

# EU-MAN

universal colours 4/99

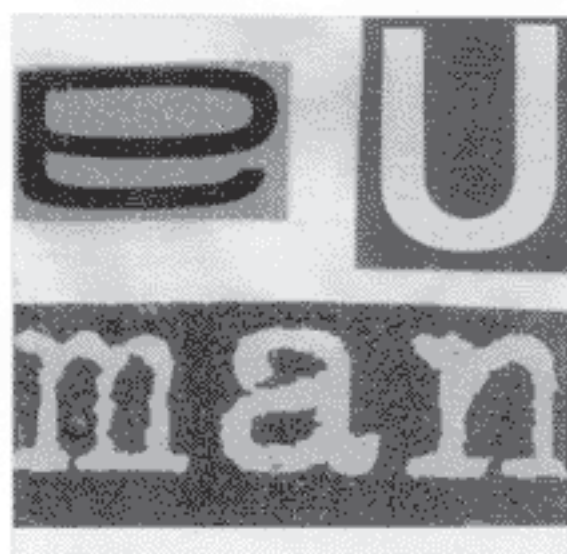


Artist of the issue Dia Al Azzawi.

**Universal Colors**  
**Magazine of the EU-MAN**  
European Union Migrants Artists Network

**Editorial Board**  
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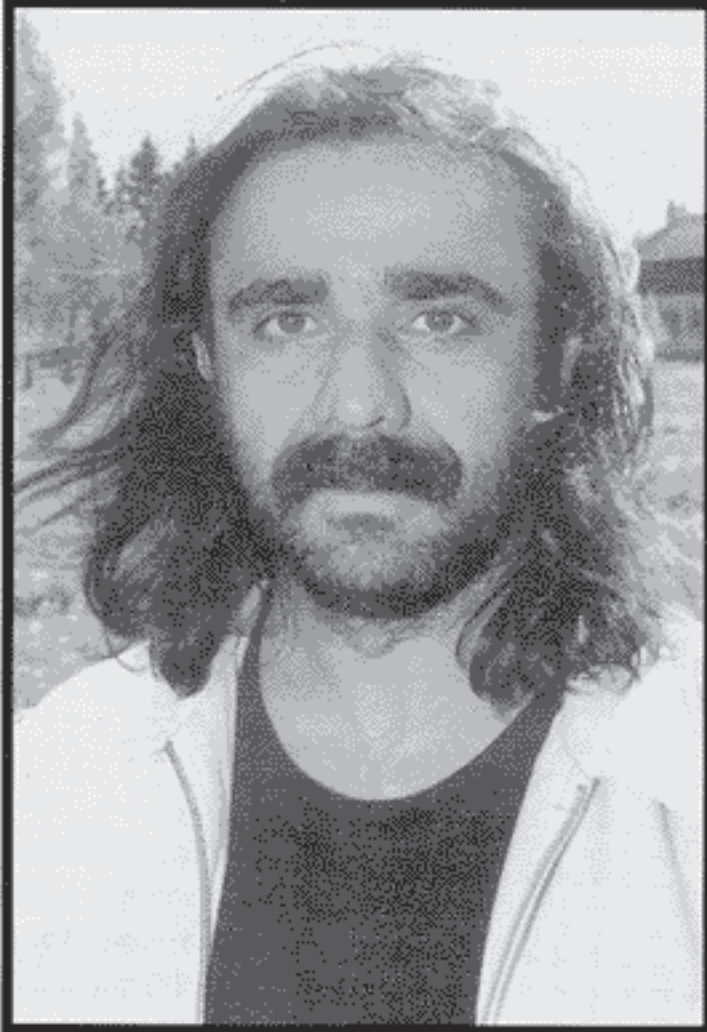


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# Editorial



I could not believe that the project of EU-MAN would take this location in the cultural life, this attention, when I started. I don't mean only among the migrant artists, but even among the natives.

I could not know that the need was increasing day by day, to arrange meetings, exhibitions, to participate even in the simplest activities in the European cultural life. I was thinking of my project as what I call "a life project", the third culture. The third culture is basically an active participation in knowing the future, or what I imagine as the future, of Europe - precisely to answer the question 'where do we go with Europe, and what will become of us after the total implementation of the European Union? For Europe and the native Europeans, the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society theme is very important - so what about us "the migrants" living in this already multi-cultural society?

This question, so far, irritates me and puts me in puzzle. I see the migrants, unemployed by force, with no possibility to participate and be active as a consequence of their problems on the social and psychological level. I see these strangers, I see them die, eat themselves, their youthhood. I imagine that they can do miracles if they rise on their feet, get active and participate in the normal life. That will create a health, a well being, to the society. I watch the products of some of them who are involved in culture and I see a better future. The products of these few are different from the mainstream products - in other words different from the European output and different from the output of their native countries as well.

This made me aware, and sure that the third culture has characteristics of its own which can be distinguished from both above-mentioned. It is true that some European critics have made statements about the products of the migrants as 'the influence of the European beginning of the century is very clear'. I do consider these statements as not critic, not pedagogical critic, simply they did not, could not reach the entity of this 'third culture'.

As I think there is a crisis in the critic movement in all Europe. When a journalist wants to write about an artist from for example China, the article becomes like any journalistic report. And, more than this, the reporter hangs her/himself in the ropes of politics and, consciously or subconsciously, becomes a propagandist, once against the regime, once to implement the media machinery of the west. The example is very clear if the migrant is a refugee - the journalist tends to put the refugee issue under the spotlight, forgetting the art and the artists.

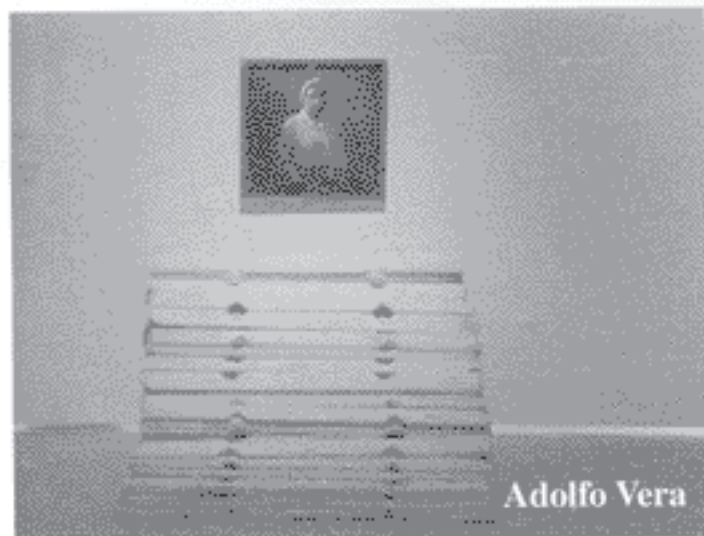
I don't want to go further in this issue, I just wanted to put a drop of light on an important issue: we should make the research of the third culture ourselves and not be shy to show it, as evidence of the role and importance of our active and interactive participation in Europe.

*Amir Khatib*

# News

## AAF

A meeting took place between EU-MAN and the chairperson of AAF (Artists' Association of Finland). Two main issues were discussed: 1) whether to put EU-MAN under the umbrella of the AAF, and 2) the nomination of an artist to be in the jury of the pARTicipation project. EU-MAN's 'getting under the umbrella' was hanged up - AAF as a Finnish organization is not the appropriate umbrella for EU-MAN. Besides it is questionable whether EU-MAN is ready to 'be under an umbrella' at all. Membership in international artists' organizations is a different matter. Worth emphasizing here is that this initiative/suggestion came from the leader of the Finnish Arts Council Mr. Risto Ruohonen.



## IAA

After considerable efforts from our chairperson Khatib, contact has been established between EU-MAN and the head of the IAA (the International Arts Association) M. de Salins, about the recommendation and support for the EU-MAN to become a member of this organization, which is very useful not least for migrant artists in all Europe, and elsewhere. M. de Salins was very enthusiastic about and supportive to EU-MAN's work, especially after having received the literature we have been able to produce under our until now short path of existence. Kindly, M. de Salins invited the chairperson of EU-MAN to make a presentation of the organization at the IAA-meeting on late November this year in the headquarters of the UNESCO. EU-MAN thanks M. de Salins for this deep understanding and great cooperation and, in the same time, looking forward to huge responsibility in the future in wider eye and vivid heart.



# The Third Culture

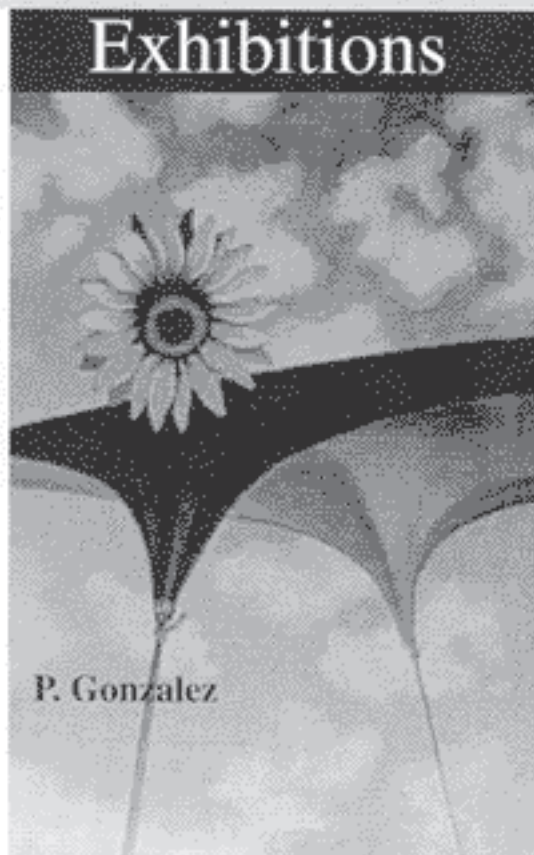
For the preparation of the project of the "Third Culture", the large scale exhibition pARTicipation will mark the beginning of the research work planned by the EU-MAN for the years of 2001-2003. The Third Culture -project aims at mapping the situation of the migrant artists and arts in Europe, with a geo-political map of the increasing phenomenon of 'migrant artists' during the last ten years. The research will deal with the potential in the influence of the third culture, the relation it has to both cultures - the new and the original.

Preliminary contacts have been taken to museums and universities - the issue is under consideration, and the UC will keep the readers informed about the progress in the matter.

**Art:** Austria: Immigration  
Dezentrale Kunst in der  
AAI-Galerie, a series of ex-  
hibitions from October 99 to  
January 00. Artists in Octo-  
ber: Abdelrahman Hawy,  
Emil Aram, Erika Dellert-  
Vambe, Roland Fischer-Bri-  
and, Evgenia Karadonev,  
Solomon Okopukhre, Car-  
men Pena de Klein, Faek  
Rasul, Tapiwa Vambe, Ju-  
dith Zillich. 9-18 Mo-Fri.  
Schwartzspanierstrasse 15,  
1090 Wien, the AAI - Afro-  
Asiatische Institut Wien.

The Shambala touring exhibition Shooting Stars with migrant artists living in Denmark will reach Helsinki, Finland on October 26. The exhibition will be shown in two parts of two weeks each, in the gallery Art Galaxy on Mannerheimintie 39.

## Exhibitions



At the same time EU-MAN goes Malmitalo gallery with a follow up of the recent Autumn Salon in STOA.

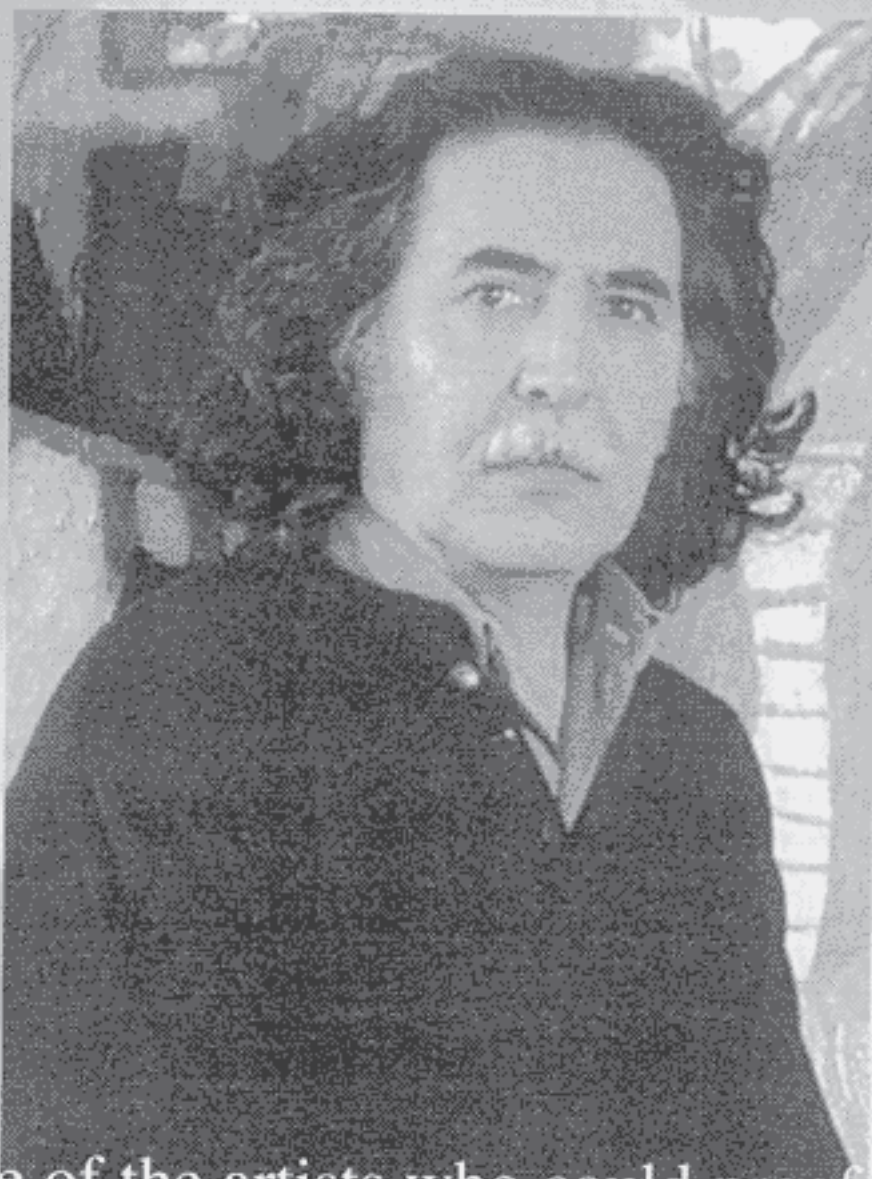
Amir Khatib was invited to have a one man show in Nurmes in the north-east of Finland. 30th of August-26th of September 99.

Dwi Setianto gives a one man exhibition in the MUU-gallery, from the 13th to 28th of October (MUU means 'other art forms' and dates from the time when

performance, video etc. were not 'officially recognized art forms, but indicated as 'muu' in for example application forms).

# Artist of the issue

Dia AL Azzawi Dia AL Azzawi Dia AL Azzawi Dia AL Azzawi



Dia is one of the artists who could proof that art is able to build the human civilization. He is one of those rare artists who could deeply realize the movement of the human history and walke in its way. He is now trying his best to certify the difficult equivalent - either to add to the movement of the history or not to be.

# AL Azzawi Dia AL Azzawi Dia AL Azzawi Dia AL Azzawi

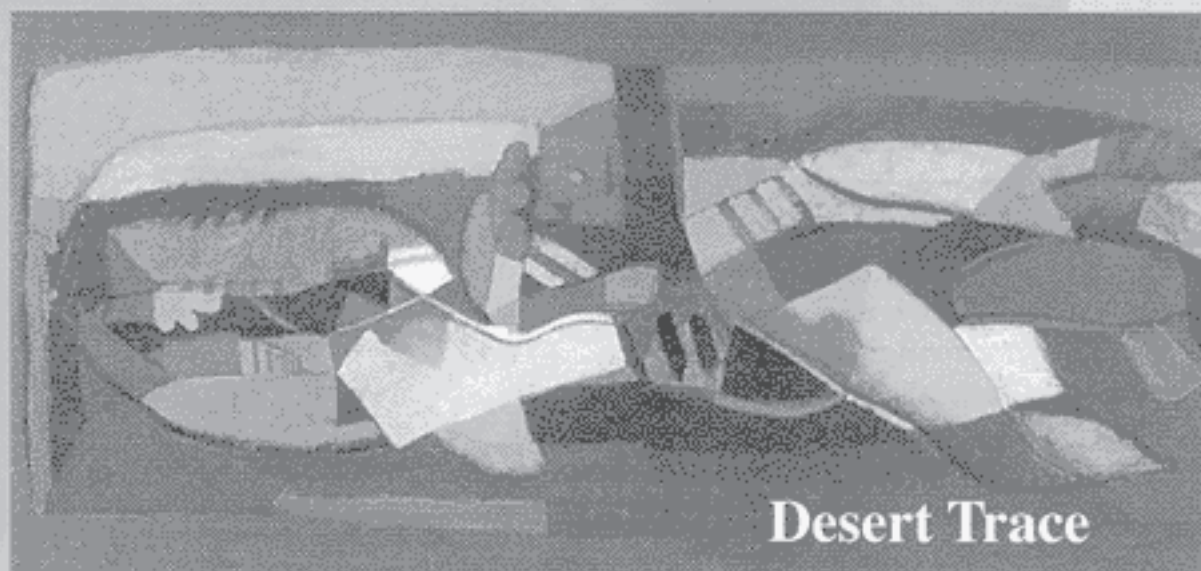
## Inevitable:

First of all must be confessed, that I am not able to present Dia AL Azza-wi in the way that he is worth. Why? because Dia is one of the most glorious names in all the Arab world, as well as he has his own stamp and artistic and idealistic characteristics that create his own character.

This little article about Dia is an attempt to introduce him to our members. He is one of the great artists who support our organization, very enthusiastic to participate in our activities, encouraging our work. I am, personally, proud of this, and the great embracement of all great artists to us, because it fortifies the bonds between the migrant artists in this exile, and create a good situation of mutual understanding.

When Dia started his artistic journey he was dreaming to implement his personal project. This was an idealistic project that he was searching as a very young man, in his childhood in the arts, if it is right to say so. Just as he searches for it today, forty years later. The figures in Dia's works occupy large spaces - not only on the board, but in his thought as well. Once you find him cutting the figures of the human body to parts in order to reach a distance, that nobody reached before him.

Another time you see him composing these parts with high quality of thinking to reach the top of the aesthetic. He could be like someone shouting to you - this is happening in each exhibition or in each new work, as if he were showing the same scream to the viewers, over and over (as I find it). I remember when I was visiting the first Arab biennial in Baghdad in 1973. I was very young at that time and could of course not recognize and analyse relations between figure and distance. But I remember I stopped in front of Dias work, why I don't remember, I only remember that for some uncomprehensive reason I was taken, ceased by that work.



**Desert Trace**

As I see it, Dia is thinking art in a supervisory way - I now think about his research in art. He makes exceptional intention of his subjects, because he wants to appoint his research not only to subjects which basically occupy a large space in his daily thinking, but also all events and happenings that pass his own life.

The research/dream did not change for Dia. As I said, his research started some forty years ago. What keeps drawing attention in Dias works is

his sticking to the same idealistic line in his research. For him the outside world, I mean all things, others, political events, social happenings etcetera, is subjects. Any artist can deal with them, any person can deal with them, but the way differs from human to human. As a conclusion of this, I can say that Dia as an artist has been on a high quality of conscious and deep understanding to this truth, since a long time, since the very early days of his career.

Dia as an artist was thinking deeply in the figure. All his early attempt to cut the human body and reconstruct it has been a result of his deep thinking that was there in the beginning of his wonderful journey with the art. Dia knew exactly the influence of the figure on the viewer, and knew significantly the last experiences of the western artists and their escape from the figure - it had become a guest following the audience in the whole life. Dia started to think not far off his old thinking, but it was a natural consequence to his former thinking and a logical successor to it. We saw his works without figures - quantities of colours occupy the space of the

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board, letting the viewer have the same imagination that the artists intended. This is by itself a very genius way to tell the viewers your message.



In his late works, you see his nostalgia for the figure. He started to paint some figures on the distances of colours, as if they were strange things you cannot separate from the total shape. In his late works he was like the great Arab poet Abu AL Taib Al Mutanabbi. When you try to separate a word from his poem, you try to create something else. It embers the poem and quickly you find that, the poem does not belong to Al Mutanabbi at all. That's what Dia was doing in his last experience adding the figure to his work - when you try to take the figure away it is the same as to try to take the nostalgia away and that is taking the whole work away. This nostalgia for the figure is not far from his old research - that the figure is an abstract sentence in the body of the poetic work as a total.

Amir Khatib

# An Autumn Salon again!

The last days of Summer were the first days of EU-MAN:s yearly Autumn Salon. To our surprise, the number of participants grew to twenty-two and filled the large space in the STOA-gallery in the east centre of Helsinki.

As I was in no way involved in the hanging, I am free to say that it was a beautiful exhibition. Partly because of the good and functional space that stretches over a large room which is partly divided into two floors, the upper a kind of balcony. So, the space has a very wide, or high space, one 'normal' and one almost intimate space, the balcony.



Durlabh Singh

Several artists living in Finland participated. Most of them (naturally?) living in the capital area, but quite many of those living in other parts of Finland too. We were happy to 'host' also a handful of participants from abroad, England, Austria, Denmark and Germany.

And the reception in the field? Unfortunately no proper art critic was made, but an article based on interviews with members building up the exhibition was published in a local paper. The Helsingin Sanomat wrote a little informative piece of text about the exhibition. As to visitors, the number grew quite high - the place is situated in a cultural centre, with a library and a coffee-shop as neighbours, so the accessibility was good - something that always works in favour of any exhibition. Some of the visitors gave their comments on the exhibition - both very angry and very supportive comments...

The span of two weeks seemed a very short time. Our efforts to prolong the time with one week were unfortunately not successful. Anyway, I think that, more or less, we can all be satisfied. No major catastrophe occurred, and that is not self-evident at all!

## **The Helsinki Night of the Arts**

Going back in time a few days only from the Autumn Salon opening, Helsinki celebrated the night of the arts. EU-MAN participated in the festivities, which on our horizon proved to be more of a back-to-school -party than any cultural occasion. Later in the evening EU-MAN:s tent almost drowned in the crowds, although it was a big tent, built in a somewhat orientalic manner.

We cannot say it was a great success, but our candy sculpture, built on the spot, went to the memory of hundreds of Helsinkies - the early evening brought a lot of all kinds of people to the Esplanade where the tent stood by the feet of our national poet Runeberg. Sure, worthwhile considering well for next year - in the right place the tent can turn into a nice cosy art corner and a place where people can get to know the network and the artists...



2000.hel.fi  
Euroopan kulttuurikaupunki  
Europas kulturstad  
European City of Culture

Strongly into the year of 2000 - but it needs work!  
We are closer than ever to the change of millennia. Hardly it will change the world too much... I'm joking. Seriously, pARTicipation is approaching and things have happened on the way up till now. Of course.

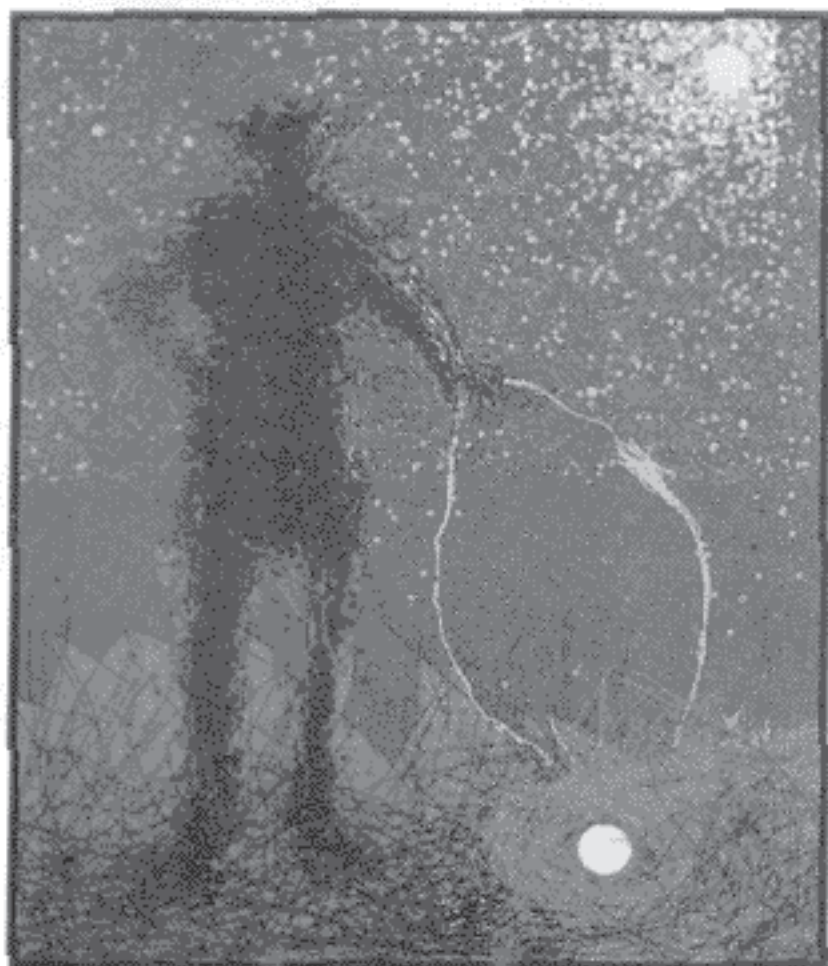
EU-MAN has finally been enrolled in the program of the foundation Helsinki Culture Capital 2000, as one of its 450 events, something that we hope gives more of other things than it gave us in money. However, hopefully, it is a good thing to be involved in the big project, if for nothing else so for the experience.

Money-making is the great challenge right now. We are waiting -as always- to hear the result of the EU funding project of Culture 2000, and the result of some funds here in Finland.

Preparations for the book are going on. Suggestions for the lay-out have come in, and it seems we are going to have a beautiful book, again.

# Group of Migrant Artists from Copenhagen at Helsinki Art Galaxy Gallery 25.10-25.11.1999

Migration across borders - be it voluntary or forced - and the new geography of Europe which has developed in the course of the last decade, together with growing internationalisation force us all including the artist- to look about us and take an interest in each other.



*Shooting Stars*



## GALERIE ARABESKE

The German city of Heidelberg embraces one of the most important galleries for migrant art in Europe: the Arabeske Gallery, which was established around three years ago, to introduce the contemporary Arab art to the German audience, and to keep it updated with the cultural products of the Arab world. The culture and art products, and also the folklore, is the intention of the people who run the gallery.

In its young journey, Arabeske has presented the most important Arab artists. It still continues promoting the Arab culture in the whole Europe in a very active way. Nadia and Yahya AL Madani are the ones mainly involved in the project, their project with Arabeske. They work hard to bring things together, they make the contacts with the artists, they contact the audience, they publish the material of the exhibitions... briefly, they do everything, arrange this exhibition or that cultural event, just for the sake of fulfilling their message.

In the future plan of the Arabeske Gallery there is a lot of important events and exhibitions which the AL Madani will arrange. During the celebration of the year of 2000 for example.

The ones behind this gallery are, as we mentioned, Mrs & Mr Madani. They are basically involved with the Arabic culture affairs in Europe; they are spending most of their time and energy for the important message they carry. They have a good connection with the German-Arab Cultural Association, they have a good relationship with other galleries and museums in Europe and in the native Arab countries, they arrange seminars, make workshops, and animate many other activities, beside their sometimes heavy duty, to arrange exhibitions.

The idea of establishing such a gallery in Heidelberg is very wise, indeed, it is worth being supported and encouraged: Heidelberg, as it is well known as both a university city and an industrial city (it has the world's largest car factory, Mercedes Benz).

In August, the AL Madani visited EU-MAN in Helsinki. In fact, it was a very useful visiting for both parts. It was positive as well, that we could reach to an important agreement for our work in the future. We hope strongly, that our cooperation will be good and fruitful work for our mutual tasks; that the mutual tasks will move our work of the future.

To our members, and to whom who like to get more information, you can contact:

### **Gallery Arabeske**

Yahya Al-Madani

Dossenheimer Landstraße 69

69121 Heidelberg

Tel & Fax +49 6221 436 112

# The International Meeting Point in Turku offers: Exhibition space!

The International Meeting Point is a part of the Cultural Centre of Turku . Our task is to help immigrants in adapting to the Finnish society and culture. This does not mean forgetting the own traditions and cultural heritage. On the contrary! The International Meeting Point aims at increasing tolerance by giving information about different cultures.

One important part in fulfilling these tasks is the arranging of monthly changing exhibitions shedding light on various countries, nations, religions and other international issues. The immigrant artists have naturally the possibility to exhibit their works here. The International Meeting Point offers its rooms only for such exhibitions that fit in with the purpose of building a more multicultural, pluralistic and tolerant Turku. There is also a possibility to arrange events relating to the theme of the exhibition, such as lectures and workshops. The International Meeting Point for its part takes care of the daily supervision and cleaning of the exhibition rooms, as well as of the announcing and advertizing for the exhibition. The exhibitor takes care of the transportation, insurance, hanging and taking down the objects and the possible service on the vernissage - the opening. The exhibition time is one month.

Applications are welcome!  
The International Meeting Point/  
Kansainvälinen Kohtauspaikka  
Vanha Suurtori 3  
20500 Turku, Finland  
Ph 358 - (0)2-2620 973  
Fax 358 (0)2-2620 932

# Galleria Art Galaxy

## Art Galaxy Gallery

The turn of millennia in Helsinki will be enriched by the appearance of the new gallery Art Galaxy, which started its activity during the Autumn of 1999. Situated in the heart of Helsinki, it will be a strong factor in promoting both Finnish and international art and culture.

The gallery offers an intimate, still large, space for 1-3 artists to bring forth their art during three weeks. The staff is helpful with practical arrangements and advertizing.

The gallery takes works for sale.

For more information you can contact:

Art Galaxy Gallery

Mannerhemintie 39

00250 Helsinki, Finland

Tel & Fax: + 358 (0) 9 24 11116

GSM: + 358 (0) 40 551 9452