

Art on 56th

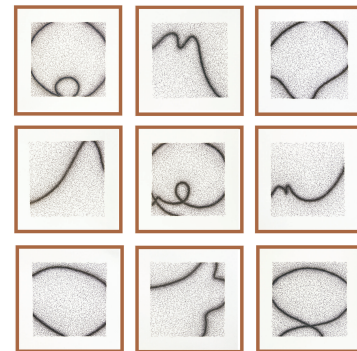
Art on 56th gallery - Beirut

Opening: Exhibition **"Fugues"**

Artist: **Mahmoud Hamadani**

Exhibition Date: Friday May 5, 2023

Immediate Release



Art on 56th is pleased to announce FUGUES, a solo-exhibition of works by Iranian artist Mahmoud Hamadani. The show will feature his most recent body of ink drawings.

Paying tribute to his love for music, Hamadani's drawings in the series Requiem are rooted in lyricism. Inspired by the melodies of Johann Sebastian Bach, the works are akin to visual interpretations of Bach's music. The minimalistic, monochromatic compositions play with the iconography of notes, and serve as partitions that guide his creative process. Through iterations and variations, Hamadani constructs his own visual rhythm, a silent symphony that comes alive in the mind. In their intricacy, formality, variety and symmetry the drawings evoke Fugues.

The process is essential to Hamadani's craft, where he selects a specific application technique, while simultaneously surrendering to the hand of fate. For instance, in the Traces series, the artist blows the ink onto the paper, allowing droplets to fall where they may. Seeking to find a balance between chance and will, his drawings orchestrate a dance between decision and accident. The tensions between light and darkness, purpose and improvisation, control and freedom are the subjects of his works, the dichotomies that are the very incarnation of life. The result is an oeuvre dedicated to the investigation of the space within those polarities, a quest to find perfect equilibrium.

Biography

Born in Iran in 1958, Mahmoud Hamadani is known for his delicate monochromatic ink drawings. Hamadani's work is inspired by his desire to explore the space at the intersection between art and life, focusing on depicting intangible concepts such as the attainment of peace and enlightenment.

In his latest exhibition, Repetitions and Variations, Hamadani's work takes on another aspect, that of the musical score. Inspired by the rhythm and movements of music, specifically the works of Johann Sebastian Bach, his drawings feature rhythmic patterns set within a simple structure. According to the artist, without freedom, art cannot thrive, but without structure, no system is sustainable.

Mahmoud Hamadani has a B.A. in Mathematics from the State University of New York and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. His works have been shown at The British Museum in London, The New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, and have been featured in both solo and group exhibitions in New York, London, Dubai, Lausanne and Hong Kong. His works are included in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The British Museum, and he is a recipient of Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant. Hamadani currently lives and works in New York City.

Artist Statement : Fugues

The compositions in Requiem involve the systematic repetition and variation of a simple theme. In each of these works harmony is achieved through slight changes in the basic element that is the building block of the drawing. In their intricacy, formality, variety and symmetry the drawings evoke fugues. The works are intuitive. I did not set out to visualize fugues. I have, however, always listened to the music of Bach while working. And looking at these works I can see how deeply the music has penetrated my psyche. As if these are not original works but an interpretation of music in the language of drawing.

I create the works in the second series "Traces" by blowing ink on paper. These are studies of chance and will. The inspiration for the series is best captured in the following poem by Gu Cheng:

Now on my heart's page
There is no grid to guide my hand,
No character to trace,
Only the moisture,
The ink blew dew
That has dripped from the leaves.
To spread it I
Can't use a pen,
I can't use a writing brush,
Can only use my life's
Gentlest breath
To make a single line of
Marks worth puzzling over.

The process of making these drawings is akin to "the search for that which cannot be found." An image appears through a process of decisions and accidents. And just as in life where much depends on chance, it's ultimately our decisions that give shape and meaning to this out of control process.

The third series, Odes, is a simple of light and shadow, a most basic preoccupation of the artist as well as the moral being.

Altogether these works are explorations of basic dualisms, with which we grapple everyday, often with little awareness.

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