

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Untitled, Hold Onto The Flower, 2019, oil on paper, 40 x 30 cm

FANN A PORTER, AMMAN GRAND OPENING

featuring MAJD KURDIEH: *HOLD ONTO THE FLOWER*

Opening reception: Wednesday, 15 January at 7pm

Manara Arts & Culture, Amman, Jordan

- Fann A Porter, Amman, Jordan marks the gallery's first expansion outside of the UAE
- The inaugural exhibition will present a latest series by renowned painter Majd Kurdieh alongside other series by the artist.
- The gallery's presence in Amman, Jordan signifies its efforts to reach a wider audience and strengthen its commitment to consistently provide opportunities and collaborations for its artists.

About Fann A Porter, Amman

Fann A Porter is pleased to announce the expansion of its activities with the launch of a new gallery space in Amman, Jordan.

"Fann A Porter's presence in Amman, Jordan will help strengthen its existing creative infrastructure to ensure the continued nurturing and success of our artists in an important cultural centre like Amman, and add value to its contemporary art market" – Ghada Kunash, Founder, Fann A Porter.

The gallery's presence in Amman, Jordan signifies its efforts to reach a wider audience and strengthen its commitment to consistently provide opportunities and collaborations for its artists.

Fann A Porter Amman will launch at its location in Manara Arts & Culture on 15 January with a solo exhibition of work by influential Syrian painter, Majd Kudieh. The exhibition will comprise of Kurdieh's latest series, Hold Onto The Flower, and select canvases from his last Surrender to Love series..

About the Exhibition

By restricting his colour palette to black and white, the 99 works that comprise Majd Kurdieh's Hold Onto The Flower series take the viewer on a nostalgic journey into the past. Like a black

and white film flickering on a grainy screen, these images are deliberately imprecise and drained of the artist's usually vibrant colours, leaving space for imagination. Even though they are monochrome, the viewer interprets the colours as they desire in a process which the artist describes as "igniting the flames of memory".

Naturally, Kurdieh's animal gang maintain their ubiquitous presence. In this adventure, Mr. Elephant who has a fish for a heart, engages in a long discussion with his heart, then he lets go of the physical world and holds only to the flower of the series' title. Fasoonah is depicted in multiple works; in one painting, she is selling smiles in return for kisses; in another, she is facing up to Mr. Monster while the gang hide in the shade of her hair or inside her eyes. In a particularly striking work, Fasoonah is dressed as a fireman, fighting the fire raging in Fasoon's heart. Fasoon also plays multiple roles in the new collection; he's a wizard, who can transform objects into birds; a gypsy; a fisherman, waiting for the river to come his way; and a horseman, riding his horse and reciting classical Arabic poetry.

This new collection features a new character; Mr. Mouse for whom nothing is impossible. Mr. Mouse raises the Sun Flag in the face of the storm.

Like a yearning for home cooked food or the trace of a song winding through the depths of early childhood memories, this series connects the viewer to forgotten places in their minds. It is the artist's intention that after witnessing the 99 tales depicted, the 100th is for the viewer to reflect upon in a boundless dream.

About the Artist

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 works have always been figurative, with his earlier works being a series of trials in realism, mythicism, and other fields. He paints recurring whimsical characters that seem to narrate a story. Over the past four 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 (Fasooneh), always smiling despite the fact their world is filled with hardships, are usually accompanied by other characters.

At first glance, the works seem cartoonlike 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.

Using a strong literary element within his works, Kurdieh joins the Fasaeen with a group of animals that he paints. 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.

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 candor and sincerely draws attention to issues he feels deserve to be represented truthfully.

Recently, Kurdieh has featured in solo and group exhibitions at BBA Gallery, Berlin (2019), Manara Arts & Culture, Jordan (2019); Fann-A-Porter, Dubai (2019, 2018, 2016), El-Sawy Culture Wheel, Cairo (2019), and Athar Al Farasheh, Aleppo (2011), 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.

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



About Fann A Porter

Fann A Porter is a contemporary art gallery 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 programme.

Fann A Porter Dubai is based at The Workshop, a unique inter-disciplinary community space consisting of a cafe, art gallery, sustainable store and design space, providing visitors with a diversified artistic and cultural experience. Bathed in natural sunlight with its garden, The Workshop is located in the heart of Jumeirah in Dubai.

For more information and for interviews with the artist, please contact the gallery on +971559480363, or email fann@theworkshopdubai.com