



Awaiting

حسام ضرار
Hossam Dirar

البارح
للفن المعاصر

Albareh is proud to present in Bahrain, Hossam Dirar, one of Egypt's most energetic emerging artists. In this exhibition, the Cairo-based artist will showcase a number of oil and mixed media canvases that build upon his 2013 series "Faces", but yet finding subtler places for an intimacy and warmth that is always elsewhere, far in the distance, almost unreachable. In his depictions of women, the artist is simultaneously looking at carefully and taking distance from his subject matter. Neither abstract nor figurative, Dirar's compositions are created out of pure material, and assembled almost in the manner of frames and moving images rather than at standstill. The ubiquity and speed of his native Cairo is palpable in the fragile environments he builds; it is but through a combination of tension and void that these works gain sculptural frames and become three-dimensional.

Heritage and future blend in his practice, as he draws on ancient Egyptian art, and on the classical tradition of icons and portraits, with their singular effects of oblique perspective and distance. As an astute observer, in these paintings of women, Dirar is asking questions about the female form, with almost child-like curiosity: He is imagining their personalities and their lives, their private surroundings and backgrounds. Nevertheless he is not interested in telling a story: He wants to capture a single moment of intense human experience. It might be the wait, the despair, the impatience. The time quality associated with the works is presented as an accidental snapshot, as in the night paintings of American realist Edward Hopper. Dirar's moment however are a lot more fragile and less open to the viewer: There is something at work between the painter and the woman.

As it is known from his earlier work with photography, installation and particularly the paintings of Cairo, based on photographs from convoluted times, Hossam Dirar also stands at the threshold of the contemporary, with his brush and palette wanting to emulate the digital, and thus creating documents which are both historical and temporary. But what is a temporary document? It is the question that the works beget. In the same manner that classical Egyptian art translated every aspect of everyday life into art and made it last for thousands of years, the artist is interested in leaving behind a document about the digital age, with the same weight of time that the ancients taught us and that by all means, is absent from contemporary art nowadays. Dirar's iconography functions as a fresco, accidentally found on the abetted wall of a grand palace.



Untitled 1 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 100x100cm | 2014



Untitled 2 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 100x100cm | 2014



Untitled 3 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 110x101cm | 2014



Untitled 4 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 103x67cm | 2014



Untitled 5 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 111x87cm | 2014



Untitled 6 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 100x100cm | 2014





Untitled 9 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 84x84cm | 2014



Untitled 10 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 97x85cm | 2014





Untitled 8 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 115x97cm | 2014



Untitled 12 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 100x100cm | 2014



Untitled 13 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 100x64cm | 2014



Untitled 7 | Oil & mixed media on canvas | 105x175cm | 2014

About Dirar Hossam

Hossam Dirar was born and raised in Cairo, and graduated from the applied arts department at Helwan University, Egypt, in 2002 and since then his work has been showcased in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Egypt, Slovakia, Germany, France, Italy, Austria and South Africa. Living and working in Cairo, Dirar is one of Egypt's most significant contemporary artists, included in Saatchi's portfolio of emerging artists to invest during 2013. Hossam Dirar is a multi-disciplinary artist working across painting, photography, installation, video and graphic design. His works are conceived as a re-interpretation of Egypt's rich visual heritage, overlapping between the multi-cultural character of Cairo, the city's complex and ever expanding urban façade, the region's traditional iconography and the influence of contemporary media in shaping cultural referents.

Solo Exhibitions

- 01/2013 Egyptian Revolution
Kosice (2013 European Capital of Culture), Slovakia
- 11/2012 Once Upon a Time
Cairo Opera House, Cairo, Egypt
- 04/2012 We Need New Oxygen & From 11:00 till 11:03
Installation & Video Art
Saad Zaghloul Cultural Center, Cairo, Egypt
- 01/2012 Egyptian Revolution Anniversary
The Egyptian Academy, Rome, Italy
- 10/2011 Wad3 Moshtarak
El Sawy Culturewheel, Cairo, Egypt
- 09/2011 Lotus Revolution 2011, Touring Exhibition
Vienna, Bratislava, Prague, Budapest, Kecskemét,
Maribor, Graz
Organizer: The Cultural Office of the Arab Republic of
Egypt in Vienna
- 07/2011 To Egypt with Love II
Safarkhan Gallery, Cairo, Egypt
- 05/2011 To Egypt with Love in Vienna
Palais Porcia, Vienna, Austria
Sponsor: The Egyptian Embassy in Vienna
- 04/2011 To Egypt with Love, tribute to the Egyptian revolution
Safarkhan Gallery, Cairo, Egypt
- 12/2010 Abstract Artworks Collection
Hanfaninha Gallery, Cairo, Egypt

Group Exhibitions

- 06/2013 Arts-Mart's Exhibition
The Four Seasons Nile Plaza, Cairo, Egypt
- 05/2013 Division, Installation Art
The 35th Annual General Exhibition
Palace of Arts, Cairo Opera House, Cairo, Egypt
- 04/ 2012 The 34th Annual General Exhibition
Palace of Arts, Cairo Opera House, Cairo, Egypt
- 01/2012 Festival of the Egyptian Revolution Anniversary
The Egyptian Cultural Institute, Paris, France
Organizer: The Cultural Office of the Arab Republic of
Egypt in Paris
(Coverage:[http://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=P6LnVcHtw&feature=share](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6LnVcHtw&feature=share) , Interview
with Al-Arabiya TV: [http://www.alarabiya.net/
articles/2012/01/28/191041.html](http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/01/28/191041.html))
- 01/2012 Tutankhamun Festival
The Festival of Egyptian Culture, Frankfurt, Germany
- 12/2011 Freedom to Create
Photography Exhibition
Cape Town, South Africa

Education

- 1995 – 2000 BA Fine Art
Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Cairo
(graduated with honors, best Graduation project
amongst all entries)
Major studies: Graphic Design, Painting, Printmaking,
and Mixed Media. Minor Studies: Product Design,
Photography, Multimedia, Textiles, and Ceramic

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