

GREEN . ART . GALLERY

Syrian painter Ahmad Moualla opens seminal exhibition in Dubai with a tribute to late Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish

For immediate release: Syrian painter Ahmad Moualla has debuted his most recent body of work at an exhibition held at Green Art Gallery. Entitled “Grey Ash” this exhibition references an earlier body of work created by Moualla in 1997 and which was dedicated to the late Syrian playwright Saadallah Wannous, who passed away in the same year. Considered one of the founding members of Syrian modern theatre, Wannous wrote an impressive body of short plays whose fundamental theme evolved around the relationship between the individual, society and its authorities; a theme also central to Moualla’s practice.

Over a decade later, Moualla revisits those very ideas, this time dedicating a seminal 400 x 440 cm sized monochromatic painting to one of the Arab world’s most prominent literary figures, the late Mahmoud Darwish. In this work, Moualla revisits Darwish’s poem, “The Dice Player” which he wrote shortly before his death. The excerpt below reflects the undertones presented in Moualla’s new body of work:

Who am I to say to you

what I’m saying?

**I wasn’t a stone washed by water
so I became a face
I wasn’t a reed pierced by the wind
so I became a flute
I’m the way the dice fall
sometimes winning sometimes losing
I’m like you
or maybe slightly less ...**

**I was born beside the well
where three single trees stood like nuns
I was born without ceremony or a midwife
and belonged to a family**

**by chance
inheriting its features, idiosyncrasies
and illnesses:**

What affects the individual's relationship to society? How much power does the individual actually possess to be able to resist that which he has been inherently brought in to? How much of that is choice, or freedom of will, and are these anything more than idealized concepts?

At a time in the Arab world where questions are being evoked, yet its answers that are more readily given, the artist asks the viewer to simply pause and re-question.

The exhibition, "Grey Ash" is on view at Green Art Gallery until November 10th 2011. For more information please visit <http://gagallery.wordpress.com>

Born in Syria in 1958, Moualla is considered as one of the leading post-modern artists in Syrian expressionism. He was the first to introduce performance in his work, first exhibited at Atassi Gallery in 1997 with the exhibition entitled "A tribute to Saadallah Wannaus". Moualla graduated from the Damascus University of Fine Arts followed by the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris. Since then he has participated in various exhibitions in Dubai, Cairo, Paris, Istanbul and Graz (Austria) among others. Recent exhibitions include "Signs: Contemporary Arab Art" at Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York (2009) and "New works" at Green Art Gallery Dubai (2009).

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