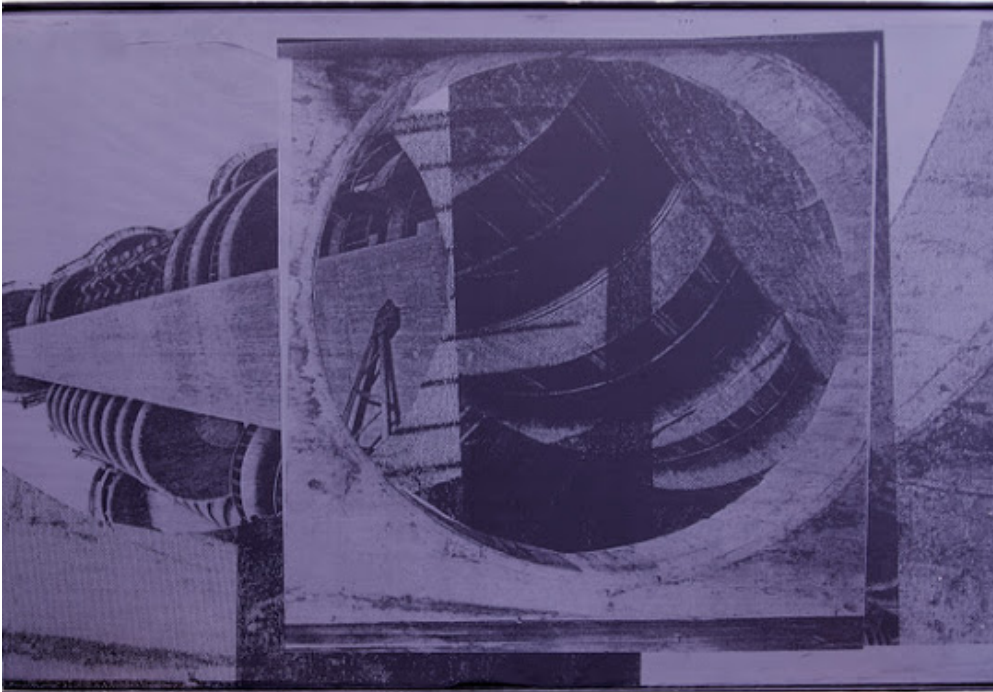


BEIRUT ART FAIR reaffirms its commitment to the discovery of the emerging Lebanese art scene

Art Events and Entertainments slider December 11, 2020



Lebanon has always been a hyper creative artistic hub and a showcase for the region's artists to express themselves freely. Today, the country is going through a strong economic crisis and many families find themselves in a difficult situation. Beirut has also been strongly affected by the two explosions of August 4th and many initiatives are being organized to rebuild and restore the city's damaged heritage. The art world is strongly impacted, as well as its institutions, museums, contemporary art centers, foundations, and galleries. Artists today also need visibility in order to survive.

What are their challenges, their aspirations, their fears, their struggles for tomorrow?

In order to support the Lebanese artistic sector, BEIRUT ART FAIR launched on November 23rd a " Open Call #1 for Lebanese Artists " on social networks, to encourage and support new artists. In just 4 days, the organizers received 196 applications from all around.

A pre-selection of 44 artists was carried out, from which 7 candidates were chosen for this first promotion of promising talents. The choice was tight as the proposed projects were so rich and varied.

For one week, from December 3 to 9, 2020, BEIRUT ART FAIR's Facebook & Instagram platforms will exhibit one artist's work (one artist/one work/one day) every day. A newsletter will be sent on December 10, 2020 to all visitors who have experienced BEIRUT ART FAIR since its first edition.

The selected works will be offered for sale in order to support and encourage these artists to pursue their aspirations.

Artists have explored the broad spectrum of topics spanning identity, be it regional, collective, community, social, or gender-related, but also the cultural dimension particularly when the applicant is of mixed roots.

Photography occupies a major place in our selection and functions here as a symbol.

Tony Mhanna opens the door for the ghosts of the past to return to re-inhabit those houses abandoned because of the war, while Zeinab Khalifeh immortalizes in his portraits the outcasts of society so they don't turn into ghosts themselves. Through a work of manual composition and graphic construction,

Basile Ghosn manipulates architectural iconography and delivers image-illusions in order to re-establish a new social and aesthetic order. Lea Skayem explores, through her staged selfportraits, the difficulties of inhabiting a woman's body in a conservative society.

Salah Missi's purified charcoal denounces the corruption of leaders in the Arab; here his characters, isolated from their environment, intertwine in a state of despair and powerlessness.

Inspired by her Lebanese-Colombian heritage, Michelle Maluf's tapestry combines ancestral techniques and contemporary elements in order to create a harmonious contrast of materials – an allegory of the Lebanese diversity.

Camila Salame's installation is a memorial to the Bald Ibis, a bird whose species has now disappeared, being last seen in 2015 during the destruction of Palmyra. Considered as the sacred bird that brought the olive branch to Noah after the Flood, it is a figure of the rebirth but also of the loss of cultural and natural heritage. This poetic work is an allegory of the eternal link between man and the earth.

“The aim of this “Open Call #1 for Lebanese Artists” is to reveal and promote the new talents of the Lebanese contemporary scene, among the numerous visitors who have participated in the fair since 2010. It is also to give back confidence to the artists, to accompany them in their creation, to help them live from their art, and to develop with them international initiatives. Today, support our artists, they need you!!! ” declares Laure d'Hauteville, founder & director of BEIRUT ART FAIR.

“This open call finally gives the artists the opportunity to make their voice heard in the time of Covid 19. The opportunities to exhibit have disappeared and independent artists need more than ever to be supported and promoted in an innovative way, especially in Lebanon which is experiencing a serious economic crisis. The positioning of BEIRUT ART FAIR is daring and I hope it will resonate with foreign collectors”, adds Marie-Mathilde Gannat-Jaber, co-curator of Open Call #1 for Lebanese Artists.

BEIRUT ART FAIR gives a major place to freedom of expression, cultural dialogue, innovation, tolerance and the fruitful exchange of ideas, which are the essential values of the fair. Beirut will recover and will always remain a creative platform where initiatives multiply.

The 11th edition of BEIRUT ART FAIR will be held at a later date, when political and economic conditions will allow it.