

Rana Raouda

is a prominent Lebanese painter born in Beirut in 1961. She studied Fine Arts at the Lebanese American University of Beirut, and after graduating in 1983 she continued her training in the field at The Torpedo Factory of Virginia in 1988, followed by Corcoran School of Art in Washington D.C. in 1992 and The Monoprint Workshop in New Mexico in 1992.

She has successfully showcased her work internationally at solo and group exhibitions mainly in France, UAE and Beirut. Her work shows abstract facets that come together to convey a unique story to every viewer. She has received great recognition from curators, collectors, critics and museums alike. Her work has been displayed in important collections, art museums and art galleries around the world. Nevertheless, who better to describe her work than Rana Raouda herself: "My paintings are vertical, meant to lift one up. It comes from a stubborn belief in love and beauty in a world where these things can be hard to find. This is what my work is about."

Rana Raouda fluently expresses her love of nature through abstract forms. Her lively vivacious canvasses radiate warmth and positivity. Working with acrylics on canvas, Rana creates numerous layers, often in various tones of the same color, giving each painting a sense of depth and movement. Her inspiration comes from life and nature but she paints always from her memory. "When I start a painting I do not plan the entire composition. The desire to express myself comes from within and what my brush conveys are moments that I have captured in my mind's eye."

Exhibitions

- 2013 Contemporary Istanbul, Art on 56th, Istanbul Turkey
- 2013 Beirut Art Fair, Art on 56th, Beirut Lebanon
- 2013 Summer Collective Exhibition, Art on 56th, Beirut Lebanon
- 2012 Chappaz gallery, Collective Exhibition, Aix Les Bains France
- 2012 Art on 56th Individual Exhibition, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2012 Beirut Art Fair, Art on 56th, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2012 Chappaz Gallery Individual Exhibition, Aix Les Bains France
- 2012 LAU Auction event
- 2011 Maison de la poésie, Individual Exhibition, Annecy France
- 2011 Mairie du 7eme Collective Exhibition, Paris, France
- 2011 Chambre des notaries, Individual Exhibition, Pringy Haute Savoie, France
- 2011 Bonlieu Exhibition, Artist's book
- 2009 Imperial Hotel, Collective Exhibition, Annecy France
- 2008 Imperial Hotel, Individual Exhibition, Annecy, France
- 2008 « Résistances » Collective Exhibition, St Gervais, France
- 2008 Art sur Cour, Individual Exhibition, Annecy, France
- 2008 Studio Ripetta, Individual Exhibition, Roma, Italy
- 2007 Hôtel de Ville, Individual Exhibition, Seynod, France
- 2007 Montreux Art Gallery, Collective Exhibition, Montreux, Switzerland
- 2007 Maison de la poésie, Individual Exhibition, Annecy, France
- 2007 Mz'art, Faraya , Collective Exhibition, Lebanon
- 2007 Vision Art 2007, Collective Exhibition, Ornans, France
- 2007 Premier Prix, MAG, Montreux Art Gallery
- 2007 Europ'art, Foire Internationale d'Art, 16th edition, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2006 Inauguration of Hôtel de Ville, Individual Exhibition, Seynod, France
- 2006 Studio Ripetta, Individual Exhibition, Roma, Italy
- 2006 XVA Gallery, Individual Exhibition, Dubai, UAE
- 2005 XXVI Salon D'automne, Musée Surssock, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2005 Hermès, Dubai, Individual Exhibition, UAE
- 2004 VIII Premio Internazionale, Massenzio Arte, Collective Exhibition, Roma, Italy
- 2004 XXV Salon D'automne, Musée Surssock, Beirut, Lebanon

Awards

- 2007 Montreux Art Gallery, Collective Exhibition, Montreux, Switzerland
- 2007 First Prize, Vision Art 2007, Collective Exhibition Ornans, France
- 1997 XXI Salon d'Automne, Musée Surssock, Beirut, Lebanon
- Young Artist Award - Prix du Jeune Artiste

Rana Raouda and the faces of absence

by Marco Tonelli, translated by Elia Khalaf

Abstract painting resembles reality in many different ways. It sets itself as an idealistic expression of the artist's perception towards reality, like an overlaying of the artist's internal model to reality, like a substantial reflection of reality. In brief, it offers an alternative to the world, that can occasionally be rational (geometrical, architectural, modular), deliciously optical-perceptive and at other times irrational (lyrical, dreamy, gestural). Raouda's painting undoubtedly turns towards a subtle and tenuous line where the artist transforms her inner vision to independent substance, hypersensitive to implications and aspirations of evident spirituality. Thus it positions itself on the historical watershed of abstract expressionism that has taken extreme and fluctuating attitudes between the tragic and frantic gestural of Pollock and Rothko's 'inaction' or Newman's, where iconoclastic emergences opened all doors to mystical and sacred visions.

Rana Raouda's latest paintings, in their insinuation to windows and doors (beyond the threshold, the absent presence of the immaterial...) drowned in blue (the color of another 'mystic' artist such as Yves Klein, a color considered as the veritable essence of the spiritual dimension) appear as one, may it be with the act of the artist or with the surface of the canvas. Concrete metaphors of a total identification between the body of the painting and the inside of the artist, between the fluidity of the thought, of the feeling and the optical and sensorial reality of the color, surfaces traversed by color where memory and echo of a 'faraway' slip, of desire, of possible discoveries with the mysterious and unutterable dimension of an inside vision and sight.

It is probable that if the general yet suggestive term: 'landscape of soul' had to find an equivalent in image, like on a photograph, this recent work by Raouda will be the figure that fits that picture; It is certainly about painting, but with a long 'exposure time', like negatives printed with an immaterial sense of feeling but with a pure essence.

According to this metaphor, each work by Raouda, once gone the contradictions and neuroses of reality, appears like a veil that gently marries the living body of thoughts and experiences. If the condition of the indistinct, of the nonlocality, of the principal of fusion, defines its absence of iconography, the radiographic profiles and incentives propose anew the iconography of absence as a phantom. And the moment it is possible to depict the form of sound, electromagnetic waves or atomic trajectories, why not consider the idea that a painting like Raouda's can be a direct manifestation (only through the culture of art) of the emotions of a personality certainly rich in passion, ideas, sentiments, thoughts, and memories? Which is, deep down, the same absolute sense of abstract and symbolic painting (in which Raouda's painting is a direct filiation, even in her personal way of visiting them) and might also be figurative and realistic painting, where behind the descriptive forms, we cannot dismiss the most profound identity of the artist and her emotions.

In conclusion, Raouda still believes that we can reactivate pure, beautiful and untouchable substance, made incomprehensible and untimely by the noise and chaos of the contemporary world (borrower of schizophrenic images).