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Artist of the Issue

Anna Isabela Zadros-Hansen



Arnold Newman

By: Farouk Yousif Sweden



Rupturing the Modernist Gland

By: Dr. Michael Casey





I could not imagine that I am facing all of these difficulties; I could not imagine that the administrative work is that impossible, but I do enjoy the work though, just because it is the mission of my life, or at least I do consider it so.

It was not critic, envy, nor racism, but it was something between all these, I must admit that my nature is more artistic than administrative, so, it may be that I cannot bare the nature of the administration work.

A lot of people were shocked when they heard that we are going to print a large-scale catalogue for our large-scale exhibition that we are planning to do on the occasion of 10 year work with EU-MAN.

Up till now, and especially relevant organizations and projects are looking in a suspicious eye, some of them are asking loudly why we should print a good catalogue, why we should do some exhibition at all!

Those organizations of course know us since we have started 10 year ago, and they have been questioning ever since, but we have our message and we want to tell this message to everyone, is it our right to do so? Is it our right to see ourselves in the way that we see them?

We go on and we are not going to care about any obstacle, from money to attacks, because we are not doing an act of terror, illegality, or uncivilized act that we should be worry about. It is art that we deal with, it is culture that we work with, all our intension is to create and participate in making a new cultural habits, all that we want to proof is ourselves, that we are not more no less than others.

So, if we are talking about equality, let's see how those organizations, others and even individuals can underline us after we lay our product, I insist a qualitative product, I mean both the exhibition and the catalogue.

More than once I said that the advantages of our existence in Europe is we can fight, we can say our words, we enjoy the freedom of speech and democracy, so I tell all the others that we are in the same boat, and we unlike you, believe in democracy and freedom of speech, we do not consider them as games that will be over soon, no, they are our rights and we have to use them.

So, we all will witness on the 1st of March 2007, the birth of the "Third Culture" in the visual arts, and you will see our fruits that we have been cultivating all the time.

There are still voluntaries in the world, not everyone is looking for money and putting his aim to be money and materials, we in the globalization era, are in the severe need for volunteers because our ideas will face the death that is for sure if they do not come forward. I am ready to understand all, but I need to be understood from very few people, can they understand?

Amir Khatib

Editorial Board

Amir Khatib

tel: +358 (0)40 554 6896

e-mail: euman_2000@yahoo.com

Ali Najjar

tel: 0046 40947974

Dr. Michael Casey

e-mail: casey0504@eircom.net

Moustafa AL-Yassin

tel: +358 (0)44 924 2496

e-mail: moustafa.al-yassin@pbezone.net



EU-MAN

P.O. Box 523

00101 Helsinki, Finland

Tel. +358 (0) 40 554 6896

www.eu-man.org

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ZHAO SHAORUO & ZHAO SHAORUO

Gallery Katarina is one of the oldest gallery in Helsinki, it has its own categories of showing any artist, not because of some reason, but because of its history. So what if this gallery show one artist, does it mean plus to her/him?

Zhao Shaoruo the Chinese Artists whom we know him not only by participating in our projects "the EU-MAN projects" but, we know him throughout his career that he made, in the student square in Begin, when he changed the photograph of the leader Mao to his own picture. Zhao Shaoruo who

later, when he left china to hongkong to Finland, participated and has many collections in international wide museums and venues.

Zhao Shaoruo now holding an exhibition in the Katarina Gallery from the 6th of September till the 24th of it, Zhao show an interesting art works they are divided between paintings, Chinese ink, and photography. It is after all a new experience that we hope all success to him.



WORD INTO ART

Artists of the Modern Middle East

By Dustin Ericksen (Visual artist. Lives in London)

There is no more topical exhibition than one of contemporary art from the Middle East. No matter what you put on the walls, it would seem like one couldn't fail but inform and entertain. But sometimes, good intentions aren't enough. Assembled largely from recent additions to the British Museum's permanent collection, Word into Art is a loosely conceived introduction to the work of artists who originate from the Middle East and whose works make use of or have some relation to text. Ostensibly, the work illustrates the centrality of the calligraphic tradition to the region's visual culture. In the first room of the exhibition, visitors are welcomed by a wall covered in photographic portraits of almost all the participants. The next four rooms comprise the body of the exhibition which is divided into 4 thematic categories: "A sacred Script", "Literature and Art", "Deconstructing the Word" and "Identity History and Politics". Additionally, sculptures by Parviz Tanavoli and a towering colourful fibreglass column commissioned for the exhibition by Dia al Azzawi are situated in the "Great Hall" of the British Museum. In the first section, A Sacred Script, the technically impressive feat of Fou'ad Kouichi Honda's Three Calligraphies is described in the wall text as being a text from the Qur'an written in "mirror writing (...) one of the calligraphic traditions particularly popular in the Ottoman era". Mr Honda's Three Calligraphies introduces the curatorial emphasis on a type of art making which

has very little to do with contemporariness or anything modern. The British Museum's acquisition of contemporary Middle Eastern art was initiated in the mid 1980's. The emphasis of the collection activities eschewed "global, generic forms of contemporary art" [1] in favour of a more craft-specified categorisation; one especially focused on religious text. The current display is mostly a manifestation of that position.

A visit to the exhibition provides a view to an impressive assortment of calligraphy and text related works by over sixty artists. Even for those only remotely interested in the visual culture of the Middle East and its Diasporas, there is a wealth of individual works rarely displayed in London. In particular, works from the Arabic word-orientated Hurufiyya movement and it's near contemporary, the Iran specific Saqqakhaneh are historic markers of the synthetic approaches by visual artists of the region. Even the notion of an "artistic movement" as such, implies that these artists engaged with the larger global context in which they worked, even if, as in the case of Saqqakhaneh, the intention was to reflect a specific national heritage.

Unfortunately, as a part of the various texts accompanying Word into Art, the category of graphic design as it exists in the West and it's relationship to the Islamic calligraphic tradition is never addressed. For example, Hussein Madi's Alphabet, 1994, is a grid of 30 squares containing Arabic letters repeated and manipulated into individual circular compositions. It is a typographical exercise. To the extent that this exhibition's audience is unfamiliar with the context of the production of such work, the burden is on the organisers to explain why such a work might transcend the category, or why this, perhaps, culture specific category is unnecessary.

Though the term "avant garde" is used in the catalogue, the collected portion of the exhibition is largely at odds with its stated intention to represent a contemporary art of the Middle East. As evidenced by exhibitions in the Middle East and around the world, there is, in fact, a great deal of art emerging from the Middle East which, although not reflecting the unfortunate characterisation of "generic", nonetheless engages in a global dialogue. Within the exhibition, work by Shirin Neshat, Shadi Ghadirian, Walid Raad, Chant Avedissian, Shakir Hassan al-Said and Sabah Naim acknowledges and participates in contemporary art production. In fact, the more interesting art in the exhibition, including that of Walid Raad and Shirin Neshat, uses Arabic text as a medium for communication; at most, having a peripheral relationship to calligraphy. Tellingly, most of these works are not from the museum's collection. Again, through quantity, the exhibit posits the primacy of artists whose production is centred on millennia-old traditions with minimal shift in meaning through content or materiality from their source, then relies on supplemental art to provide a contemporary context.

A similarly focused display could be culled from almost any corner of the globe that has a tradition of calligraphy. For example, if one created an exhibition based on Chinese culture, there would be an ample supply of contemporary Chinese calligraphers, whose work has synthesised modern western practices. Also, the history of Chinese politics, governing, poetics and indeed religion, would be demonstrated to inform their practices. The same could be accomplished for Japanese, Indian, even American culture. What these examples illustrates is that the position of the curators bias toward the Calligraphic tradition reifies and encourages this craft above other, forms, characterised in the catalogue as "generic". Would a similarly organised exhibition of European or specifically Calligraphy-related European Art necessarily reflect such a strong representation of religiosity? Indeed, American fundamental Christian craftspersons frequently deploy artisanal calligraphic strokes; scribing their most holy phrases and platitudes, yet the work of these, highly talented craftspersons would not be any more contemporary or avant garde were they lumped

together with the work of Barbara Kruger or Christopher Wool. The exhibition proves beyond a doubt that religious and secular modes of production co-exist in the Middle East and among its Diaspora, but it avoids addressing the disparity in the meaning of these artistic practices. The work of these two sets of artists is categorically unrelated. Within its narrowly defined remit, the educational context of the exhibition is well developed, and the aesthetic value of much of the work is remarkable. However, this exhibition and the collection from which it is largely drawn stand to define contemporary or modern art practices from the Middle East as seen from Europe. A constricted collection and exhibition does a disservice to both the artists of the region and the appreciation of the wider audience.

Note:

1. Word into Art, Artists of the Modern Middle East, Venetia Porter, The British Museum Press, 2006, p.14

NAFAS. EXHIBITION AND FORUM

Current information, ifa-Gallery Berlin:

- Photo tour through the exhibition
- The 9 featured artists
- Forum

Nafas starts in Berlin with the exhibition of works by the artists:

Lida Abdul (Afghanistan/USA)
Ebtisam AbdulAziz (United Arab Emirates)
Vyacheslav Akhunov (Uzbekistan)
Mounir Fatmi (Morocco/France)
Amal Kenawy (Egypt)
Nur Hanim Mohamed Khairuddin (Malaysia)
Waheeda Malullah (Bahrain)
Anas Al-Shaikh (Bahrain)
Suha Shoman (Jordan)

Following the presentation in Berlin, Nafas will be shown at the ifa-Gallery in Stuttgart and then travel to several other countries through 2007. In cooperation with the partners of the respective exhibition venues, the group of participating artists will be expanded according to the spatial and logistical conditions.

Accompanying events will take place at all exhibition venues for the exchange of ideas and opinions on practical, conceptual, and theoretical aspects of art practice, the international art system and its mechanisms, and other issues. This online magazine will prepare, follow



up, and document the communication process, and enable those people to participate who are interested but unable to attend in person.

Idea and concept were developed by Pat Binder and Gerhard Haupt. Together with the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa), they are the editors of the online magazine "Contemporary Art from the Islamic World" and responsible for its realization.

Nafas is a metaphor for the focus and broad outline of the project. In Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, Malay, and Indonesian, nafas is understood essentially as breath or breathing. A variation of similar origins is the Turkish nefes. The word appears in many combinations and nuances, usually with quite positive connotations. Nafas can be used in the sense of a "second wind", i.e., being able to endure difficulties, or in the sense of a refreshing breeze that soothes torment. When someone carries out specific activities especially well, for example excellent cooking, it is said that he or she has nafas-talent: a particular way, a personal style. Sometimes nafas is associated with the meaning of "freedom", for example in Sufism, a mystical current of Islam. The root of the word is nafs, which means "self" or "soul" in Arabic and which is regarded as the dynamic power breathed into a person's body at the beginning of life.

For in all the overarching aspects at the base of the idea of such an exhibition, the principle issue is to access individual artistic positions, this meaning not only the immediate experience of art, but also the mediation of personal, cultural, social, and other contexts. Maybe this should be a matter of course in all art exhibitions, but it seems worth explicit mention in this case. All too often, the expression used here as a conceptual tie, "the Islamic world", arouses stereotypical ideas that fail to correspond in any way with the complex reality and stand in the way of a non-prejudiced encounter with art.

To find this phrasing in the subtitle of Nafas may seem problematical for its suggestion of a unifying view of the countries and regions with Muslim majorities, which this project aims to counteract. For even though both the "West" and the "Islamic world" are extremely heterogeneous and anything but monolithic entities, the general perception is that there is a conflict between two antagonistic blocs or civilizations bearing these labels that goes back very far in history and is fueled again and again on both sides. In connection with the Nafas project, we use the term "Islamic world" and "Muslim world" to address and contradict the terms as they are widely understood today. Commonly accepted ideas are confronted with artworks hard to fit into the usual clichés and created by artists, Muslims or not, who locate their cultural home or essential sources of reference for artistic production in Islamic countries and regions. In this respect also, the Nafas project is conceptually linked to the online magazine "Contemporary Art from the Islamic World".

In the exhibition, the contents of the magazine are accessible via small computer terminals. They enable the viewer to access more details on the works and artists presented; beyond that, they draw attention to colleagues who are working in a similar direction, but not featured in the exhibition. As most generally the case of contemporary art, the artworks in Nafas are strongly context dependent. The sensual experience of the work of art is supplemented by an information level, providing useful and conducive access to the personal, social, cultural, political, and spiritual constellations behind it.

Anna Izabela Zadros-Hansen

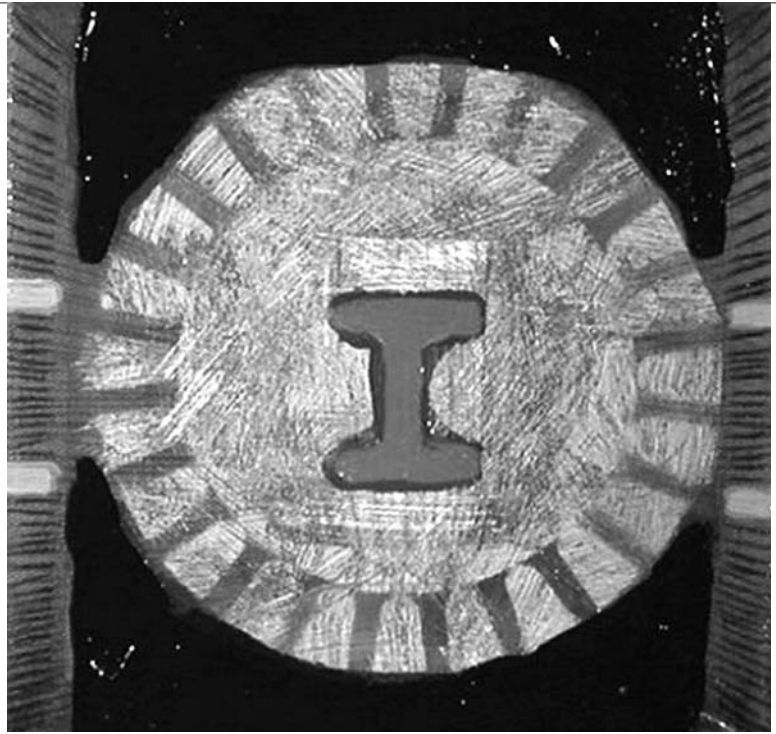
What does it mean if some one knows her/his surroundings? What does it mean if one lives all her/his life in distress, maybe she/he who creates this distress, or it may be the others?

What does it mean if you know yourself? Is it so that Socrates said it and left? Did he say it for an obstruct purpose, that one should know her/himself just for knowing it? Or just for a fall into a self centrim? Or Socrates said it, because man should know her/his size, acts and other contexts in her/his life-time.

“Anna dose not afraid of one large-scale artwork, even if the project takes the space of two galleries, the space is not a matter with Anna, but the matter is how to implement her ideas...”



Lots of philosophical questions are roaming in my mind, when I see the artworks of Anna Isabella Zadros-Hansen, and a lot of aggressive questions too, her works inspire many things inside me, I do not know how to describe them, my pen or tongue do not know how to express them, simply because it is a visual language, which tries to become different of all visual languages in the world that I know.



Anna established her visual dictionary, if it is right to say, so the abstract is not abstract in the ordinary meaning, which we knew it during our study to the art history, symbol is not symbol of that meaning too. All that you see inspire you in many ways.

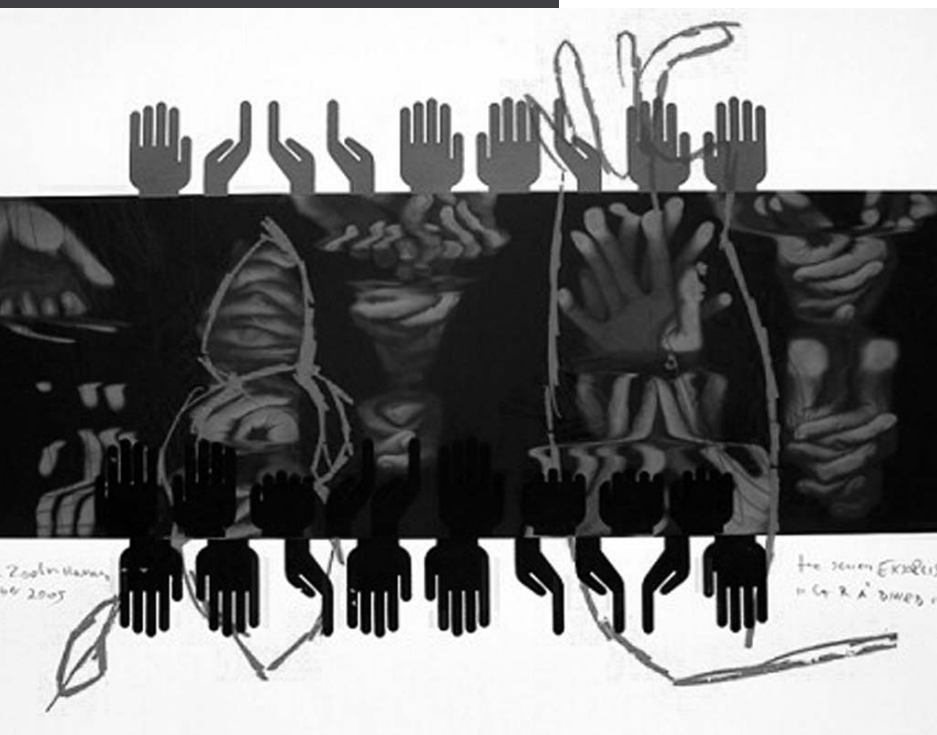
I remember when Anna sent her works to participate with us the year 2001, I received her works, opened them, I had many different feelings, I was puzzled, questioning myself, as I do rarely with the participating works that I open. Silence of the colours, appropriate selections, great self confidence of the outline, strokes and leading her audiences towards the movement that she wants. All these made me, but taught me how to deal carefully with the other artists, though there was no more than 4 years of the age of EU-MAN.



Anna Izabela Zadros-Hansen

I knew about the Polish art many things, about the traditional art and the modern one, but I haven't seen such an artist of knowing the message of the art,

mastering the technique, and I have not seen an artist who knows the contemporary language of the visual art, as I know Anna.



This artist moves as all artists during her lifetime from stage to another, but not traditionally from colour to colour or from a technique to a technique or even style to another, but from one type of art to another, and the amazing matter is the person who follows her sees carefully the thread between all of her arts, so she is a painter, installation artist and media artist as well, besides that she is self-struggler continuously toward achieving

her message, so working hard is her nature which she might not know it.

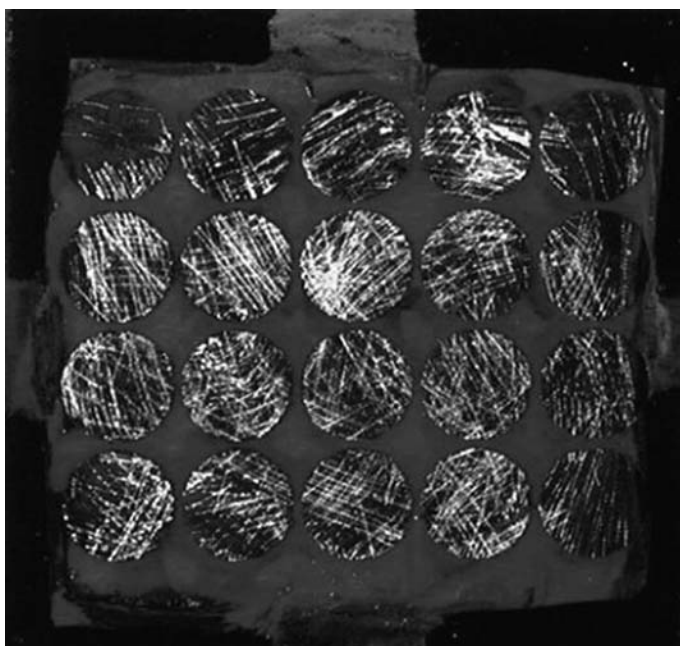
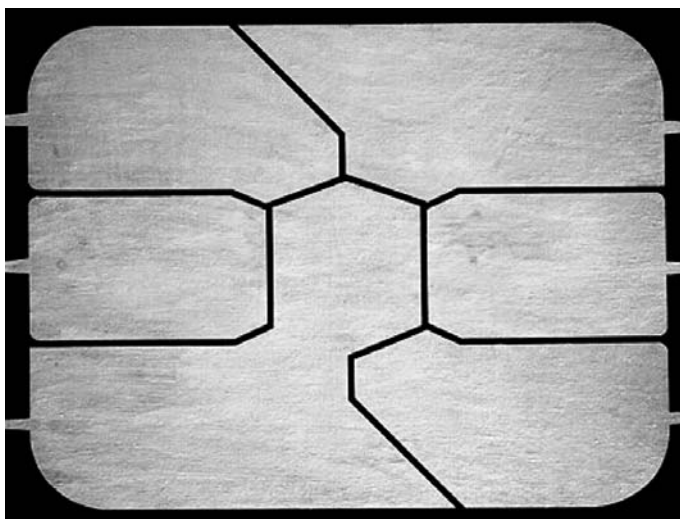
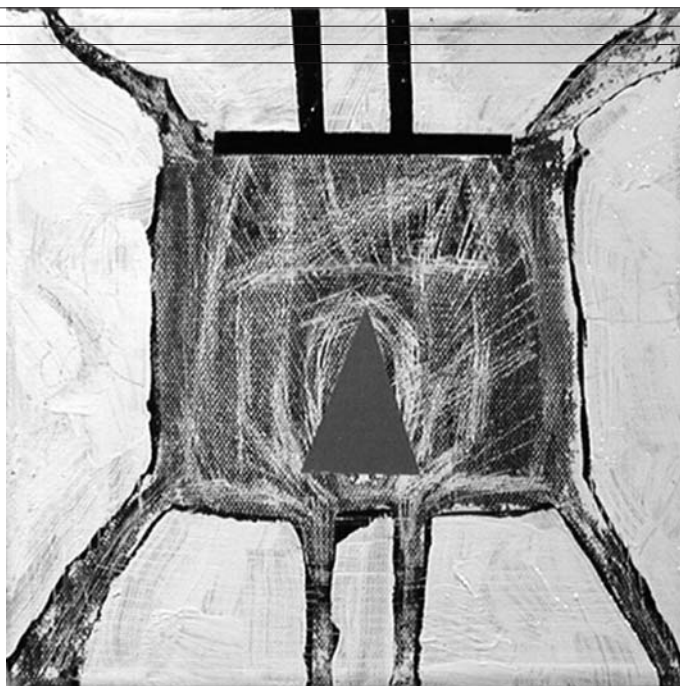
Personally I see a lot of influences in her art, colours are affected by the Scandinavian atmosphere especially her abstract paintings as well the Polish spirit is there. And I see there is hidden power of braveness in her installation artworks, yes in those installation art projects which she rather calls them, they are real large-scale projects. Anna does not fear large-scale artworks, even if the project takes the space of two galleries, the space is not a matter with Anna, but the matter is how to implement her ideas and say what she wants to say, and that does happen rarely with an artist who lives in exile.

As I mentioned that there is strong thread between Anna's works, so the viewer who sees a painting can see same things in her installations, there is spirit which is mutual between them, perhaps it is the mutual soul or some secret things that we cannot know them. Threads lead you and show you that these artworks done by one artist.

To the contrary of the contemporary American artist Jeff Koons, I mean the very well known pop American artist whom I have seen an exhibition last year in Helsinki City Art Museum, I could not know which artwork belong to him, because, the thing that I discovered quickly that each "artwork" can be called by different artist, I mean there is no thread which might proceed you that this exhibition is of one artist, there is absolutely nothing, nothing of the style, spirit, soul or anything which might lead you knowing the type of the art.

It is absolutely different with Anna's case, so that the painting continues the installation and any piece of her art shouts in a high voice that I am here.

Amir Khatib



ARNOLD NEWMAN

*By: Farouk Yousif
Sweden*

Newman's black & white genius, prophecies of an unfinished age

1

In the eye of Arnold Newman the American photographer, who dies recently at the age of 88, Andy Warhol seems as somebody else, Newman adds to the "king of the pop art" a mask inspired by Andy's face, it does not look like any of those illusory masks, which he was attracted to using them in his life that was look like absurd game.

Newman is always like that in all of his personal photos that he took to the popular politician and cultural social figures in USA and other parts of the world, even Haile Selassie the Ethiopian Emperor, Newman's eye gave him temporary epical impression. It is clear of that impression, the puzzled questioning contradictory and truth denial.

Pablo Picasso has the biggest share of Newman's interest of the changeable expressive faces. The wild innocent performing of Picasso, is not enough to interpret Newman's interest, because Picasso who discovered the power of the bull and its obstinacy, and that what Newman pickup in Picasso and then present him as wild, sad and obstinate man.

Newman, who is one of the innovative classic photographer in our time, stood distinguishing the distance between black and white, it is a distance that Newman's full it by quiet deep dreams at one time.

*"Pablo Picasso has the
biggest share of
Newman's interest of
the changeable
expressive faces."*



The face of Marlin Monroe appears as profile from darkness, full of hot desire of crying, Marlin as Newman see not as others see, he gave her the humanistic diminution that the media took it out of her, because media used her as temporary entertainment erotic subject. Because of Newman we know that diminution which emotionally touches us and let us forget the blond toy.

Newman seems clearer and braver in the photo that he took to the Russian composer Stravinsky, Stravinsky himself accepted to be a secondary actor in a picture that should present him, while the piano was the focus of that picture, what Newman did has nothing to do with the clear symbolic message only but, on composing the photo that has the abstract appearance which shows musical tones improvising the picture's appearance in the space.

2

In the early forties of the last century, Newman started his career; he did not stop photographing till the end of his life. The faces of his objects that emerge from the darkness of his realistic photos reveal his desire of showing us an imaginative world, world that faces are parts of a knowledgeable universe which is decreased in photo.

Newman's black & white genius, prophecies of an unfinished age

Photos that Newman makes can say a lot, not those things that we expect, and if we were denying who is the person in the picture, Newman puts many keys between our hands, which help us to solve the riddle. For instance the photo of the Dutch artist Mondrian, to a far extent like the geometric-abstract paintings which Mondrian himself was creating.



Joan Miro the Spanish artist in his portrait looked like those magical colourful rhythms, which Miro himself was throwing on the surface of his boards. Newman was hard with Mondrian, but cool with Miro. As a matter of fact Newman was not describing the person as he was trying to catch the legend of the person, and test it aesthetically. And if the picture that the French artist Nadar (1820-1915) which turned to be an icon that archive to stiff moments that mankind community lived, when it was turning to the modern time.

So, Newman was archiving those moments and the deep turning, as a result we conclude that Newman get the true heritage of Nadar and he was brave not because he was a faithful to Nadar by dealing with black and white only, but from his early sensitivity to his time's events which he implement his works by dealing with pioneers.



3

On 1975, Newman took the French artist Bekon, to put one light to his face while his face appears down the picture. All of Bekon's artworks can be seen in that picture, although we cannot see the details of the artworks of that artist, and as I see that this picture expresses the depth of the aesthetic understanding by soul before the eye.

In that picture, Newman composes a dictionary presenting through it the artist in brief, Newman does not present his paintings, but he go forward with challenging steps to his hidden obsessions to clarify the artist.

Visual here does not deal with anything, but inspires others to discover, and the role of the photographer is not only what she/he see, but goes further to what makes hidden inspiration to viewer to look.

Vision which pushes the expectation perhaps was his personal picture that was the happy recourse to him, Bekon whom no body is happy to look at his artworks, because his works were like Kafka's novels, they insist that everything going to the inhales and that what is waiting us.

The reason of the happiness of Bekon is that, there are some of his age's people who could discover the whole secrets of the roles of the game; they are secrets which has nothing to do with the forms at all.

Newman's pictures were as expectations to uncompleted age.

Rupturing the Modernist Gland

By: Dr. Michael Casey

“Luostarinen traces the dynamics and processes that marked the transition from modern to Post-Modern modes;”

There is little argument that the current insolvency of modernist aesthetics has left abstract and reductionist painting impoverished. Abstract painting continues; yet only a few Finnish painters - most notably, Leena Luostarinen (b. 1949) - confront the crisis of abstraction in significantly reflexive terms. In her work, Luostarinen traces the dynamics and processes that marked the transition from modern to Post-Modern modes; she also revises the modern processes according to the Post-Modern programme of interpretive contextualisation. In effect, Luostarinen is in favour of responsible interpretation - the thoughtful revision of the dead styles, physics, and metaphysics of modernism's past - to ease the tension between the legacy of modernist painting and the contemporary gaze.

At its zenith in the minimalist era, abstraction was thought to have displaced psychological meaning with self-evident gestalts, replaced human gestures with technological processes, and supplanted metaphysical relations with those of material form. The painted field was reduced to a proposition of physical-perceptual relations which, though obviously contingent on the human nervous system, implied logical sets of relations that transcend sociological conditions. Or so it was presumed. By the late 1960s, the whole formalist canon was challenged

by the argument that painting cannot be wrenched from the societal plenum for any length of time; nor can any cultural form be invisible, devoid of morphological constituents. No matter how effective the method for emptying visual fields of meaning or how rigorous the safeguard against morphological re-entry, it was maintained that the formalists could not truly locate the zero degree of abstraction. Once a form is "emptied" of ostensive content, ancillary meanings and underpainting contexts emerge. These meanings and contexts are always there, but are ordinarily obscured by the more mundane or spectacular contents which characterise traditional art forms: the narrative, symbols, allegories, and metaphors that preoccupy human thought. As with Derrida's "black light" of texts, the blinding heart of recorded thought where the slippage and shift of reference binds metaphysics, metaphor, and context, it was only after painting was stripped of mundane and metaphysically explicit signification (when Stella, Reinhardt, Kelly, Noland, Martin, Ryman, Marden and LeWitt reduced painting to its ultimate ontological equations) - and only after one became accustomed to the bright light of "pure" abstraction - that one began to perceive the afterimage of these underlying sociological characters.

But it would be years, even decades, after abstraction's first appearance before these began to coalesce in human apperception. It's been just over a decade since painters, in the wake of abstraction, began to see the implications of the cyphers taking shape before them. Hence, investigations of the eclipse of meaning by abstraction have yielded relatively few significant advances in painting. Instead, artists interested in using paint either quickly embraced the return of narrative, allegory, irony, and information (Clemente, Kiefer, Bleckner, Halley, Taaffe, Richter) or more recently have been impelled by Conceptual proscriptions into producing a critical antipainting (Annette Lemieux, Marilyn Minter, Peter Hopkins, John Miller) in which paint is reduced to a prop for some greater cultural scheme. But few chart any part of the terrain precariously splicing the two tendencies - the unique precinct between abstraction and representation called "twilight painting" by Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe - accessed from the human nervous system and leading to the whole.

Leena Luostarinen is one of those who succeeds in charting this little explored frontier. Approached through the dense membranes of art historical mythologies, cliches, and production of the past, the artist reverses modes of abstraction so that their sociological, organic, and mechanical "linings" are exhibited in rich detail. But Luostarinen is ambivalent in her relationship to painting. She does not maintain painting's demise as do the antipainters, but she does express skepticism that painting is still capable of radical newness. Luostarinen also refuses to reduce painting's status to that of a mere scaffold for historical, political, sociological, or material critiques (through historical, political, and sociological contexts permeate her fields) and instead indulges in its unparalleled sensuality; the artist ensures that sensuality is checked by a discourse of process.

Establishing her point of departure among the patriarchal myths of Abstract Expressionism, Luostarinen drips paint but doesn't revel in the cascade, as did the legendary protagonists of the 1940s and 50s. Rather, the artist inverts their procreative

Rupturing the Gland

*“Luostarinen's
paintings are un-
derpinned by an
elaborate meta-
physic...”*

Modernist

invocations with feminist metonymy. Whereas the mythic males of the New York School painted histrionic ejaculations - nervous, passionate eruptions of action - Luostarinen contrives to contain the convulsion in an imploding field, a meltdown of introspective circumscriptions that, rather than break out of the composition, paradoxically cement the composition's furcations with their static liquidity. In a painting like *Night Flowers*, this implosion manifests alternately: the thick paint either trails and solidifies, or the thin washes erode and evaporate, leaving only a trace of their temporal presence and course. In either case an illusion of depth is paired with - and is contingent on - a real layering of materials, thus honouring the traditional device of pictorial illusion.

The persistent illusion of depth - and its subversion - is Luostarinen's key to metaphysical propositions. Swayed serenely by Post-Modernism's theoretical winds, the artist "pinches back" depth, disallowing the sprouts of spacial continuity to branch out. Like Alain Robbe Grillet's literary enterprise, the *Nouveau Roman*, Luostarinen begins to compose a narrative of flatness, slowly defining its depths, identifying its characters, and stratifying its course of action from processes and materials; only to divert the narrative's development suddenly by transgressing to an alternate course of action, with its own unique depth and visual characters, then on into a third, a fourth, and so on. This is engineered according to some structure - sometimes predetermined, sometimes improvised - known only to Luostarinen. Some paintings, like *Opium and Life and Death and Secret Gardens*, are dominated by bifurcations that prompt the viewer to revert to bifocal vision, with one image seemingly receding and one advancing. Others, like *Expressional Desire* (a title referring directly to the compulsions of Abstract and Neo-Expressionism) divide into multifarious compartments that are neither easily observed nor demarcated without scrutiny. More often than not, Luostarinen's paintings are underpinned by an elaborate metaphysic having little to do with temporal relations and, in fact, are intended as sanctuaries of non-materialistic thought. In this respect Luostarinen aligns with Abstract Expressionism; in every other sense, she abrades the Abstract Expressionist style, acknowledging the natural entropy of ideas - the gradual breakdown of all systems, structures and mentalities - which inevitably leads to revisions, assimilations, and equilibrations. Luostarinen does not participate in a maintenance of abstraction, but rather in the erosion and injury of all that has been said and written around it.

ALI RASHID

Ali Rashid came from Spain, after participating in the Biennale Alpaca.

Ali's participation was under the director of the Biennale's request to implement an artwork on the exhibition's ground. The media was spreading news about Ali's work and about the phenomenon that he created as an artist.

Ali is busy nowadays with his personal exhibition on November in the northern Holland where he lives and works for many years.



HOME WORKS III

By Anne Maier*

The Home Works Festival was held in Beirut for the third time from November 17-24, 2005. This forum for "curatorial practice", as the festival's founder Christine Tohmé calls it, is regarded as the outstanding platform for the region's artists. After the decline of the Ayoul Festival, the independent, organization Ashkal Alwan, or Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts [1], was founded in 1994. With its events, it has become the most important site of exchange for contemporary art in the Arabic world. Without any state support, Christine Tohmé has consistently advanced the scene and provided it with decisive impulses. It's all a little like at a family gathering. Friends from all over the world come together; many, almost most of them, have come home. And nonetheless there is a certain melancholy in the air around the Home Works Festival III. Beirut and its white buildings, the unrivaled light, and its rapidly falling nights in November have less to do with this mood than does the simple certainty that it looks like this third forum for curatorial practice will be the last one convened in this form. Art from Beirut (still) enjoys the flair of the exotic on the international stage of curators, institutions, and the market; and the number of emissaries from institutions and major artistic events is still surveyable. But that could change quickly. Possibly too quickly, before the scene here has stabilized and taken form.

Artists and cultural workers from all over the Arab world - returnees, natives, and immigrants, mixed with visitors from Berlin, London, Paris, and New York - crowd closely together in the foyer of the former movie house Masrah al Median in the once legendary shopping street, the rue Hamra. To judge by the bustle, Beirut's art scene must be flourishing and enjoying a dense local and international following. Like its two predecessors, Home Works III lives from the energy and enthusiasm of its organizer, Christine Tohmé. For years, she has dedicatedly challenged Beirut's artists, offering them a platform with events throughout the year and this forum, ideally to be held every one and a half years.

Despite the intended challenge and enticement, Home Works III remains oddly undecided. It is like a party with good friends; one has already said all there is to say, and the stimuli or willingness to deal with new themes is lacking. Symptomatic of this is the opening exhibition. No real festive feeling develops in the whitewashed, brightly lit, almost perfect gallery rooms of the Sfeir-Semler Gallery (from Hamburg and here for almost a year). The works by Lebanese artists seem oddly lost when set in direct juxtaposition to works by artists from other regions.

One would like to delve into this fascinating aspect of failure and investigate why the hype-able art from the Arabic world seems so pallid in the White Cube. Questions and more questions about precisely those "curatorial practices" that Home Works has made its primary focus need to be discussed and answered. But this forum is not held. And thus the lack of a continuous site for visual art and a continuously occupied space in Beirut is painful.

All the denser and more comprehensive are the film and video program and the lectures and discussions in the framework of Home Works III. Here in the darkness of the projection room, the whole richness and multi-facetedness of the region's artistic creation unfolds. In a further processing of his study on the Shiite festival of Ashura [2], Jalal Toufic shows never-before-seen, slow motion views of the relationships, yearnings, and feelings of the self-flagellants. This seems to me one of the most important discoveries of these November days in Beirut: thematizing love from the viewpoint of the religious. For Jalal Toufic, one of the most intellectual of the Beirut artists, the point is not the beauty of fanaticism, but the examination of the moment of ecstasy in all its shades.

A completely different form of sublimated love is the theme in Ayreen Anasta's video essay on Pier Paolo Pasolini's journey to Palestine in the year 1963. "Pasolini Pa* Palestine" tries to follow the trail of the great filmmaker when he was seeking motifs for his "Passion According to Matthew". Ayreen Anastas was born in Bethlehem, studied in Berlin, and has lived for several years in Brooklyn. She has a light touch when dealing with subjects and motifs and when shooting in Israel and Palestine. Her pictorial ease brings something like an at least situational normality into the projection room for several minutes. The world in southern Lebanon, beyond the border - fictional, because nonexistent in official diction - is suddenly very real. Here, as there, the same unique light, the heavy earth, and the washed-out stone - for a moment, Anasta's film calls forth something like cheerful concern among the principally Lebanese audience.

Otherwise, the festival showed lots of self-reflecting film creation. The civil war and its results are still intensely present. The constant distrust and the never-ending questions of guilt and expiation remain the most important reference points in the life and work of the Lebanese artists. How close fiction and reality can be is revealed in a performance by Walid Raad that was created in collaboration with Naeem Mohaiemen, an activist who lives in the USA. Their documentary fictions or fictional documentaries about Muslims who have disappeared or been kidnapped in the USA and Europe are constructed with as much suspense as crime films. The news about Khaled el-Masri in December 2005 revealed how fast fiction can turn out to be reality. His case almost leaped from the performance stage directly into the headlines. Between 1985 and 1988, the abduction of the two Frenchmen Jean-



Paul Kaufman and Michel Seurat had a prominent place in the news. While Kaufman's kidnappers released him in Beirut after three years, Seurat disappeared after eight months in captivity. Omar Amiralay, who was born in Syria but has lived for years in France, has shot a distanced portrait, full of restrained emotion, of the two friends. With oriental modesty, it comes so close to the vanished Michel Seurat that one almost sees and feels him through the projection screen. Some visitors to Home Works III will search in vain for their own Orient in the wealth of offerings in the program. In their play "Who's Afraid of Representation", actors Lina Saneh and Rabih Mroué believe they have found entanglements between Orient and Occident. The theater man and journalist Mroué deals refreshingly irreverently with the art history of Actionism from Günter Brus to Chris Burden, Gina Pane, and Valie Export. Skillfully, he mixes their self-injuries and experiments with moments of the civil war and, in a parallel plot, gives a voice to the office worker Hassan Maamoun, who, lacking words, carried out a massacre on his colleagues one day. The Arabic text with its profuse invective and explicit sexual words had to be toned down for the censor; in translation, the original diction resurfaces. The nuances, which led the audience to everything from smirks to loud laughter, were lost on those who had to rely on the translation. Too bad!

Home Works III did not blaze new paths to art in the Arab world, but it made it clear that this scene must consolidate itself and in a certain way re-invent itself. It is hard to deny that few new developments were visible. Amal Kenawy (Egypt) and Akram Zaatari could point art in Arab countries in new directions. Christine Tohmé and her associate Ashkal Alwan must now create new landmarks. After the stages of self-reflection and self-assertion, it is now necessary to debate more aggressively, internally and externally - and take painful losses and virulent new discoveries as part of the bargain!

Notes, Links:

1. Ashkal Alwan. Article in this Online Magazine.
2. Ashura festival. The Shiite day of mourning and penance on the 10th day of the Islamic month of Muharram. It is devoted to the memory of Husain, the son of Ali and Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Mohammed. After his allies forsook him in the city of Kufa, Imam Husain, his family, and his followers were surrounded and massacred by the soldiers of the Umayyad governor on the 10th of Muharram (approx. October) in the year 680 near the city of Kerbala, now in Iraq. The Shiites regard the abandonment of Husain as an inherited sin. They do symbolic penance for it in mourning processions and communal self-flagellation

* Anne Maier - Curator and cultural publicist, lives in Berlin. Communications director at Art Forum Berlin.

EUROPEAN EXILE

"EUROPEAN EXILE" was the title of the exhibition that Marco Cecioni, Roberto Torregiani and Giuseppe Bertolini Berg in Gallery Aspis in Helsinki, a lot of people attended the opening ceremony, and it was sponsored by the Italian Cultural Institute in Helsinki. Italian art lover and friends supported the three artists and they did hope to see these artists again in Helsinki. The exhibition was for two weeks only from the 22nd of August till the 3rd of September 2007.





Moustafa AL-Yassin

LAST DROP

The power of pushing

Many nights I stayed awake, many times I was thinking, writing, drawing, by all kinds of inks and cements, then I was eating, drinking, sleeping and waking up, and I loudly raised my voice.

My voice, which does not care about all things, does not give up the hope that someone might hear.

I said throughout all these years, hey colleague artists, all that we need to complete our artistic project is the power of pushing, because we have all causes of movement, but without the power of pushing, this power which is useful to all of us, and without this power we will stay as beautiful Egyptian sculpture on the floor of the western culture, and sure that there s no one hears, sees or who is able to assist a little to this power of pushing.

Perhaps every one will understand the power of pushing as her/his mood interprets, not on the account of the power of pushing, so we accepted and we said: there is no force to others only the conscience... So we requested the others, and requested the others hoping that the conscience will be awake, but the result that we became experts of shouting and bagging, oh where are you good heart people?

Thing went OK and we were moving from one cultural station to another, not by the power of pushing as we were hoping and requesting but, by the power of requesting, which means, ask this man to help us continuing this project, and arrange some meeting with that man who is a relative of one other man as so. But things went OK, and no "complain" as to say

But, in our station that we prepared all that we can or possible to do, I mean the third culture station, we requested for the power of pushing with a bit of officialise, our of bagging, and we were happy that things went OK and as it should be, thus we did not calculate that thing turn 360 degree from the power of pushing to the power of betting, yes it is so with the Third Cultural project, of course I do not mean with the officers and the fund bodies, but I mean the artists themselves, it is unfortunately.

All are blaming, all became angry by a negative power of pushing, but although we say it is OK and we have some aim so, nothing stops us to making our dream come true, the Third Culture will come to the light, and those who want to be in the shadow they choice to be there by the end, it them not us, we do not need a negative power of pushing, briefly I want to say according to Darwin's equivalentents we need a useful power of pushing, not to not oriented turbines.

Moustafa Al Yassin

DRAWING !!!!!



Julian Beever is an english artist who's famous for his art on the pavement of england, France, germany, usa, australia and belgium. Beever gives to his drawing an anamorphose, his images are drawn completly diforms which give a 3D image when viewing on the right angle ... see for yourself it's amazing !!!

