

UNIVERSAL

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COLOURS

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MUSTAFA AL-YASSIN

Artist of the issue



"Reciting a
colour
Painting a verse"

www.eu-man.org

UNIVERSAL COLOURS

European Union Migrants Artists Network Magazine

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EDITORIAL

Here I am, writing again, or rather screaming again. As if there is no other voices in this world, but mine nor there is any other deaths but my own.

I am trying to scream with the loudest voice, that I am the survivor; I am the live person who remains standing, among all that has happened last year and the year before. I do not want to call this stage, the stage of challenges, or the stage of recognition repression, but I am trying to learn from my mistakes, towards surviving.

This stage started in crazy boiling reactions and successive attacks, attacks with obvious aims. I remain holding to the profile, because I do not see my work form a machiavellian point of view, but I see it as a message, like the profits messages, or those who struggle in life, such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King and others, not for any other reason, but more stability on this crazy Earth.

Here I can say strongly, or rather scream with all my voice that what we achieved in the EU-MAN during last year was a miracle, or something out of the mankind logic. So that we could hold some 12 exhibitions for our members in the gallery, which we have opened for the EU-MAN association, we could continue publishing U.C.; we could carry out one of the most important projects, was the large-scale exhibition of Autumn Salon 2002, which included 14 artists from 4 countries as exhibitors.

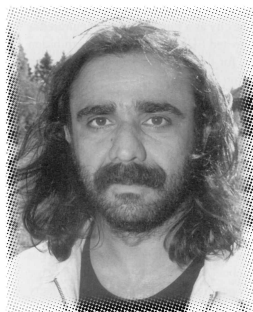
What we achieved here was to be a united team and to give evidence that we need this organization. It was not an easy task to accomplish all these projects with a total annum income of €9000. A simple calculation could show what we did, as the rent of the gallery alone is about €8000.

Here I do not mean that we can continue our work with the same way. And I do apologize for using the word miracle, because I was not alone who worked and implemented all these projects, but the board of the EU-MAN with me all the time, they advised and supported me with their sincere conscious affirming that EU-MAN is a must for all of us.

My scream is to the faces of those who put obstacles and still do, those who wish that our movement would die one day. The reality is that this movement was born in my mind, and speareded everywhere and became as a phenomenon in Europe, that it raised a lot of questions and made storms of debates. Surely it did.

This movement, which will be, hopefully soon, recognized officially, in Finland draws the attention of the politicians and others, who are involved in art and cultural affairs to the migrant art and artists.

Mrs. Sirpa Pietikäinen, a Finnish MP, with whom I met last summer in the Parliament house and made a short presentation to her about our work in the EU-MAN as an independent unique movement in Europe, was very positive and cooperative as well. This hard working lady was preparing a paper for culture policy in Finland The paper that I received recently included an acknowledgment of the existence of the migrant artists in Finland, it is also considered as an action plan, which the Government Council to be discussing. This paper urges to taking the migrant movement into consideration.



A committee of Risto Ruohonen, Kari Poutasuo, Mikko Cortes Tellés and myself, met the general director of the ministry for culture Kalavi kivistö last September to discuss the project of EU-MAN and the possibilities of continuing this project and to solve the problems, which hinder its existence such as the annual fund, official recognition and other difficulties facing the organisation.

Isn't appropriate to scream?
Have I passed on my message?

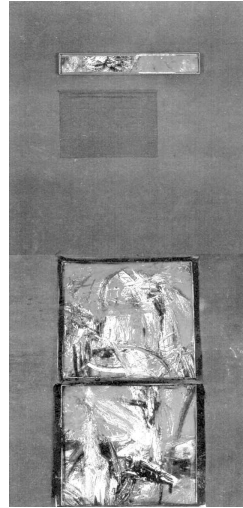
Amir Khatib

WE HOPE TO SEE GRISHA AGAIN

EU-MAN gallery hosted an exhibition of the Russian Artists, "originally Arminian" for a month. The exhibition was considered a landmark in the gallery history.

The exhibition inspired media, collectors and the other enthusiasts of art.

Helsingin Sanomat, the Finnish leading newspaper, wrote about Grisha's works and hoped that Grisha will exhibit in Helsinki again.



SYMPHONY OF LIFE AND DEATH

A TV set is about to eat up an upside down human being, dry grapes are in opposition to fresh ones. Nails are composing a shape of unity whereas a page of a book is torn into two parts away from each other. This was Dwi Sitariano's exhibition, which took place in the gallery between 24th of September till the 11th of October.

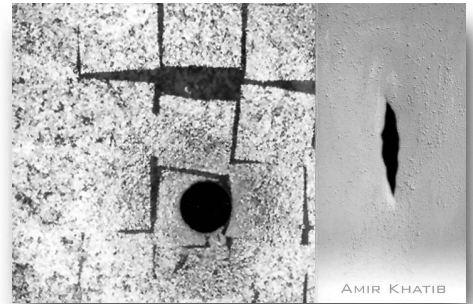
"It might be life against death. Understand it the way you like." Said Dwi in answering a question about why did he put the dry and fresh grapes in contradiction.

The art collection reflected the artist's post modernism leaning and made the viewers gaze closely with a different understanding each time they went back to have a second look.

EXILE AND IDENTITY

Is exile an ever lasting search for identity? A stimulating question was felt among those who read it. One that Amir Khatib had put forward in his invitation flyer when he first presented his 'The Three Trinities' exhibition at the 'Galleria EU-MAN' in Helsinki, in October 18th 2002. A question that, and upon viewing his works, appears the stable point in what Khatib was addressing both as an explanation as well as a thought provoking invitation to be mulled over. But that the term 'exile' itself orchestrates an range of varying definitions both as what we, the individual person, perceives whether it be politically motivated or socially, as a whole or singularly. What perhaps stands out, and is most striking about the three bodies of trinity... 'Happiness', 'Unsettlement', and 'Waiting', as well as with the two complementary independent forms of, 'Absorbion' and 'The Last Version' = (a singular piece at this stage) is that they set the wheels of the mind in motion as the exuberance of Khatib's beliefs and idealisms, wishes and desires.

(See a review by Jer Halpin on page 16)



Invitation Card

PRISM OF THE SOUL

This world around us is beautiful: spring, first love, faith, conversation, journeys and an interesting book. How many other things?

With this question Alex Kuprianov and V. Apinijan started their invitation card to their collective exhibition in the EU-MAN gallery on December the 3rd.

question raised from the art works of the two artists. A dress would be an answer as Alex Kuprianov used it as an art object in itself, without a female model inside.

Alex answers the question saying: "When something suddenly moves inside my soul, I find the object of my art, which I turn it to be the subject of my creation.



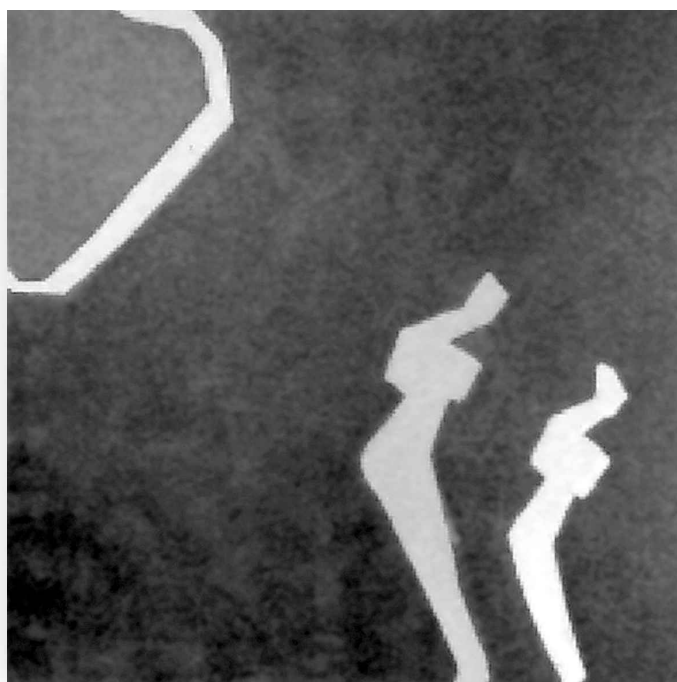
Invitation Card

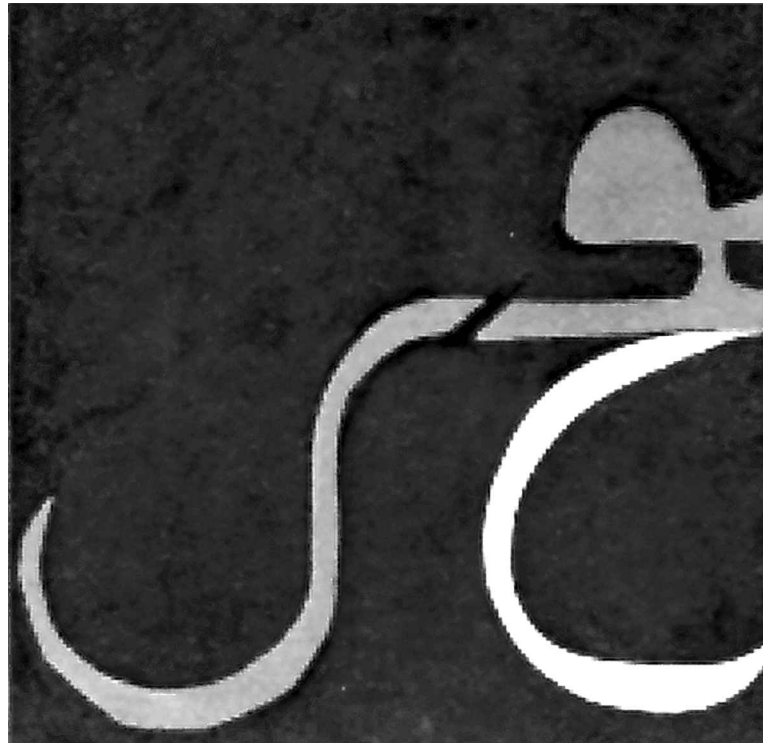
Mustafa Al-Yassin

Most of the time the commencements, which happen to the poet while starting to write a verse, look like those inspirations which come about to the painter while thinking of starting a portrait. The fields of the human creation meet in one single point, which the poetry point; even the pure sciences are not far from this that any creation needs a "feeling" to be complete.

The feeling is a very important dimension in drawing a portrait, this feeling whispers to the receiver with the inner rhythms of the colour, line, light and other artistic entries.

*Reciting a
colour.....
Painting a verse*





As our artist today enters his own world to start his work, the cloth turns to a paper and the brush into a pen, with which he writes his poems from his unconscious. Verses turn to a visual music could be seen with eyes, this is how we can describe the art works of Mustafa Al-Yassin, whom we have known as a poet and an artist.

Mustafa lives both destinies in one person.

Mustafa's works don't depend on his feelings only, but also on what happens deep inside him in the unknown area of the unconscious.

Mustafa makes and lives his own terms, establishing his own ideal world, which comes as a reaction against these pressures of reality and by creating this world of his, he tries to compensate his loses and this what makes his works come in a conceptual format.

These formats are his ways to express what happens inside his soul.

Mustafa Al-Yassin



Al-Yassin left his home country Syria about 14 years ago. These old places remain in his mind, but they come empty or deserted in his works.

This theme in Mustafa's works emphasizes on the importance of the others' presence more than their absence that the artist soul is still roaming around these places and attached to them more than before.

Mustafa used the Arabic letters as a theme at some point. He used these letters as multi-face expressions as they came as a trail to express the concepts of time and space. They also expressed his personal suffer in dealing with the present as it came in his Arabic letter collection.



Mass, space and colours are Mustafa's most important tools. He shows his ability to recruiting these tools and develops them to become absolute tools with which he produces absolute forms, including the Arabic letter as a theme.

Using the Arabic letters did not mean neither going back to heritage as a source, nor using exotic forms by which he astonishes the European viewers.

Using the Arabic Letter was a use of an artistic element like colour and space.

Mustafa did his best to put the Arabic letter in the focus not as a letter, but as an artistic element as colours and spaces.

By Amir Khatib

MIGRANT IN EUROPE

By Khaled D. Ramadan

During the 1830s, the universities of France were opened to foreigners, and the right of political asylum was first codified in its modern form in which an individual can apply for this status through an established state bureaucracy, rather than plead for it as a favour from a ruler. Throughout the 1840s, Italian political émigrés and other Europeans such as Poles and Greeks poured into Paris, because the Parisians idealised the resistance to aristocratic and royal exploitation.

“The solidity of native things, as of selves, which have not experienced displacement, may be the greatest of illusions.”

Displacement produces value, reflexive value. That is value given both to the viewer as part of the things seen and to the very physical world itself, whose character and form we are forced to see by looking at its transformation in a distorting mirror. By contrast, there is an illusory solidity to the objects that have not been subjected to this displacement. The solidity of native things, as of selves, which have not experienced displacement, may be the greatest of illusions.

It was in Paris that the changes that would produce the more modern image of the foreigner as a person necessarily in pain first became apparent. These changes, paradoxically, were due to the development of modern nationalism - a nationalism that has made those who leave their nations seem like surgical patients who have suffered an amputation. One would think of Socrates' refusal of exile as evidence of the belief that even death as a citizen was more honourable than exile.

It was due to the meaning attributed to nationality that the exiles, who lived in Paris in 1848, would find themselves having to rethink what it meant to be long

displaced from home. During their everyday lives abroad, they gradually lost contact with the rituals and customs of the homeland, and the *nomos* became a memory rather than an activity. They would have to find a meaning for their lives in the very fact of their displacement, in being foreigners. They would need to look at their memories of the nation in something more like Monet's mirror and say, "I look in the mirror and I see someone who is not I."

The doctrine of nationalism, which crystallised in 1848, gives a geographic imperative to the concept of culture itself. Tradition, habit, faith, pleasure and ritual – all depend upon enactment in a particular territory. More, the place, which nourishes rituals, is a place composed of people like oneself, people with whom one can share without explaining. Territory thus becomes synonymous with identity.

In the middle of the 1920s, Paris became the principal stage for European modernism, having only a decade before shared this role with cities such as Berlin, Hanover, Moscow, Munich and Zurich. Paris became the place of study for artists from other countries who came in great number to the Academie Moderne and other private academies. The official French art of the first decades of the century was a traditional middle class art, and the works shown in official exhibitions were academic works of idealised realistic character. Among the official exhibitions, the Salon des Artistes Francais was the most renowned. The official artistic milieu was dominated by academic painters, by the members of Institut de France, and by competition for prizes and medals. The official art was furthermore identified with the national concept. The art of the official school of artists was in official circles called 'French', as opposed to the art of the modernist artists. This was because almost all of the modernists were foreigners, and their art was considered cosmopolitan. The modernist movements were often compared with the Mensheviks or Bolsheviks by the establishment, in reference to vanguard art groups in Germany and the Soviet Union, while France was considered the protector of the values of the so-called 'classic art', meaning traditional and academic art.

Because art has everything to do with identity, tradition, heritage and nationality, it has given rise to a split personality syndrome among many immigrants, and this leads to some points, which I would like to draw your attention to. "You have the strongest identity when you are not aware of it. That is, you are most yourself when you are least aware of yourself." It is the basic rule of modern norms that you are most yourself when you are least aware of yourself. This statement can be made to prevent cultural contamination as the national institutions can be legitimised as reflections of popular impulse rather than as constructions, which

By Khaled D. Ramadan

might be problematic, and in need of constant discussion. Manzoni wrote as Tolstoy would later write: “The peasantry is morally superior because peasants have no awareness of themselves in time and history, are free of the growing poison of too much thought, of thinking beyond the confines of life as it is given. The peasant does not look in the mirror of history; he simply is. The people are silent.”

The foreigner remained passionately interested in the affairs of his country but felt no longer able to live in it. The foreigners faced two dangers: The first was the danger of forgetting, the other, the danger of remembering. The first was a condition in which the foreigner was demeaned by the desire to assimilate, the other, a condition in which he or she was destroyed by nostalgia. Feeling ashamed of oneself is likely to lead to the loss of judgement. Instead, for the foreigner, the knowledge that he comes from elsewhere, rather than being a source of shame, should be a cautionary knowledge. Instead of the ancient device, “nothing that is human is foreign to me,” the device of modern identity could be, “nothing that is foreign to me is real”. The Japanese president Nakasame once asserted: Only those who understand one another can make decisions together. A foreigner’s assertion of the right to participate, beyond what pertains to his or her national identity, is one way to force the dominant society to acknowledge that there is a public sphere beyond the borders of anthropology. It is also the only way to survive being personally imprisoned in an unequal place of differences.

“We cannot leave each other in peace, not because we do not want to do so, but because the possibilities are there.”

In a way, it is always a temptation for individuals who are displaced to idealise their roots as solid and secure, to make still photographs of the past, while the present unfolds more like composed of abruptly shifting scenes. If the foreigner cannot become a universal citizen, cannot throw off the mantle of nationalism, then the only way he or she can cope with the heavy baggage of culture is to subject it to certain kinds of displacement, which lighten its burdensome weight. And in this effort to displace the imagery of culture and folkways, the foreigner is engaged in a work akin to that of the modern artist whose energies have, in the last century, been used not so much to represent objects as to displace them.

In our complicated modern time, it is difficult to live in a closed society. We cannot leave each other in peace, not because we do not want to do so, but because the possibilities are there. Time has changed, humans

and human figures are no longer the centre of the universe like in the time of the Greek Renaissance. Today we are not in need for physical contact to solve our problems – we can see and hear each other from distance. We can practise and exercise most of our senses via electronics. We are moving from the object of priority to the object of less priority – from sculpture to installation – from location to dislocation – from identification to un-identification, especially in art and in particular in visual art. The artistic identity has almost vanished – we are moving forward towards artistic globalisation in styles, ideas and techniques.

If we are capable to see, it means that we are capable to be affected by what we see. In many of the western countries, there are a few artistic ideas that circle in the minds of many different artists at the same time. But there will always be someone who will tell you that their art is reflecting their identity, even though they belong to the contemporary abstract school. It is unusual for artists to abandon the time and place they are part of, and they must reflect the contemporary conditions. Those who live in a different time than their own and present different shapes and forms than their contemporaries will definitely end in conflict. One has to live in harmony and in full contact with time and place in a very natural way. If one forces him- or herself to do so, the result will be conflict as well. Many foreign artists in Denmark are facing these problems. A large number of foreign artists living in Denmark or elsewhere are committing a typical mistake. In many cases, they switch from their own historical art language to an abstract language in a desperate attempt to gain quick recognition from the new society they live in. In other cases, some artists are standing stubbornly on their heritage and express only their own identity, their own art language and their own exotic art. Both approaches end in conflict.

For the artists that attempt to produce art that can be accepted in the new society without allowing the dimension of time and place to be naturally reflected in their art, their work will be an unoriginal copy of the local art and these copies will not be able to compete with the original local art. Abstract art in the western world is a reflection of the complicated life style in this part of the world. But despite its complexity, it is helping many nations to agree on one issue. Art and especially abstract art is a successful globalisation phenomenon.

In Denmark, there are many foreign artists. However, since Denmark opened its borders to immigrants about 40 years ago, foreign artists have not left a great impression on the Danish society. A few effective foreign artists have found their way through the bureaucracy of the Danish art life and the institutions, and most of them, unlike the foreign artists in the 1920 Paris that worked in groups and started new waves and styles, work alone.

Paper for cultural workshop in Holland 1999

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ALICE BURTON: 4 ABSTRACT WOMEN ARTISTS

Berlin, DE Germany

2002-12-30 until 2003-03-14

Galerie Im Neuen Kranzler Eck



Canadian artist Alice Burton exhibits in Berlin this winter as part of 4 Abstract Women Artists at the Galerie Im Neuen Kranzler Eck. This exhibition is made up of mixed media works on canvas and paper. The show opened with a vernissage on 5 December and runs to 28 February 2003. The gallery is at Kurfürstendamm, 21, in Berlin.

Alice Burton's paintings, as described by curator Ming Tiampo, are about memory and discovery, like layers of pattern, colour, smell, taste and light wafting back in fragments when recalling an adventure into the unknown. Neither narrative nor completely abstract, they conjure up the experience of travel... There is a strong emphasis on colour, texture, line and composition in her work. After spending a part of her childhood in the Maritimes and the West Indies she developed a love of travel. Like many artists her work has been enriched by these experiences. She combines knowledge of art history, which tends to be a Western interpretation, with the artistic expression of other non-western cultures that is rich in iconography, pattern and textures.

WOLFGANG TILLMANS: VIEW FROM ABOVE

Humblebæk, DK

2003-01-15 until 2003-04-21

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art



The 2003 season of exhibitions at Louisiana opens on 15 January with the first Scandinavian presentation of the German-born photographer Wolfgang Tillmans. Tillmans is the most talked-about photographer of the nineties and a remarkable renewer of photography in relation to other contemporary visual arts. He is now based in London, and in 2000 - as the first foreign-born artist - he won the most prestigious British art award: The Turner Prize.

View from Above is a presentation of works dating from the past four years, a period which marks a new phase in Tillmans' art. While his work of the 90s could be called a chronicle of the decade's youth culture, his recent abstract works are of an almost classical beauty. The title of this exhibition refers to the many shots from above, down into everything - from night-time views of Los Angeles to small plants growing in the artist's window box. Tillmans' work is characterized by a human interest in the surrounding world that makes social, psychological and architectonic patterns visible.

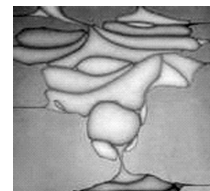
ANDREW CHESLER: NEW PAINTINGS

Paris, FR France

2002-12-13 until 2003-01-25

g-module

g-module presented a new series of acrylic works by New York painter Andrew Chesler. The ten science fiction-inspired paintings explored the idea that technological achievement threatens to fling humankind into a surreal primordial realm populated by the hybrid offspring of technology and nature.



The Play-Doh-colored, stain-based paintings possess the signature atmospheric, otherworldly qualities of the artist's past work. In this series Chesler adds forms which could be portraits -- perhaps of beings born of Chesler's terrestrial apocalypse, perhaps creatures from another planet. Or the subject could be the still life that decorates their tables, or even the landscape that appears out of their windows.

In these spare, yet electric paintings, accretions of obscure shapes, which suggest polished stones, slept-on pillows, or amphibian egg sacs, appear to be drawn to each other by some unseen force-- magnetic? sexual?-- that binds them together. In many of the works, little probes enter and leave the central figure, off the picture plane, implying some exploration or linking: but to what?

MADAME DE POMPADOUR: IMAGES OF A MISTRESS

London, UK United Kingdom

2002-10-16 until 2002-01-12

National Gallery

Madame de Pompadour rose from modest beginnings to become Louis XV's acknowledged mistress and one of the most powerful women of 18th-century France. Attractive, educated, highly intelligent and a lavish patron at a time when France dominated the European artistic scene, she employed the best of her country's artists to depict her and to embellish her various residences. The exhibition will explore how Madame de Pompadour created an image of herself for social and political reasons against a background of increasing domestic and international tensions. It will include paintings, sculpture, porcelain, furniture, gems and prints.



Among the exhibits was Boucher's stunning portrait of Madame de Pompadour of 1756 from Munich, Carle Vanloo's portrait of her in oriental dress from St Petersburg, Greuze's 'Simplicity' from Fort Worth, and one of her writing-desks from Versailles complete with a secret compartment. The exhibition has been organised in collaboration with the Réunion des Musées Nationaux, the Musée des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon and the Kunsthalle, Munich. Running concurrently is the Wallace Collection exhibition entitled 'The Art of Love: Madame de Pompadour and the Wallace Collection'.

EXHIBITION REVIEW

A Sociology Personified

By the Hand

Through the vacuous tares and holes, past the glitter of gold and feather, colour, texture and grain we are drawn deep within the realms of another humans beings most private, and inner sanctum ``absorbed`` but still, and without restriction or bonds, we are free to roam, to wonder these endless, imaginary corridors and rooms that are both open, and on plane view to the fullest scrutiny. To open the many draws, cupboards and closets and to either freely address or quietly reflect upon the many parts that hold similarities in relation to that of our own unique psyches, and awareness about our selves or those more ‘ ‘not’ so perfect flaws’ that we are so reluctant to admit even to our selves, those places in us where, and by choice we so refuse to go.

‘.....exile is an ever-lasting search
for an identity’.

An intriguing question I felt when I read it. One that Amir Khatib, the father and creator of these works had put forward in his invitation flyer when he first presented his ‘**The Three Trinities**’ exhibition at his base the ‘Galleria EU-MAN’ in Helsinki, Finland (October 18th 2002:) A question that, and upon viewing his works, appears the stable point in what Khatib was addressing both as an explanation as well as a thought provoking invitation to be mulled over. But that the term ‘exile’ itself orchestrates an array of varying definitions both as what we, the individual person, perceives whether it be politically motivated or socially, as a whole or singularly. What perhaps stands out, and is most striking about the three bodies of trinity... ‘**Happiness**’, ‘**Unsettlement**’, and ‘**Waiting**’, as well as with the two complementary independent forms of, ‘**Absorbsion**’ and ‘**The Last Version**’= (a singular piece at this stage) is that they set the wheels of the mind in motion as the exuberance of Khatib’s beliefs and idealisms, wishes and desires. Dreams and hopes perceptions and character are clear in evidence as they flow freely trough the material that is carefully needed through his work (via) his hands. As though his use of colour form, symbolism and shape, distortion, bend and curve are nothing more trimming, decoration, a formality for a Presentation for the viewer but that the passion is what consumes even that of the least discernable eye upon one entering the room as almost immediately one is confronted with a dilemma of at which group ‘exactly’ should one start? And as there appears to be no discernible beginning ‘nor’ end as though straight away one has, without realising, been enveloped by both the artist and his world.

Jer Halpin
Poet/writer/Artist

EU-MAN Gallery

* **Marco Cicioni:**

One day show - 07.02.2003

* **Gady Bustani:**

Photos from this World 14.02. – 04.03.2003

* **Luis Bandraud:**

Photographs 07.03. – 26.03.2003



Gady Bustani

Events

* This World: same and different at once

Porvoo - June 2003

* Sculpture Garden Paszkowka

Poland - July 2003

CORRECTION

U.C. wishes to apologise for a typing error that took place in the 3rd issue in year 2001, when an article under the name “the image of the artist” was published with a wrong signature. Mr. Gumbrich wrote the article, but the signature was for Sir Gombrich who was not the real writer.

We received an explanation from Dr. Michael Casey, the U.C. editorial advisor, who sent us a letter of apology.

U.C. wishes to send its apology to Sir Gombrich’s granddaughter, Ms. Leonie Gombrich’s who sent us a memo asking for a correction to this mistake. We also wish to apologise to the writer of the article Mr. Gumbrich, who is an author and art critic.



LAST DROP

Azer Sawiris
azer777@yahoo.com

Rusty

We leave our home countries whether voluntarily or because of some other reasons and once we step out of our original country we become emigrants or immigrants. A new life when we settle in a new place and most of us have this astonishment or amazement once staying in the new country or the second home. Maybe some of us still remember how our eyes were wide open while seeing different habits in the daily life, in the street, on public transports and shops. Everywhere.

We also remember that we had a fresh eye. How many migrant artists were inspired by moving to his/her second country? The answer might be that all of them, even those who have had sad reason to leave their country.

But does the eye of the artist get rusty after staying for a long time in the second country?

Do they feel that they are not "excited" anymore? Did these things which were going on around them become just "normal" daily routines!

What should an artist do to make his eyes fresh again to be able to catch these little things he remember noticing?

Is travelling abroad the solution? Is participating in different exhibition sand artistic events igniting the fire inside the soul?

Suffer

We discussed in the previous issue of U.C. how some artists like to live and look bohemian. Today the question is: Does it have to be hard to be art? I just wonder why some artists think that they have to have some difficulties and pain in their lives to create! Is it because of the romantic cliché that the suffering artist is put into! Is it because the artist should have pain to feel the pains of the others and only then he can create? If you have an opinion, please send it.

Last drop

"If my husband would ever meet a woman on the street who looked like the women in his paintings, he would fall over in a dead faint."

-- Mrs. Pablo Picasso

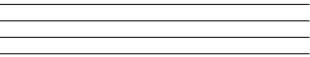
Marko Cicioni

AT EU-MAN GALLERY

Marco is one of our active members, who also is busy with his art-life projects. He keeps moving between Rome, Stockholm Helsinki and many other capitals. This time, he decided to work in Helsinki and make one day show (Five to Nine) before he makes his exhibition in Manhattan, New York this year.



ONE DAY SHOW
7.02.2003



The WEB



www.eu-man.org