

## Wissam Melhem

Wissam Melhem is a Lebanese architect, landscape designer, and an emerging artist currently exploring different contemporary themes through the processes of sketching and painting. Wissam holds a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture and a Master of Arts in Landscape Urbanism from Notre Dame University in Beirut. He is an experienced architect and educator, working for over 10 years as Senior Architect at Nadim Karam and Hapsitus Architects in Beirut. He is currently a full time lecturer in the Faculty of Architecture, Arts and Design at NDU and a part time lecturer at the Landscape Architecture department at the American University of Beirut.

### “EMANCIPATION”

curated by Maie El-Hage, art historian

19 June 2020 – 18 July 2020

In his series 'Emancipation' Wissam examines the many individual and collective experiences in contemporary Lebanon. Out of a study of prevalent social and cultural references that recur, 'Emancipation' presents archetypes of hope, resilience and resurgence of the contemporary Lebanese citizen. Wissam's work is thought-provoking and intense; in his paintings he communicates messages. These messages are open to interpretation. In this sense, the work is transcultural and can be appreciated beyond its local context. Accompanied by the gestural freedoms and experimentations of an emerging artist, Wissam's works present strong visual compositions and impressive elements. The results are paintings that impact the viewer both intellectually and emotionally. Wissam's style can be best described as Neo-Expressionist, but in a contemporary context. Additionally, there are tendencies towards Symbolism in his choices of recurrent imagery and archetypes. Wissam's work sets out to appeal to the wider Lebanese public, at home and abroad, in addition to the global community.

**Maie El-Hage**

# Art on 56th

Art on 56th Gallery is an independent visual art gallery in Beirut, Lebanon. It was founded by Noha Wadi Moharram in 2012, and is rooted in Gemmayzeh, the capital's booming artistic and cultural neighborhood.

In addition to presenting a roster of local artists to an international audience, the gallery's mission is to promote both established and emerging contemporary artists from the Middle East and beyond. This results in a colorful exchange, highlighting the powerful meaning of images and creativity within a society.

The gallery exhibits artworks in a large variety of media, including painting, sculpture, work on paper, photography and video installation.

## **Opening Hours:**

Tuesday – Friday: 11.00 – 6.00 pm

Saturday: 11.00 – 6.00 pm

Sunday & Monday: Closed