

THE DISTANCE

MUSTAFA ALI



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ART SAWA

14 SEPTEMBER – 25 OCTOBER 2014

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Every time we have an encounter with Mustafa Ali's work, we find our self in a world reflecting the source of a human being inner voices through space and form.

In each wooden head we read the story of a thinking mind, well conserved in a perfectly shaped mass, in order to do not lose a single breath, of a feeling, stimulated by that moment. The moment where we have to see our reality as human being, divided between the survival of our identity carved by culture and experience, life and death, ego and empathy. The head of wood could even draw what it might be a land scratched by an eternal discussion driven by the sense of belonging thoughts..



RIFT HOLE, 2013
1/1
Wood
46 x 28 x 26 cm

MEDITATING, 2014
1/1
Wood
40 x 28 x 22 cm



FACE & VACUUM & MASK, 2014
1/1
Wood
38 x 30 x 20 cm



FRONT BLUE, 2014
1/1
Wood
30 x 18 x 15 cm



DERVISH, 2014
1/1
Wood
64 x 22 x 17 cm



TINTED DREAM, 2014
1/1
Wood
35 x 22 x 20 cm



UNTITLED, 2014
1/1
Wood
33 x 17 x 15 cm



VIOLET FACE, 2014
1/1
Wood
30 x 17 x 13 cm



BRIDE, 2013
1/1
Wood
48 x 27 x 30 cm



AND MYSELF, 2014
1/1
Wood
34 x 24 x 16 cm



THE PRINCE, 2014
1/1
Wood
49 x 20 x 17 cm



DREAMER, 2013
1/1
Wood
70 x 50 x 30 cm



MUSTAFA ALI

Born in 1956, Latakia, lives & works in Syria.

Ali is known for his elegant, monumental sculptures that pierce the consciousness and underscore the fragility of mankind. He has been widely collected in the Arab world for nearly three decades. Ali's work is housed in private and public collections, including a number of official institutions in Syria such as the National Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Damascus, in addition to the Jordan National Gallery in Amman, the Sharjah Museum of Art and the Arab World Institute in Paris. Many of his bronze and wood sculptures can also be found in public spaces, such as "The Gate of Syria," which is on display in the Mediterranean Olympiad in Pari, Italy, and "The Tower of Memory," which stands in the Damascus International Fairground.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 Gallery Ayyam, Damascus, Syria
- 2013 Gallery Dahab, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2004 Spark-shell, Damascus, Syria
- 2003 Kawaf Gallery, Aleppo, Syria
- 2003 Al Qabbani Theatre, Damascus, Syria
- 2000 Fayrouz Gallery, Bahrain
- 1999, 1993 Shoura Gallery, Damascus, Syria
- 1998, 1995 Alice Bogabgab Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1996, 1993 Baladna Art Gallery, Jordan
- 1988 (First bronze sculpture exhibition in Syria), Ashtar Gallery, Damascus, Syria

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 Duo with Nazir Ismail in Doha, Qatar
- 2013 Duo with Farouk Guendakja, Jeddah. KSA
- 2010 Dar Al Assad for Arts and Culture (Damascus Opera House), Syria
- 2009 The Syrian National Museum, Syria
- 2008 Trio with Nazeer Ismail & Amal Melhem titled "Sirca, Contemporary Syrian Art", Courtyard Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2007 Graz, Austria
- 2006 Istanbul, Turkey
- 2006, 2002 Europe Art Exhibition, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2006 Dar Al Baath, Damascus, Syria
- 2005 Tamer Henneh Gallery, Damascus, Syria
- 2005 Uruk Gallery, Damascus, Syria
- 2005, 2002, 1998, 1996 Duo with Abdul Latif Al Smoud, Majlis Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2004 Duo exhibition with Nazir Ismail, Maisaa Shehabi Gallery, Damascus, Syria
- 2004 Arab World Festival, Montreal, Canada
- 2004 Syrian Cultural Week, London
- 2004 Al Rewaq Gallery, Bahrain
- 2003 Theatre of Life Exhibition, the French Cultural Center, Damascus, Syria
- 2003 Exhibition organized by UNHCR at Al Assad National Library, Damascus, Syria
- 2002 Intellectual Exercises in Art and Painting- Responses and Diversifications, with four artists, Attasi Gallery, Damascus, Syria
- 2002 Art SUD Exhibition, Paris, France

PARTICIPATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUMS

- 2010 Sculpture Symposium in Sweida, Syria
- 2010 Dialogue between Generations Sculpture Symposium, Damascus, Syria
- 2009 Beijing Biennale, China
- 2007 EMMAR International Art Symposium, Damascus, Syria
- 2006 International Sculpture Symposium, Amman, Jordan
- 2005 Imagine the Book Biennale, Alexandria, Egypt
- 2004 JEEM International Sculpture Symposium, Latakia, Syria
- 2002, 1998, 1997 Al Mahabba Festival for Sculpture, Latakia, Syria
- 2001 International Sculpture Symposium, Valencia, Spain
- 1998, 1997 The First and Second Symposiums for Sculpture, Damascus, Syria
- 1996 Cairo Biennale, Egypt
- 1997, 1995 Latakia Biennale, Syria
- 1994 Alexandria Biennale, Egypt
- 1994 The First International Sculpture Symposium in Rashana, Lebanon
- 1997, 1995, 1993, 1992 Sharjah Biennale, UAE
- 1987 International Sculpture Symposium in the Open Air, Berlin, Germany

ACQUISITIONS

The Public Palace, Damascus Syria
The National Museum, Syria
The Ministry of Culture, Syria
The Contemporary Art Museum, Jordan
Sharjah Museum, UAE
The Spanish Royal Palace, Spain
The Arab World Institute in Paris, France

MONUMENTS

The Damascene Sword at the Omayyad's Square, Damascus, Syria (collective work with artist Ihsan Intabi)
The Gate of Syria for Mediterranean Olympics, Pari, Italy
Tower of Memory, Damascus International Fairgrounds

PRIZES

2008 First prize for competition held by the Arab World Institute in Paris on the occasion of its 25th birthday, which included implementing an artwork on its roof
2007 Winner if EMAAR's International Art Symposium's prize
1997 Golden Prize, Latakia Biennale, Syria
1992 Bronze Prize, Sharjah Biennale, Sria
Designed the prize for Damascus Cinema Festival, Syria

MEMBERSHIPS

Member of the Higher Committee for Acquisitions at the Syrian Ministry of Culture
Member of the Syndicate of Fine Arts, Syria
Member of the Arab Plastic Artists Union

EDUCATION

BFA, Faculty of Fine Arts, Carrara, Italy (1996)
BFA, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Damascus, Syria, with an excellence degree (1979)
Graduate of the Applied Arts Center, Syrian Ministry of Culture (1977)
Graduate of the Plastic Arts Center, Syrian Ministry of Culture (1974)



Questions & Answers

How were you first exposed to Art?

When I was a child, I grew up surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, sandy hills, green meadows and little rivers where I used to run into wilderness and total freedom. My playground was my surroundings and I used to play with sandy stones, wood pieces and floating debris and clay as well, all were my toys for my hands and my imaginative world. Fortunately, my father never prevented me from this sort of games that till today I still practice ...

During my years of education at school and later at the institute, which helped me to refine and to understand the creative process, I experimented furthermore these practices. Later on and during my university years I distinguished myself amongst my peers through sculpture that becomes my realm.

Tell us about your educational background, as well as your personal background?

From my first years of school, to the Plastic Center of Art in Latakia, to the Applied Arts Institute in Damascus, and then to the Carrara, Fine art academy in Italy, I implemented constantly research and experiments on special techniques, focused always on the newest ones. I was also lucky to participate to various sculpture symposiums.

What was your first exhibition and where?

The first personal exhibition was just after my graduation from university; Bronze was the main material for my artistic production, in 1988.

I adopted from Phoenician Etruscan culture and from the famous master the Alberto Giacometti, the excess of sensitivity and the elongated shapes. This exhibition was a total success at all levels and it is after it that I was called "the bronzy sculptor" that was held in Syria.

What is the inspiration behind your Work?

It has been mainly the woman, the feelings, the emotions as love, sadness and hope, and all social concepts.

It is always a sort of letter to the memories of the past and to the hopes of the future.

What are the messages you convey through your art?

Memories of the past, hopes of the present and future and the symptoms of the current events

How did you select the works for this exhibition?

In 2014-2013 my faces have an expressionist power based on building new warmth and hopeful features; they are the result of this hard intrinsic process of using the sharpness of my tools to create these eventful abysses in the wood for a human face. With the help of tools I mold surfaces, intruding and sinking into the heart of the artwork.

How do you envision your future of art on? If so how will it be accomplished?

The whole vision around me and what will come are my approaches toward future ideas of the new works; always guided by this constant leitmotiv that leads me to another creation.



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