

## Ghassan Nana

Born in Homs, Syria in 1953, Ghassan Nana graduated from the Fine Arts Center, Homs, in 1971. He then continued his study till he graduated from the painting department, Faculty of fine arts, from the Damascus University. Throughout his life, he had been part of various exhibitions that took place in Syria, Russia, Sweden, London, Jordan, Qatar, France and Egypt.

Nana's art creates a glimpse of a fragile reality. His drawings have a misty atmosphere that can combine the contradiction between fact and fiction, reality and illusions, past and present. He revives his past while surrendering himself to his emotions, instincts and memories. His inspiration came from the examination of great artists such as Picasso and Gerhard Richter. This inspiration gave us a gift that can sweep us into a different mystical world far from the reality that we live in.

### Artists Statement

Painting... A reflexion of human emotion.

Art in my life has transformed from an obsession to a source of knowledge. Human worry is rooted in my visual taste, which was established at a time where I was focused on the nature of life and the environment. It is rich with elements of origin and history, such the city with its markets, houses with its people and personalities with its faces drained from business activities.

My visual memory is based on my viewings of Picasso's works, Hieronymus Bosch's dreams and vision as well as those of Breughel, but also Millet's peasants, Botticelli's lines, Mirò, Ktuzo; Goya and Rembrandt's paintings, drawings, faces of the iconic Fayum; Islamic pictures, Asian Art, in additional to all the creations that have spurred throughout the course of the history of art.

The artwork does not require explanation, as it embodies the reflection on his feeling at a precise moment and his expression as a result. It manifests in the form of signs that include feelings that usually are a mixture of joy, love, sadness and fear. In order for the artwork to be honest, one or more of these emotions should be taking place and should exist in the piece itself; if not, the work will merely appear as a worthless arrangement of lines and color.

I try to transcend these feelings and emotions while painting through visual tools. This mirrors my passion for the accuracy of photography over the roughness of the touch. Its softness and homogeneity and, sometimes, the expression it evokes through writing, provides me with an opportunity to experiment with exposure, far away from the beauty of the business but close to reaching a heavy, rich canvas with graphic impressions. Black and white in the painting are opposites that carry a potent energy source in expression. If used wisely, it creates sharp contrasts but also produces a written form and is the best means of communication.

I deal with nature, with its different conditions and contradictions in a total aura of freedom. When I start working, I leave the world behind me and rely on my intuition and memory, from my knowledge of colors to instincts of pleasure. I transport my feelings as I begin the work.

Art, in the end, is a translation of human feelings onto the canvas and is an attempt to humanize them.

**Ghassan Nana**

### **Solo Exhibitions:**

- 1978 The Arabic cultural center, Damascus-Syria.
- 1979 The Soviet cultural center, Damascus-Syria.
- 1980 Salet Al-Sha'eb, Homs-Syria.
- 1987 Gallery Ashtar, Damascus-Syria.
- 1994 Gallery Naseer Shoura, Damascus-Syria.
- 2002 Gallery Fateh Al-Moudarres, Damascus-Syria.
- 2011 Gallery **Tajalliyat**, Damascus-Syria.
- 2016 Art on 56 th, Beirut- Lebanon

### **Collective Exhibitions**

- 1984 Quad Exhibition (with Asem Al-Basha, Edward Shahda and George Maher), Salet Al-Sha'eb, Damascus, Syria.
- 1985 Participated in "Drawing in the open air" symposium, Smoln, Bulgaria.
- 1989 Trio Exhibition (with Abdul Kader Azzuz and Karam Maatouk), Gallery Ashtar, Damascus
- 1990 Private Study in Gallery Anatoly Klankov, Stavropol, Russia.
- 1993 Seven Artists mobile exhibition, Sweden.
- 1994 Dual Exhibition with Abdalla Murad, Gallery Al-Shami, Homs, Syria.
- 1995 Trio Exhibition (with Edward Shahda and Karam Maatouk), Gallery Al-Khanji, Aleppo, Syria.
- 1996 Participated in Cairo biennial, Egypt.
- 1998 Quad Exhibition for drawing on paper, Gallery Atasi, Damascus-Syria.
- 1998 Quad Exhibition for drawing on paper, Gallery Quaf, Aleppo-Syria.
- 2000 Participated in Monte Rosa Symposium with Lebanese artists, Damascus-Syria.
- 2000 Participated in "Think with your hand" competition (won the first prize), Institute Cervantes, Damascus, Syria.
- 2001 "Women and Was" Exhibition, the Red Crescent hall, Damascus.
- 2002 Quad Exhibition about landscapes, Fateh Al-Moudarres Gallery, Damascus-Syria.
- 2002 Participated in the Mediterranean Association for Art Exchange, Carthage-Tunisia.
- 2003 Six artists from Syria exhibition, Europe Art Gallery, Geneva-Switzerland.
- 2004 Syrian cultural week (Syrian-British Association), Gallery Browny, London, UK.
- 2004 Participated in the small painting exhibition, Gallery Souad Isaawi, Jordan.
- 2004 Five artists exhibition, Gallery Al- Dar, Damascus, Syria.
- 2007 Participated in 10 artists exhibition, Jableh Museum, Jableh, Syria.
- 2008 Participated in "Paris, Damas: regards croise" exhibition, Arabic World institute, Paris-France.
- 2009 "Tribute to Giath Al-Akhras" exhibition, Gallery Kamel, Damascus, Syria.
- 2009 Participated in "Paris, Damas: regards croise" exhibition, The National Museum, Damascus
- 2010 Participated in making a Mural representing the Syrian revolution martyrs, Sweida, Syria.
- 2010-12 Beijing International Art Biennale, China
- 2012 Duo exhibition (with Abdullah Murad) in Al Markhiya gallery, Doha, Qatar