



albareh
art gallery

آني كرکديجيان
Annie Kurkdjian

About the Show

Annie Kurkdjian in this exhibition investigates transgressions effected on the human body as a consequence of violence and anxiety. A vision drawn out of what she calls the “orgy of Beirut”, inspired by a number of readings in film, philosophy and literature, her work does not spare us the unmediated sight of horror. Yet the vision is fragmentary; absent elements complete the vision and compete with the imagination in encoded signals

Initially informed by the Lebanese Civil War, the work of remembrance and the labor of missing are here transformed within the frame, into a search for an object and a subject located as forever absent. The canvas is in this exhibition not a mere format but a marker of visual impossibilities. Kurkdjian has adopted

the most external point of view: What does it mean to be seen? Her investigation has shifted from pure experience and story-telling towards reception and perception. Once the subjects have been exposed and their interior revealed, how do these personae perceive themselves?

Rather than merely informing us about the process of bodily reconfiguration, Kurkdjian’s characters withdraw their gaze from us. The uncanny characters are everything but absent, imprisoned behind and within a frame, being constantly observed and yet always on flight, aware of their omnipresence and demanding to be ransomed. The animated creatures are aware of their precarious position and accordingly, turn their gaze in reverse, reaching out for the unknown, suspended in the boundlessness of a place we cannot reach, being prey of an ambiguity, sometimes lustful, sometimes repulsive.

If flight from the public crime of being seen is not possible, then a full closure ensues and the visual field disappears, leaving us with an incomplete syntax of the artist’s intentions. Speaking of flight and enclosure, the paintings examine the limits of the canvas as a site of personal expression and open up warm spaces for intimacy and exposure. Annie Kurkdjian retains her singular combination of humor and moral seriousness, and her acute preoccupation with the traces of history left on the body. “Flight and Enclosure” is a temporary window that can disappear at any time, leaving us far behind in the dark.

About the Artist

Annie Kurkdjian graduated with a bachelor's degree from Palandjian College in 1990, and obtained a master's degree in business administration from St. Joseph's University in 1994. Living through the turbulent years of the Lebanese Civil War that broke out when she was only two years old, her childhood was spent amidst turmoil and violence. After spending a few years attempting to keep the business her father – assassinated during the war – had left behind, she sought for a path towards self-expression that she found while studying fine arts and psychology at the Lebanese University, and theology at St. Joseph's University.

Her journey through the arts and humanities led her to concentrate full-time on art after 2009 and her paintings are thus construed as a reflection on the traumatic years of the war, the experience of womanhood, and the tragic absurdities of life. In her work, she translates the effervescent metaphors of Beirut, both cruel and beautiful, into transfigurations of the body, theatrical stages and shocking ironies.

As a painter, Kurkdjian has the capacity to articulate horror and humor in a direct and irreverent style, situated between absurd and cynical but effusive with the soft colors of genre painting, typical of her native Lebanon. Although her technique might be confused with merely figurative, her work is contemporary and surrealist, expressing the instability of life, diverse scenarios of inner emotional violence, deformities and psychological anomalies.

Kurkdjian's work has been showcased since 2005, with solo exhibitions at the Goethe Institut, Beirut (2005); Centre Culturel Français, Beirut (2006); Galerie Surface Libre, Beirut (2007); Zico House, Beirut (2008); Atelier 109, Cannes (2010), and Espace Bertin Poirée, Paris (2012). Group shows include: Gallery Sader, Beirut (2001, 2002); UNESCO, Beirut (2003); Salon Sursock, Beirut (2010, 2011); Royal School of Arts, London (2011); Biennale Arts Hors Normes, Lyon (2011), and Art et Déchirure, Rouen (2012).

She was the recipient of the Johayna Baddoura Prize 2012, the "mention special de jury" at the Sursock Salon, Beirut, 2011, and the first prize of figurative painting at Atelier "Z", Paris, 2012. Kurkdjian's works can be found in collections at the University of Balamand, Beirut, and at the Musée de Tessé, Le Mans, France.



Annie Kurkdjian

Born Beirut, Lebanon, 1972,
lives and works in Beirut;

Recipient of the “Johayna Baddoura Prize” 2012



120x75cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2012



136x80cm / Pastel on paper / 2013



42x50cm / Mixed Media on paper / 2009



98x88cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2013



80x50cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2012



70x55cm / Mixed Media / 2012



70x104cm / Acrylic on wood / 2013



60x35cm / Acrylic on board / 2010



100x100cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2010



120x67cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2013



120x100cm / Acrylic on board / 2010



70x75cm / Acrylic on board / 2011



75x100cm / Mixed Media / 2009



78x58cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2012



90x200cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2009



120x100cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2013



114x105cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2013



100x120cm / Acrylic on canvas / 2009



البارح للفن المعاصر

ص.ب. ٢٦٢٨٢، العدلية، مملكة البحرين
هاتف ٩٧٣ ١٧٧١ ٧٧٠٧ | فاكس ٩٧٣ ١٧٧١ ٤٥٤٥

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