CONT.)

Strongly poetic and very sensitive Kurdieh channels the multilayers of his emotions into creating deeply humane art. The ingenuity of his paintings and drawings relays the artist's candour and sincerely draws attention to issues he feels deserve to be represented truthfully.

Kurdieh's works are playful and positive. He continues to develop his characters that gain more depth as he progresses in his own practice. At the centre of his practice is a sense of duty to make the world a better place, whether through art, discourse, or creating moments where the viewer forms a connection with his Fasaeen.

Recently, Kurdieh has featured in solo and group exhibitions at MADS Gallery, Milan, Italy (2021); Azad Art Gallery, Cairo (2021; 2020); Egypt Art Fair / Art Cairo (2022; 2021; 2020); BBA Gallery, Berlin (2019), DAR Art (2021, 2022); Fann À Porter, Jordan (2021, 2020, 2019); Fann À Porter, Dubai (2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2016), El-Sawy Culture Wheel, Cairo (2019), Sikka Art Fair, Dubai (2018) and Art Bahrain, Manama (2019, 2018). His works are housed in public and private collections in the Middle East and abroad, including HE Dr. Zaki Nusseibeh's private collection and the Atassi Foundation.

Born in Aleppo, Syria in 1985, Kurdieh lives and works in Amsheet, Lebanon.



Majd Kurdieh, [You are what you walk towards.]
One Wound, One Smile series, 2022, oil on canvas, 90 x 90 cm
USD 2,700



مجدي كورديه ٢٢

طوفان بعد طوفان و مازلنا نحاول.

Majd Kurdieh, [One flood after the other yet we still try.]
One Wound, One Smile series, 2022, oil on canvas, 90 x 90 cm
USD 2,700

MAYAR OBEIDO

Mayar Obeido (b. 1995) is an artist from Syria. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Damascus, he works in painting, drawing, and sculpture, moving freely between media while producing a focused body of work. In Obeido's most recent works, anonymous human figures and how they relate to their surroundings, which include the inanimate objects that occupy these spaces, become meditative reflections on the mundane.

In his mixed-media paintings, composed of acrylic, charcoal, and collage, Obeido incorporates clippings from Arab newspapers, a reference to the current events that inevitably impact inner worlds. His anguished figures appear to melt into the background, as though overcome by the details of these texts or perhaps internalizing the news. In other works, an apple becomes a point of reflection, a symbol of sustenance that slowly takes on anthropomorphic characteristics in response to the emotional torrents that sweep over his figures. Obeido's drawings are distinctively expressive as he combines figuration and abstraction, a dynamism in draftsmanship that informs his paintings, while his sculptures animate the objects shown in larger works. This multimedia investigation provides the viewer with greater insight into his subject matter, creating an immersive experience.

Obeido has participated in solo and collective exhibitions at art spaces and galleries in his native Syria, in addition to exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates.

Mayar Obeido lives and works in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



Mayar Obeido, Apple Observer
2023, mixed media on canvas, 110 x 235 cm
USD 5,000



Mayar Obeido, Apple Observer 2
2022, mixed media on canvas, 48 x 62 cm
USD 1,000



Mayar Obeido, Self Portrait
2022, mixed media on canvas, 53 x 67 cm
USD 1,000



Mayar Obeido, Auto Portrait
2022, mixed media on canvas, 53 x 67 cm
USD 1,000

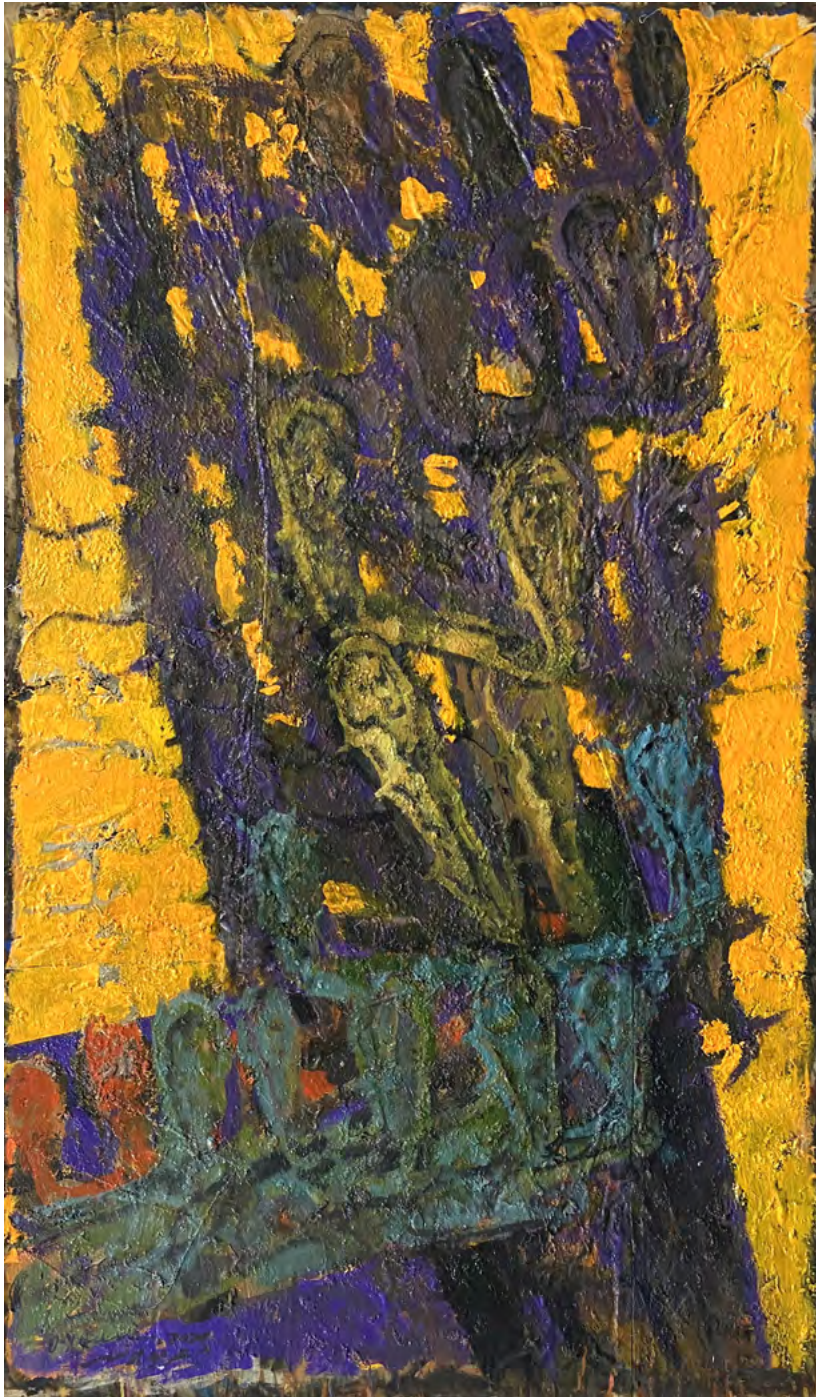


Mayar Obeido, Apple Observer
2022, mixed media on canvas, 48 x 62 cm
USD 1,000

OMRAN YOUNES

Since the late 1990s, Syrian painter Omran Younes (b. 1971) has probed the psychological undercurrents of expressionist painting, building on a rich tradition of Syrian modernism that began when artists such as Fateh Moudarres used painting as a way of visualizing the unseen but palpable shifts in Syrian society in the mid twentieth century. Younes is steeped in this history yet remains committed to ongoing experimentation, actively pushing the boundaries of painting in search of ways to communicate the complexity of the human psyche and the physical responses that reveal its fragility, such as instances of fear and pain. This emphasis on the human condition makes works that were inspired by his surroundings in war-torn Syria categorically universal, resonating with viewers from the U.S. to the Middle East. His rich palette, characterized by shades of vermilion, sunburnt orange, lapis, and black, white, and grey, contrasts the warmth of the earth with the vastness of the sky, grounding his scenes in reality. In his most recent works, distinguished by thick, loose brushwork, prickly pear cacti stand in for the anonymous figures of earlier works, anthropomorphic representations of weathered yet resilient protagonists.

Younes received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Damascus' Faculty of Fine Arts in 1998 and 2000, respectively, and was the first prize recipient of the 3rd Annual Youth Competition in Damascus, among other awards. He has exhibited at galleries and art spaces across the Middle East, the United States, and Europe, including the Virginia Commonwealth University Gallery in Doha, Qatar, while his paintings are held in the collections of institutions and organizations such as the Atassi Foundation.



Omran Younes, Untitled
Cactus series, 2022, mixed media on canvas, 190 x 100 cm
USD 11,500



Omran Younes, Untitled
Cactus series, 2022, mixed media on canvas, 120 x 100 cm
USD 7,200

RABEE KIWAN

“The main element of my work is the human figure in all its states and manifestations. Since the beginning of my career, I took inspiration from the observation of reality, trying to imitate it in the composition of my works, at the same time playing with the material in an expressive manner”

In this latest series titled Black, the artist’s experiment is considered a natural extension of his previous exploration of contemporary human life. He uses a special technique that abstracts space and imbues his paintings in different details.

We see human subjects with skewed expressions representing a condition of awe and astonishment that are clearly manifested in wide eyes that are reminiscent of Sumerian sculptures from the region’s old civilizations. The size of the eyes signified the person’s socio-economic status, but the artist portrays them as a reflection of the surrounding environment and its sudden and continuous change.

Born in Damascus, Syria in 1984, Rabee Kiwan graduated from the painting department of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Damascus in 2008. Rabee Kiwan’s works are part of several private collections in Europe, Canada, America, the Persian Gulf and Lebanon.

The artist lives and works between the UAE and Syria.



RABEE KIWAN 2021

Rabee Kiwan, Untitled
Black series, 2021, mixed media on canvas, 130 x 130 cm
USD 6,800



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled
Black series, 2022, mixed media on canvas, 90 x 90 cm
USD 4,630



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled
Black series, 2022, mixed media on canvas, 50 x 50 cm
USD 1,500



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled
Black series, 2022, mixed media on canvas, 50 x 50 cm
USD 1,500



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled, Black series,
2021, mixed media on canvas, 30 x 26 cm
USD 520



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled, Black series,
2021, mixed media on canvas, 30 x 26 cm
USD 520



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled, Black series,
2021, mixed media on canvas, 30 x 26 cm
USD 520



Rabee Kiwan, Untitled, Black series,
2021, mixed media on canvas, 30 x 26 cm
USD 520

SALAH HREEB

Both an architect and an artist, Salah Hreeb was born in Damascus, Syria in 1985. He graduated from the Faculty of Architecture, Damascus University in 2010.

Salah found a keen interest in art at a very young age spending many hours in drawing and reading about art. His passion for art continued as he began developing his skills and techniques academically, being trained by many local artists for 10 years, and having participated in many art workshops. Undoubtedly his architecture study also contributed in improving his artistic vision.

“My work is based on the monitoring of life through forms, elements and movements. Reformulating the image through Abstraction and Impressionism and creating a relation between the viewer and the painting. My aim is that the viewer will be able to relate to the painting and enjoy himself through his own visual experience”

Salah has participated in several collective exhibitions around the world including Syria, Dubai, Lebanon, England, Turkey, and beyond.



Salah Hreeb, Untitled
2022, acrylic on canvas, 180 x 90 cm
USD 5,000



Salah Hreeb, Untitled
acrylic on canvas, 125 x 80 cm (each)
USD 3,000 (each)

SARA TANTAWY

Sara Tantawy's realist paintings explore a range of human emotions, using allegory and metaphor to describe profound experiences. Her ability to render figures with painstaking detail while creating pensive depictions of isolated figures establishes her work as part of a long tradition of painting, one that aims to unearth the psychological dimensions of portraiture in order to facilitate a reflective experience for the viewer. In her most recent oil on canvas paintings, she invokes the grace and elegance of traditional Egyptian folk dancers as ancient cultural forms that are at once cathartic and transporting.

Based in Cairo, Tantawy (b. 1994) graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Helwan University in 2017, and has been active in Egypt and abroad since then. She has participated in large-scale exhibitions and competitions such as the Beijing International Biennale (2019), the Luxor International Painting Symposium (2020), the Dafen International Oil Painting Biennale, from which she received an award in 2021, and the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh (2022). Other notable events for the artist include a solo exhibition at Motion Gallery in Cairo (2022) and a group exhibition of Egyptian artists hosted by Meridian Center for Cultural Diplomacy in Washington D.C. (2022).



Sara Tantawy, Pile of Hay
2019, oil on canvas, 110 x 180 cm
USD 3,000

About Fann À Porter®

Fann À Porter is a contemporary art gallery at The Workshop Dubai that represents a diverse selection of emerging international and regional artists.

The gallery aims to nurture the burgeoning and dynamic contemporary art scene through quality exhibitions, non-profit events, auctions, and an active community program.

The gallery's exhibition program includes eight curated exhibitions a year, and features artists working across diverse media.

Fann À Porter has established a series of dialogues and collaborations with curators, writers, governmental entities, and institutions to affirm its commitment to support the long-term development of young contemporary artists from the Middle East.

By hosting a regular public programming including exhibitions, talks, non-profit and charitable initiatives and by participating in fairs, Fann À Porter has established itself in forefront of the region's exciting arts landscape.

Founded in 2006 by Ghada Kunash, Fann À Porter is based at The Workshop, a unique inter-disciplinary community space consisting of an art gallery, a sustainable store, design studio, and a cafe. The Workshop aims to engage the audiences, and support the development of Dubai's arts scene through its extensive programs, educational initiatives, and community projects.



Fann À Porter

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