

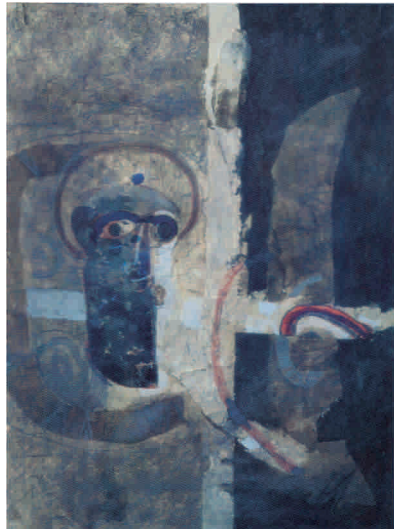
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UNIVERSAL CONNECTION

406

Artist of the Issue

Salah AL-Masoudi





This is the last issue of our UC for this year, this is the 10th year of our work in EU-MAN, and soon we will bid farewell to this year, hoping that the New Year will be full of work “soft work”, which might make us concentrate more on our affairs with more flexibility and inspiration.

As a matter of fact, 2006 was full of useful, fruitful and rich experiences, towards realizing our dream project of the Third Culture on its best.

After publishing the last issue of the magazine, we started directly for the real work of meeting, discussing, networking, traveling and lobbying in a way that did not let us do something else.

We have chosen the writers of the catalogue of the Third Culture exhibition project, which is set to take place on March 2007 in Helsinki and in April-May 2007 on Copenhagen. These writers will take the responsibility of writing about the participants of this exhibition.

We also visited to those participants, who are new members and willing to participate. We were forced to make some changes in the participants' list, because some works did not match the exhibition's theme.

We where in Copenhagen for an agreement on the venue for the Third Culture's show, it was really a good experience, especially to get to know Mr. Jesper Vang Hansen, the Rundetaarn's director, who inspired me and made me more enthusiastic for taking the exhibition to Copenhagen.

Mr. Jesper has a very big heart, sympathetic and full of energy, he came up with many ideas to help us and bring our project about.

So, we want to say that we will be a “10-year-young” organization, which is still seeking official recognition, these 10 years were full of activities that we participate in our efforts to reach a multi-cultural society, or at least what we could offer the society we live and work at.

Probably it would be rather a pause for meditation and rearranging things that might lead us to the safeties land, a pause which might lead us to more accuracy in our work, relationships and networking.

That is what I really hope.

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A. SADOON

A.Sadoon... who went through

A.Sadoon is an Iraqi artist who made his career in Iraq with the leading generation of the visual art, not for a particular reason, but he was professionally active making art and design for many magazines, newspapers and different companies. The Swedish city of Vänersborg invited him to present his art in the City Art Hall, so On the 18th of November 2007 was the opening and it was a cultural event that local paper wrote more than one article presenting A.Sadoon's art. On the vernissage ceremony a Swedish musician played piano, which what made the opening more atmospheric and Mr. Henrik Mossberg told the audience that he felt satisfy while he was plying and seeing art around him. Kristina Holmberg the director of the City Art Hall presented A.Sadoon in her speech as one of the rare artists who work on the theme of the presence and absence, and that was clear through out his sculptures (who went through, the title of the sculptures) which were a sort of surprise to the audience.

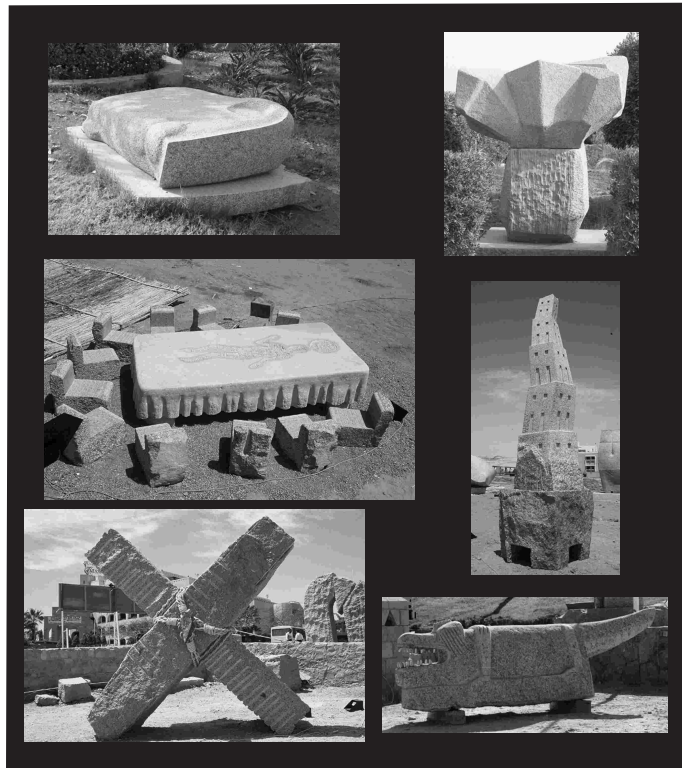
Worth mentioning that in parallel with his City Art Hall exhibition A.Sadoon was showing some of his sketches in the City library of Gothenburg, so, as he was active artist in Iraq, he continue his career in Sweden where he lives and works.



MAHER AL ABROUDI

Al-Baroudi is a well-known artist in his homeland and in Europe, he gets a lot of awards in Syria, Egypt and in France where he lives and works since 1987. Maher Al-Baroudi recently presented his artworks; paintings and sculptures, the theme is “the sheep”

Maher is one active member of EU-MAN, and always tries to keep in contact and finds opportunities to all members of EU-MAN in France.



MAGDA TÓTHOVÁ

Exhibition dates: November 29, 2006-January 13, 2007

Global player since long before Christ

In her show “global player since long before Christ” Magda Tóthová (born 1979 in Bratislava, lives in Vienna) presents space-filling objects. In her work, she repeatedly uses urban space as a field for artistic actions and manifestations, and stages everyday as well as abysmal scenarios.

In the current show, too, she revolves the cosmology of an art form that’s approaches show references to the Slovak conceptual artists Julius Koller or Stano Filko.

“It only needs a few trimmings, and the sun was born. Since then, it reflects more than merely a universe. This way, we once lost ourselves in it and found the beginning again, and lost ourselves anew.” she said.

The exhibition was opened on November 29, 2006 and will last till January 13, 2007 in Galerie Andreas Huber.

Galerie Andreas Huber.

WELCOME TO HELSINKI

Our large-scale exhibition that will take place in March in Helsinki and in May 2007 in Copenhagen will witness a lot of activities and a lot of surprises, which is not a strange thing since we want to keep ourselves together and we need that.

Helsinki will host about 10 artists who will come from England, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. An accommodation will be arranged and the school of art in Hyvinkää promised to help in this matter by sending some helpers to the international artists who will come to Helsinki.

Voluntarily, Mr. Jarmo Vellonen the Finnish sculptor will make the layout for the exhibition; he will be the person in charge for putting and distributing the art works in the venue of PURESTAMO of the Cable Factory.

So, our word to those artists who are willing to come to Helsinki, just you are most welcome and you will find your other home here.

NORDIC AMNESTIA

Nordic Amnesia

The colonial history of the Nordic region is a dark chapter that seems to have slipped the memory of many of the Nordic populations. Although it continues to make itself very much felt in the region's former colonies, this history is alarmingly absent in the collective memory of the once-colonizing Nordic countries.

With Rethinking Nordic Colonialism: A Postcolonial Exhibition Project in Five Acts, we aim to shed light over this history. Not only do we hope to explain why this past has been forgotten in some parts of the region. We also want to show how this history continues to structure the Nordic societies today, and how our contemporary problems of intolerance, xenophobia, and nationalism have their roots in this history.

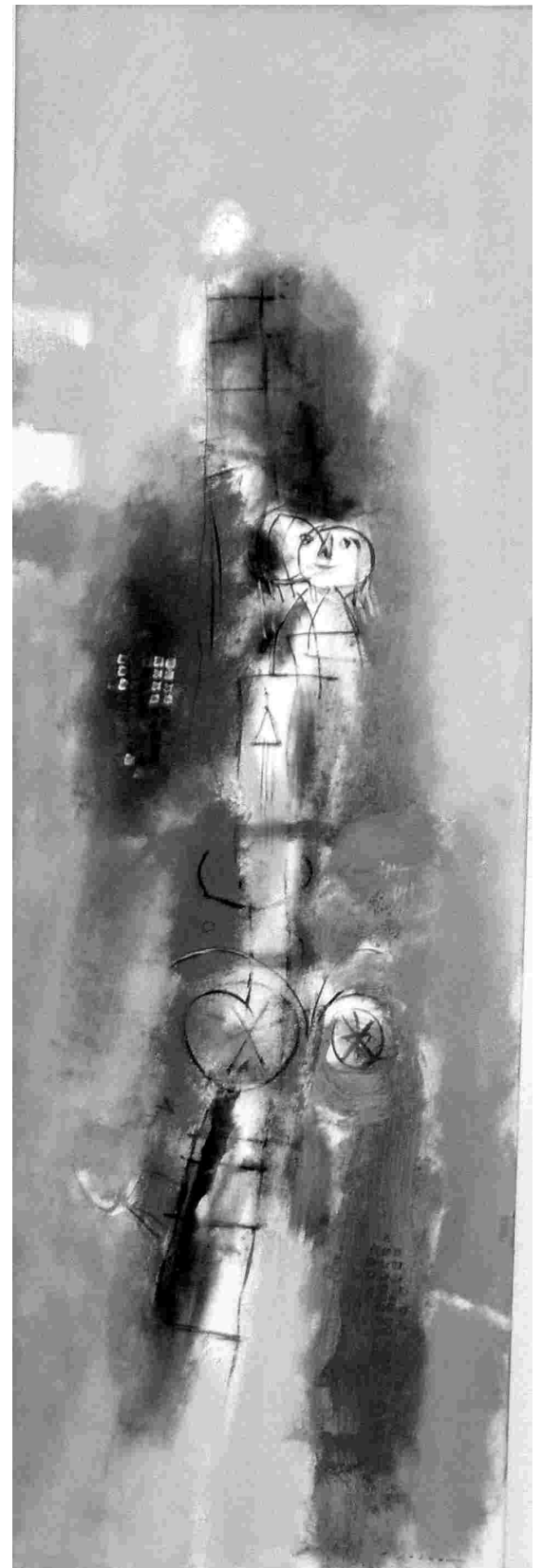
Hopefully, the project will also demonstrate that the postcolonial state that the region finds itself in today is not only a story of oppression and sad destinies. The historical chain of cultural clashes between colonizers and colonized have resulted in other formations of modernity and other value systems different from those of the West. If we dare engaging them, they might pose fruitful alternatives to existing norms and values.

Exhibition Structure

Rethinking Nordic Colonialism will revisit this history during the course of five acts, which combines exhibitions with workshops, conferences, hearings, and happenings in the locations of Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and the Sámi area of Finland. 56 internationally recognized artists, theorists, politicians, and grassroots activists from all over the world participate in the project, which runs from March 24 – November 25, 2006.

The project opens in March in Reykjavik, Iceland (a former colony of Denmark) with an art exhibition and a workshop. In April, the project moves on to Nuuk, Greenland (also a former colony and now a self-governing part of the Kingdom of Denmark), where audiences are invited to attend a new art exhibition and a public hearing. Tórshavn in the Faroe Islands (also a former colony and now a self-governing part of the Kingdom of Denmark) will host Act 3 the following month, where yet another art exhibition is complemented by a performance event. Act 4 takes place in June in Rovaniemi in the Finnish part of Sápmi (the home land area of the indigenous Sámi people) and also features an art exhibition combined with a conference. In the fifth act, the many activities and conclusions of the project will be documented in a DVD Box Set, which is released on November 25, 2006 during four simultaneous closing events in the Nordic metropolises Copenhagen, Helsinki, Oslo, and Stockholm. With Act 5, the project's many postcolonial voices reach the past colonizers of the Nordic region and become audible to their present populations – and to the world at large. .

Rethinking Nordic Colonialism is remarkable in a number of ways. It represents a first attempt at writing a comprehensive history of Nordic colonialism and involves all the Nordic countries. It supports the incipient postcolonial studies in the Nordic region. And last, but not least, it is based on extraordinary partnerships between important art and culture institutions in the region: The Living Art Museum and The Reykjavik Academy in Iceland; Greenland National Museum and Archives as well as the Teachers' Training School of Greenland in Nuuk; The Faroe Islands Art Museum and The Nordic House in Tórshavn; The Arctic Centre and Finnish Railways Locomotive Engine Shed in Rovaniemi in Northern Finland(Sàpmi).



Salah AL-Masoudi

By: Ali Najjar

Essential attempt to read Salah AL-Masoudi artworks

AL-Masoudi tries his best to be out of that darkness, but still often he faces difficulties of that, the details of his artworks which is full of violence positions, hide an attempt to destabilize the artwork itself, they are such a works which take itself in pieces, crumble the imaginary oriental romantic heritage (the erotic and the sentimental) although that heritage has colorful, fantastic figures, Salah tries sometimes to take the body or the nature in pieces. Not for exile composition try, but for the rearrangement of what he destroyed, one by one of that what remain of the violence attempt!

“AL-Masoudi tries his best to be out of that darkness, but still often he faces difficulties of that, the details of his artworks which is full of violence positions, hide an attempt to destabilize the artwork itself”



AL-Masoudi can't get red of his personal history (that at least what we see of his experience) though it is a distinguished limit of an ordinary Iraqi character. AL-Masoudi walks in the dark part of that character- the apparent part and the hidden one at the same time.



AL-Masoudi tries his best to be out of that darkness, but still often he faces difficulties of that, the details of his artworks which is full of violence positions, hide an attempt to destabilize the artwork itself, they are such a works which take itself in pieces, crumble the imaginary oriental romantic heritage (the erotic and the sentimental) although that heritage has colorful, fantastic figures, Salah tries sometimes to take the body or the nature in pieces. Not for exile composition try, but for the rearrangement of what he destroyed, one by one of that what remain of the violence of his attempt!

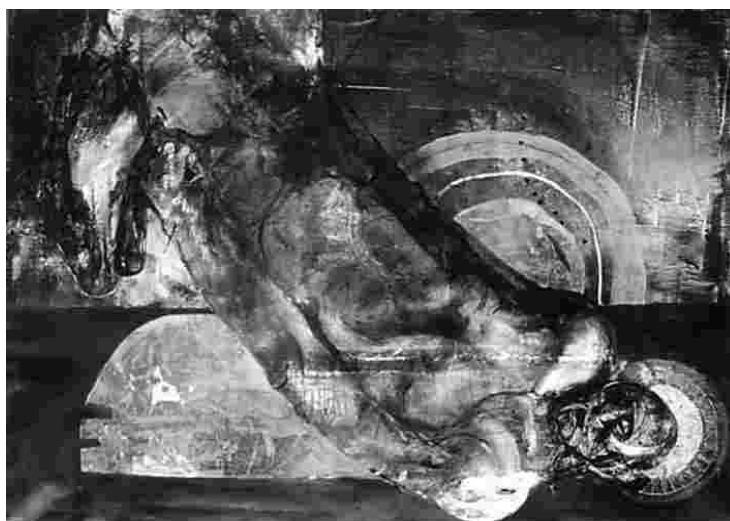
If Salah knows that, taking the body in pieces goes via sentimental channels, it is sentimental dealing with storage of memory, which does not leave its vivid history, though for narrow and ignorant space. And then bring some details to ancient Iraqi history gradually (history which is in parallel to our contemporary history)

And then Salah put himself as a witness to the chronicle valance, to emphasize rooted identity to Iraqi or as they call it the "black land" the land that naturally gives the black petrol which what remain of its buried inhumation resources, or taking in pieces the influence of the poison contemporary wars.



Salah highlights the technique in his works to ease its details maneuver, on the limits of taking down or up its composition, even that he tries more than one time to efface some of its marks, still there is many indications shows us Salah's attempts.

If the history (the Sumerian body) appears in Salah's works, its presentation comes through demand or bring to as witness to the chronicle violence- the eye is the center of the world and details are the map of the earth- so what remain of the body fragmented difficult to realize or generally to know the concept of the Iraqi contemporary art.



Arabic writing has strange distinguished characteristics, as line drawings continue or

Salah AL-Masoudi

cut, it loses the straightness on the account of its curves and it leaves fragmented pointillists around its circles to fill the surface satisfied or filled with what it leaves of emotional. As this is the case in Salah's paintings he does not feel satisfied

with implementing his primer visual maps (his very first items that cover the artwork's surface). He tries to delete some of these items or add others line or color effects to increase the inner tension (the monologue of the opposite), which leads to accelerating the emotional state. His trails might not be very far from the act of dotting and away from the horizontal lining; a mood like that never leaves something to the accident outside his awareness borders. Salah's work as they appear to the observer of his changes throughout his artistic time, still uses its memory (it looks like a visual monument that has not lost its primitive characteristics since the beginning of the 70s). Although time and geography changed many times, he went on in two different paths, the artistic

professionalism and the visual one and it seems that when these two areas crossed each other, they enhanced his artistic performance as the body or some fragments of it forms the most important item in his visual items, which can not be ignored even if he was working on a landscape as it contains some of his emotional fragments.

At the same time, we can't ignore the virtual holes that are contained in his artworks and throughout the painting surface, it stops us sometimes, or leads us to a gap that does not penetrate the surface but to cover what's left from his brushes strokes, with details that he can not tolerate its sharpness. His memory, which he exhausts sometimes in completing his works, comes out through these virtual holes as a legend of time.



The circle or its curves is a medium for a hole that is emerging, a hole (gap, center, bottom, womb) is a part of a whirlpool or a mental uprising, forms here a round mentality that comes against the static trend, a mentality that inherited its being, even though there is a long experience that tries to make it an international trend.

As the space would leave between the bodies (palm 2) a trick that is trying to win the eternity, Salah's works come with this virtual formula, palm (body) soil (blackness) tenderness, aggression, closeness and distance as it is formed in the top (the bird's eye) holes that are covered with the errors of the time and the impossible salvation.

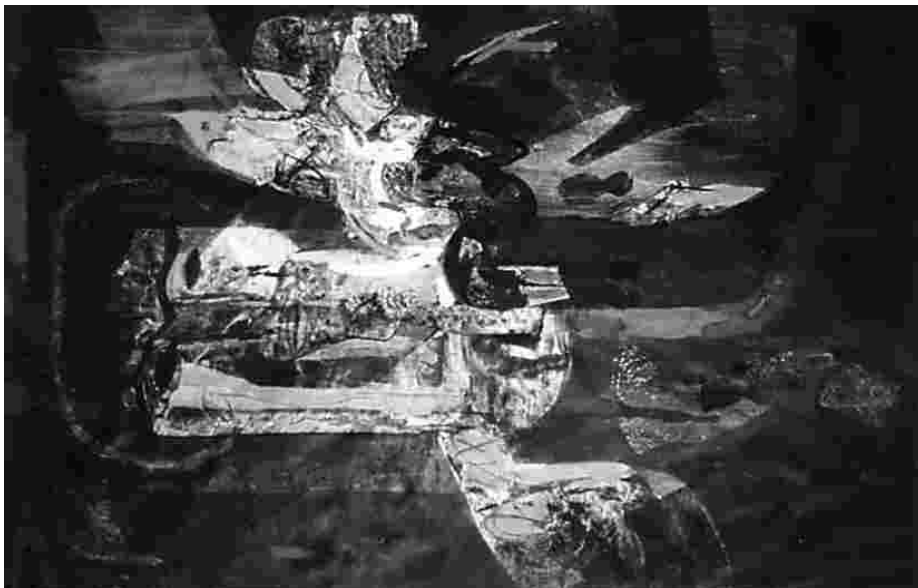
Footnotes

In the beginning of the 70s I visited Basra with the late (Dr. Qutaiba Asheikh Nouri) and some other artists, artist Shawkat Arrabiai took us in a boat trip across "shat alarab" and the amount of palm trees in Al-Khora area was amazing, Dr. Qutaiba started a discussion on the space that separate palms from each other. magic that is deep inside emptiness or its vanishing or disappearance.

The emptiness here looks like it is as much as the palm trees as life goes through it with all its force, a space that was taken by the mythical inheritance and started to penetrate us somehow. The border of life that is hidden between its layers tells somewhat about what these spaces hide in Salah's works that are forests of Iraqi palm trees that are scattered throughout its unkind contemporary times, exhausted by wars and got poisoned of them, got stiffed and crucified and left cracks and wounds all over its body that is stretching around the water.

1. Salah Giad Al-Masoudi was born in Basra, southern Iraq in 1947

- He studied art in Baghdad and resumed his studies in Paris, where he has lived since 1976
- Participated in personal and group exhibitions in Baghdad, Kuwait, Paris, Athens, Moscow, Tokyo, Finland, Bulgaria and many others
- Got many art prizes from Iraq, Kuwait, Bulgaria and France.. Basra is the world's richest place with palm trees.



Chronicle



By: Moustafa Al-Yassin

THE HOLLY NAKEDNESS

My grand father said don't die before death comes to you...

Because there is something which is worthwhile to live this life
even for moments

Probably

But, I don't know

Was it he, my "grand father" who lived 108 years, before he knew
that he died 108 times each day, just to witness that he lived and
he did not live at the same time.

But, I don't know

Were the talking last evening about the lovebird, that for tomorrow
just a Jasmine scent

And I became including the system of the civilization divorce

Then we have to be aware that cultural pockets have snakes

But, I don't know

Sinking of Estonia* yesterday, has it something to do with the
safe of the ocean?

And the last help scream of the captain was very serious

But, I don't know

Was it Dante who imagined the hill as icy cone? Not as glowing
fire

Although that Dante did not enter civilized investigation room
as conflict of civilizations.

But, I don't know

Was it Brancusi*, the naked priest right? When he fined his
endless column, it was just to say that we know and we do not
know at the same time

We continue and not continue, is there tomorrow?

Is there tomorrow

But, I don't know

Estonia a ship that sank in the north sea year 1995, almost all
its passengers died, and it was a catastrophe.

Brancusi a Romanian sculptor who lived the first and the second
world wars, he considered one of the most expansive sculptor in
the world

Depoliticizing Modern and Contemporary Arab Art: Christie's and the Rush to "Discover" the Arab World

By Maymanah Farhat

The May 2006 opening of Christie's Dubai marked a new era for modern and contemporary Arab art. Establishing record prices for several pioneering artists, the inaugural auction affirmed the growing popularity of art from the region. With sales reaching well over \$8.4 million, many observers of the field predict the auction could generate a greater place for Arab art in the international market. Some have even gone as far to claim that the record prices will serve to further legitimize Arab artists in the global art scene. Since market values do often dictate the momentum of the international art world, there may be some truth in these remarks. Given the social history of art however, the introduction of the major international auction house to the Arab world should be measured with caution.

The expansion of the Christie's conglomerate to include the Middle East is a prime example of globalization, a logical step in the latest campaign to assert American and European political and economic dominance. This attempt to corner the Middle Eastern art market is part of a larger trend, one distinguished by a sort of rush to "discover" art and cultural production of the region. Many view the field as uncharted territory and are dashing to partake in its "emergence." The notion that exhibitions of contemporary Arab art are a newly introduced phenomenon to the international art world is erroneous. Many seminal Arab artists have been exhibiting their work in Western venues since the mid-twentieth century.

Evident in the abundance of exhibitions of contemporary Middle Eastern and "Islamic" art held in the United States and Europe in recent years, Arab art has emerged as a fashionable commodity among Western scholars, art institutions and the art market. An increase in institutional fellowships for academics researching Arab art and culture also appear to be on the rise, with more opportunities being presented at top universities annually. This comes as no surprise at a time when parts of the Arab world have expressed significant resistance to Western hegemony. Provided the geopolitical context in which this new found interest has materialized the profusion of academic, institutional and market interest in Arab art must be examined.

Although such exhibitions as the Station Museum's *Made in Palestine* (2003), Noorderlicht's *Nazar: Photographs from the Arab World* (2004) and the British Museum's *Word into Art* (2006) presented the proper sociopolitical and art historical contexts needed for viewers to gain a clear understanding of Arab art, these examples are few among recent exhibitions.

Reflected in the politically and culturally biased ways in which Arab art has been represented in several other major exhibitions over the past five years, it has become evident that there is an underlying need to co-opt contemporary Arab visual culture in order to censor and further suppress the Arab voice. Notwithstanding the space Arab art has been given in major American and European museums and institutions, an examination of curatorial statements and exhibition catalog essays provides clues into some of the ideological frameworks from which this rush to "discover" Arab art originates. With statements such as:

We [Europeans] do not understand that you can go directly from a tent to a skyscraper, from a camel to a six-cylinder. And yet for artists of the Arab world this process is a matter of course, and this concept is important in the way the cultural side effects illuminate it. (1) the Arab world is reduced to an "archaic" (a term used to describe the region earlier in the catalog by a different curator) land that is just emerging into modern times. These blatantly racist projections of Arabs not only maintain notions of Western superiority and Middle Eastern inferiority, they work to reduce the importance of the art exhibited and

silence the creative voices of those represented. In the end the presenting of Arab art only serves to reinforce the exact stereotypes that have been used to justify the exploitation of the region for political and economic gains by several Western governments.

instance in modern history that the political sphere has been entangled in cultural activity. Since the art market has been used to define art as a luxury good, mainstream art exists as a direct reflection of a particular cultural and sociopolitical reality, one defined by dominating economic interests and the political agendas of those in power. Capable of transforming political culture, revolutionary art movements throughout the twentieth century were constantly struggling to remain autonomous.

Frances Stonor Saunders's *The Cultural Cold War* revealed the heavy handed involvement of the American government (more specifically that of the CIA) in financially supporting and promoting the work of certain cultural and artistic practitioners during the Cold War. Besides the funding of publications and academic research, one of the most famous examples presented by Saunders is the manipulation of the art world to serve US foreign policy (mainly anti-communist political campaigns) through the co-opting of Abstract Expressionist artists and the promotion of their work.

(2) The American movement bore resemblance to the Russian Constructivist School of the early twentieth century, but was devoid of its revolutionary political content. Decades later, we find similar formulas being used to combat any evidence of political dissent from the Arab world and its diaspora.

demonstrates current efforts to pacify the revolutionary aspects of Arab art in several ways. Initially, it is to gain control of the international market for Arab art so that only a specific demographic has access to the work of its influential artists. This maintains the false sense of exclusivity that is the trademark of Western art but which has been vehemently fought against by countless pioneering art movements throughout the development of modern and contemporary Arab art.

The Oil-rich Gulf region is the perfect candidate for creating this cultural divide between the wealthy ruling and impoverished classes of the Arab world. Not only do the governments of most Gulf nations consist of some of the wealthiest ruling families of the Middle East, they are also systematically aligned with American political and economic interests. Since the 1970s the "modernization" of the region has meant the emulation of American and European models. The perversion of transforming cities into lavish and excessive displays of Gulf wealth that rival those of Western nations, while major political and humanitarian crises rage in neighboring Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon, is the exact apathetic state needed to depoliticize Arab art.

The societal frameworks of Gulf nations also provide the ideal environment for the dissemination of such intentions with nationality

acting as an integral factor in the distribution of wealth and the establishment of class. A large portion of working class populations in these nations consist of expatriates from South Asia and neighboring Arab countries. Ironically it is art by South Asian artists that sold for the highest prices at Christie's Dubai in May. Additionally, in the majority of regional art galleries, the art of well known Egyptian, Iraqi, Lebanese and Palestinian artists dominate the annual exhibition lineups and are among the top sellers.

Such work can be marketed by Christie's with ease towards wealthy Gulf art patrons. There is an existing interest in art by prominent artists from the above mentioned countries and a cultural familiarity that comes from expatriates working in the region that is coupled with a degree of exoticism of the working class and poor. This places the future of Arab art in the hands of the financial interests of Gulf States. The current construction of expansive arts facilities in cities such as Doha, Dubai, Sharjah and Muscat will lure generations of young Arab artists into art scenes unlike those that exist elsewhere in the Arab world today, the greatest emphasis will be on market value, the potential death of future revolutionary art movements.

The opening of the hefty auction house forms separate classifications for Arab art. With the increasing of prices for work by certain artists, a hierarchy is formed among all artists, one that will eventually enable the controlling of the art scene. The archetypical method of manipulating visual culture today is marketing. In leading international art centers such as New York, Paris and London the promotion of an artist's work is based on a series of market hurdles, the initial and most important step being the establishment of auction records. The capability to establish auction records for any Arab artist, allows for the malleability of content, the promotion of art to fit a particular market and the further censorship of Arab art justified by the concept of "what sells." Here lies the most dangerous aspect of placing Arab art into the international market: the depoliticizing of its revolutionary nature.

To consider modern and contemporary Arab art revolutionary is not an overstatement. Over the past fifty years Arab artists have struggled to preserve artistic and cultural practice under formidable conditions. As several Arab nations have experienced the devastating effects of war and occupation, political unrest and state censorship, artistic production becomes a form of resistance to the oppression, violence, destruction and instability inflicted upon local communities. The sheer existence of Arab art becomes political. Using various modes of artistic production, all art from the Arab world and its diaspora reflects a profound sense of defiance and determination.

In the 1930s, with the growing popularity of the Mexican Muralist school, which fostered the move towards politically cognizant work in international art, numerous attempts to subdue the movement were made in the United States. The commissioning of leading muralist painters to create large-scale murals with local themes by American business tycoons were ways of co-opting the politically charged visual language that was making the movement influential. Murals were painted by Diego Rivera in such places as the San Francisco Stock Exchange, Rockefeller Center and the Detroit Institute of Arts. A retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art for the movement's artistic giant was also a visible testimony of the art world's attempts to tame the revolutionary momentum. Yet in light of these attempts, Mexican muralists maintained their political fervor, shaping the modern consciousness of Mexican culture and countless art

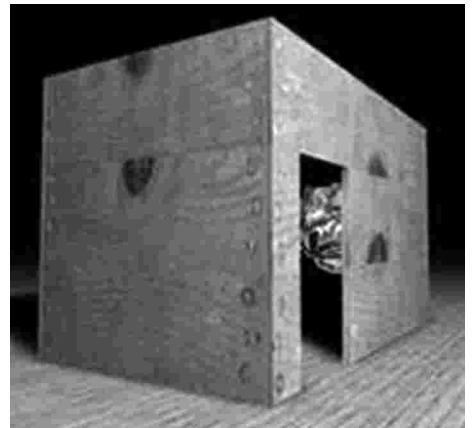
Exhibition review

By: Ali Najjar

“Peter Holst in his artwork number 5 could surprise you as he becomes able to make the body as a solid maze to which you can’t enter or get out, by stretching the door’s mass.”

Since the establishment of the city of Malmo’s art hall it is very keen on presenting the best art exhibitions, whether on an international level under a general name such as the art of the 20th century, which was an exhibition for some very famous artworks of some famous artists from the 20th century such as Spain’s Tapies and Miro, Denmark’s Oliver Eliassen or Argentina’s Arnesto Nito among others.

Malmo 2 was the latest exhibition in this art hall; it is not that far from the fantasy area of the postmodernism that was dealt with by the Danish or the Argentinean artists mentioned earlier, but with some differences in the vision and the technique. The exhibition, like other previous ones, had the “space” as a theme, the space as a room for awareness, surprising or entertainment. There were 12 participants from Sweden and Denmark and the exhibition aimed at giving a second group of artists a chance to exhibit their





works after the first group got its opportunity to do so in an exhibition called (Malmo 1) The choice of the artists, whose ages were between 31 and 48 years old was carrying a message as they all were born in the second half of the last century and learnt their techniques within the current art trends, so the 20th century's modernism is far and near of them at the same time.

One of the artists, Hans Sherzibiri has some weird ideas, but they were not absolutely strange in the modern art times as he chose to document the prints of the human body using fragments of sponges of used beds and drew faces and hands and legs. He tried to document the secret history, the history of the body or its intimate prints and the artwork came in fitting the category of "poor art" that doesn't cost much.

Peter Holst in his artwork number 5 could surprise you as he becomes able to make the body as a solid maze to which you can't enter or get out, by stretching the door's mass. As the 'house' is one of the obsessions of the Nordic life because of the harshness of nature, we find an artist called Trolls Millan working on it as a theme as he connects his two-storey house by pipes and used himself or somebody else's figure to be hung in the middle, he made the pipe house as a maze in the space the artist lost his way inside it. The video also had a good share in the exhibition, especially with a female artist called Tina Sherzibiri and her artwork called the chair that mixed between the body that is controlled



Exhibition review

by a dynamic movements parallel to the shape of the chair, which sometimes shape a dual movement as it forms a colorful unity. The project of the exhibition as it is advertised is to give the artists from a very particular area (Malmo and its neighbor city of Copenhagen) a chance to practice their activities and artistic creations.

It also aims at social suspense through dragging the viewer to be an interactor at the same time.

Some of these artworks do not lack the emotions and such projects confirm the idea of the separation between the modern art and the modernism and all its schools that became very traditional for the newer generations. These generations who are very fond of the virtual events and the strange concepts!



New York gets its black angel back

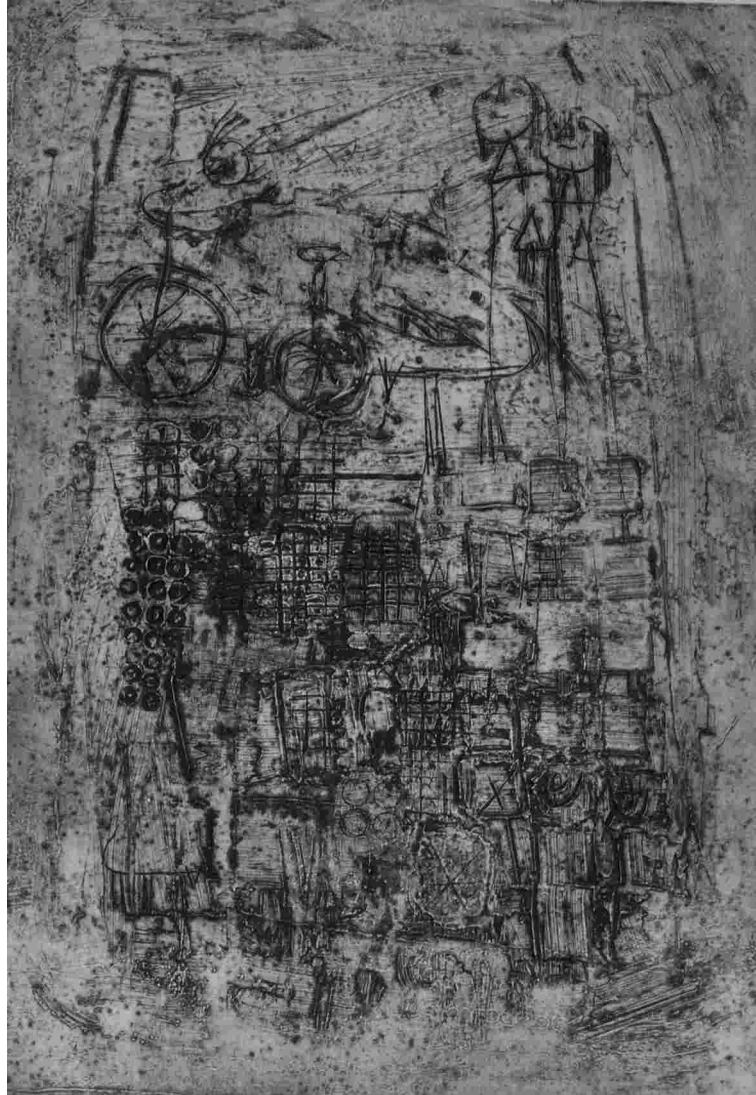
*By: Farouk Yousif
Sweden*

Archil Gorki opens door to dreams in early drafts

As autumn starts, many of New York-based galleries celebrate the artists of the 40s of the last century, those who put the city on the map of art history as New York got its own art school like those of Vienna and Paris, those such as Jackson Bollok, Archil Gorki, William de Coning and Mark Rothko.

CDS Gallery was interested in Gorki, the artist who lived his life as if it is a mirror for a past he did not live as he would have wished.

Gorki's early drafts were the theme of an exhibition at CDS and it was a good opportunity to get to know this artist, who died in an early age, through his artworks. He left works that looked like tears left on the material of the paintings, tears of the agony of searching for his mother's grave that he never knew its where about. When Gorki arrived at the US as an immigrant with his father, this sad Armenian boy was under 16 of age, his mother, whom he loved as he had never loved anybody else in his life was one of a million Armenians who were victims of the Turkish brutalities in 1915. After five years of his compulsory immigration he settled in New York in 1925, he then invented his name that he was very well known with (Archil Gorki), his real name (Vozdanig Atoyan) was forgotten. His new name was a mixture of the name of a Greek myth hero and a Russian famous author, this mixture could be tracked in all what he left behind of paintings and memories of a short tragic life, which ended by his own hands in 1948. Gorki became one of the most important figures in the New York art school, which took painting by the



action abstractionism storm , but he kept looking behind, where was an artwork, which he did not finish but in 1936 after seven years of starting it, a painting that of him and his mother. In this painting, there were his incomplete emotions, he was sure that he filled expressionism with imagination. He could not be free from the desire of expressing the mother tenderness, even when he used this puzzling expression, which took abstractionist type.

The mother's womb was tracking most of the shapes that he created; these shapes were so fragile like a weeping child, who Gorki was all his life.

In his twenties, Gorki got affected by George Brak and Paul Sizan and Picasso before them. This could be found in his early drafts that are shown now, but Cubicism did not eat up all his dreams. At these days, Gorki had already met his life time friends, William de Coning and Mark Rothko. The three migrant artists had a far fetched aim than understanding the contemporary changes in the European art; their knowledge of the new world opened the horizon in front of them for new adventure, which did not come into shape but in the 40s of the last century. The action abstractionism was a chemical solution for a complicated problem that emerged because of the blocked path that abstractionism and expressionism ended at.

The new Americans found the solution for this problem, a solution that did not emerge out of the blue.

Archil Gorki opens door to dreams in early drafts

The effects of those Europeans, who fled from the curse of the war were obvious on the inventors of this magical solution, especially Miro and Mata Masson and it is not a coincidence that the three of them were Surrealists.

They were predeceased to New York by Andre Breton, the Pope of surrealism; Archil Gorki was one of his very first friends and believers.

The strategy of the dream was the most important gift of Surrealism and Gorki was the nearest of the three to the fountains of this direct vision that was calling for a world that is able to escape the realistic destiny.

Gorki tended to express his misery through his paintings that carried moments that of those between sleep and wake, silence and talk movement and staying still.

His shapes did not stop giving signs of mysterious memories, he was hunted with a fresh, but depressed memory. It was the memory that kept getting its light from his mother's image, the woman that will stay young forever.

Could it be possible that this man of the magical dreams a black angel (this is the title of the latest books on Gorki)?

His shapes never left their isolation although they were flying; this isolation was lived by him as if there will be nobody else but this one he was when he looked at his mother's eyes. The genius of this ghost gave us a chance to have a look on a childish world still mixes the religious chant with the super forces of nature.

Gorki paintings were pictures for uncompleted dreams and we can not get to know this beauty but through its death.

We use it to come closer of a life that we could have lived, but we did not. Gorki's shapes that are floating and his lines that are never having enough with what they leave behind give an idea of a short life, as if it is a butterfly that tells us that something sacred is about to vanish.

He was more solid in his earlier drafts, more aware of his profession as a painter, whereas his latest drawings that made his glory are an expression of an inevitable weeping that is because each and every shape of his is a tear he threw on the painting material and it symbolises his mother's grave that he does not its whereabouts.

of art knows as the action abstractionism.



LAST DROP

Fire flies

Avtarjeet Dhanjal

*Fire flies can not lit a room,
nor do they show us direction at night,
as stars do. Fire flies only tell us that its night."*

(Poem by Manjit Tiwana, a Panjabi poetess)

"Artists are not social reformers nor do they claim to change the world, as politicians do. Artists only make us realise that we are human beings."

These were opening words, of my first lecture at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. I could not stand there as Christian missionary who bore a special message of God. I was there only as a humble artist.

Artist is like a candle that can easily be ignored when other bright lights are around, even can be blown off. But a candle has the potential to light another thousand candles. That's where candles

have become powerful. Artists of world famous paintings in the caves of Ajanta and Alora (India) are remembered today, not because they were good campaigners, but for the 'art' what they left behind for generations to enjoy.

Artists of Ajanta - Alora, dedicated their lives to their art and lived a simple monastic life; society automatically took care of their basic material needs. We artists, who choose to live in the West, (for various reasons) do need to play the material game to survive. Today there are no more such monasteries, where basic needs of the residents are taken care. Even if there are few, I don't know if these places are open to artists; or any of the artists would choose to live there.

In 1997, at end of a conference at UNESCO, we several artists were sitting in bar in Paris. Realizing that our group members came from various backgrounds, I took this opportunity to ask a question to each of the artists - 'who is an artist?'

Answers varied from mundane to metaphorical depending upon the origin of each artist.

At the end I had answer the same question. "Artist definition do change over time; but today for me - artist is who dreams, as most others also do; but artist goes couple of steps beyond, he/she not only dreams but expresses these dreams to share these dreams with the world. My friends, it is our 'unique dreams', 'vision of the world', that we offer to the world, irrespective of whether we are paid for it. This is what makes us 'artists'. This way we also create a unique space for us, from where we share our vision of life and world listens. That is our strength.



Rundetaarn of Copenhagen, the venue where EU-MAN will transmit the Third Culture Exhibition on April - May 2007.



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