



Katya Traboulsi




# PERPETUAL IDENTITIES

*KATYA TRABOULSI*







Katya through her art talks about identity as a force that no war can eliminate and that bounces back inevitably. During the Lebanese Civil War, in 1975, she received the empty sleeve of a mortar shell for her birthday, which automatically found its place on a shelf, without further reflection on its nature or the journey which led it to her. Thus, the object, which had blindly sown death where it fell, ended up in her room, raised to the status of a trophy celebrating the courage of fighters or the defeat of enemies. In 2014, as the Arab Springs wilted into winters, the memory of this object, trinket or trophy, called on to Katya again. Reflections on the mortar shell inspired an installation project which sought to divert the weapon from its morbid destiny and make it serve Life.

The depiction of the shell dressed in a variety (46) of symbolic cultural execution, is the physical and spiritual core of the 'Perpetual Identities' project. Each one is handmade, using different materials, including ceramics, porcelain, resin, wood, and iron. These 46 shells, adorned with the arts and crafts of various countries, become body of designs, themes and skills; bearing the glory of every person and inviting them to join in the universal sentiment of Humanity. The shell becomes like a 'book', an inventory of myths, of traditions of embodied know-how, and invites the discovery of the "Other". The shell becomes an 'arrow' and sows not death, but knowledge and civilization in the territory of the "Other". Its scope becomes sociological, theological and philosophical. As part of the process, cultural identities were constantly added as a palimpsest, until the mortar became enriched with reflections and revelations. The mission of this transformed object is to celebrate the glory of Humanity. Removing its primary function permits it to carry universal and immortal messages.

The mortar as art transcends its destructive origin and it becomes a melting-pot of perpetual identities. Katya's creations are inspired by historical events. The artisans that took part in the project are the perpetual memory of that history, glorifying through their artistic talent the heritage of their identity. An object of death forgotten on a dusty shelf, found itself rehabilitated, transfigured in the sparkling whiteness of a museum, a place of beauty and life. Also endangered are the identities sacrificed on the altar of globalization which imposes an aseptic and effective language, gradually leading to the loss of ancestral know-how, language, tools and its land.





*Thailand*

2016  
Hand carved resin  
and gold leaf  
Brass base and top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Lebanon*

Hand carved  
cedar wood  
Brass base and  
top  
AP  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Japan*

Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 4/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm





Portugal

Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm

## U.A.E

The “Mandoos” chest is still often found in Emirati homes. Young brides would usually take one with them when they moved to their husband’s family home. It would contain the carefully prepared clothes and jewelry they had made and acquired before their wedding, as well as their most treasured possessions. Younger women would visit grandmothers and aunts during the Eid al-Fitr celebrations and were given small gifts for their “mandoos.” At other times, they sat in a circle, while the family elder removed items from the chest and told the stories associated with them.



2016  
Hand nailed and  
painted wood  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 3/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm









*Armenia*

2016  
Hand painted  
resin  
Brass base and  
top  
73x21x21cm



Canada

2016  
Hand carved and  
painted wood  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 1/6  
76 x 21 x 21 cm



*Uzbekistan*

2016  
Fabric and  
jewelries on resin  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm

*Russia*

2016  
Hand painted  
wood  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 3/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm







*Algeria*

2016  
Hand painted resin  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm

## BRAZIL

The pre-Columbian culture of Marajó once boasted a population of 100,000 people living in the Amazon rain forest. These Native Americans may have used black ground called terra preta to make the land suitable for the large-scale agriculture needed to support the large population and its complex chiefdom structure. In the 19th century, European travelers noticed the presence of mounds (maybe remains of temple structures), with ceramics stored inside or scattered around them. European and American museums began collecting them, in particular the large funerary urns. These elaborately decorated vessels contain the remains of deceased significant individuals after their deaths, their flesh was ritualistically cleared from their bones, which were placed in the urns, sealed with a bowl or platter.



2016  
Hand carved wood  
painted  
Brass top and base  
73x21x21









Iran

2016  
Hand painted wood  
Brass base and top  
Edition 5/6  
73x21x21cm



PERPETUAL IDENTITY  
BY  
KATYA TRABOULSI

AUSTRIA





GERMANY

PERPETUAL IDENTITY  
BY  
KATYA TRABOUESI

PERPETUAL IDENTITY  
BY  
KATYA TRABOUESI

NIGERIA

QAT





*Peru*

2016  
Hand carved wood  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Mexico*

2016  
Hand carved  
wood  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Indonesia*

2016  
Hand painted  
wood  
Brass base and top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm





*Ethiopia*

2016  
Hand painted  
wood  
Brass top and base  
edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21cm



Yemen

2016  
Hand carved stone  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Oman*

2016  
Handmade silver  
and brass  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



## IRAQ

The most important archaeological discoveries of the Mesopotamian city of Sumer, whose civilization dates back as far as 2,500 BCE, are a large number of tablets inscribed with cuneiform writing. Sumerian writing is a milestone in the development of the Middle Eastern and Western civilizations, since it enabled the recording of History, of financial transactions, and of poetic epics, prayers and laws. The Sumerian language continued to be the language of religion and law in Mesopotamia long after Semitic speakers became dominant. The well-preserved statue of Ebiḫ-II, discovered in the temple of the goddess Ishtar in Mari, Syria, is a masterpiece of craftsmanship and expressive style. The eyes of the statue have retained their inlay of shell and lapis lazuli, which came from Afghanistan, a testimony to the long-distance trade already taking place in the third millennium BC.



2016  
Hand carved stone  
and marble  
Brass base and top  
Edition 4/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm









*Palestine*

2016  
Brass  
AP  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Turkey*

2016  
Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass Base and top  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*The Netherlands*

2016  
Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass base and top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm





*Afghanistan*

2016  
Hand carved and  
painted resin  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Morocco*

2016  
Brass  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Italy*

Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass top and base  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21cm





*Philippines*

2016  
Mother of pearl shell  
on wood, Brass base  
and top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm

## SPAIN

The Cuir de Cordoue (Cordoban leather) is an ancient art of treating and gilding leather that was often used in lieu of tapestries as largescale wall coverings. The technique involves molding wet leather - usually calf - into shape, before gilding it with oil and applying a layer of lacquer. This technique has other names, like 'guadameci' (from the Libyan town of Ghadames), as well as 'cordobanes' (for soft goat leather). The Cuir de Cordoue went through numerous styles, sometimes drawing on silk damask and Chinese patterns. It retained its popularity from the 9th century through the 18th, but went out of fashion with the rise of printed wallpaper during the Victorian era (19th century).



2016  
Hand carved  
leather on wood  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm









*India*

2016  
Hand carved  
alabaster stone  
Brass base and top  
Edition 6/6  
76 x 21 x 21 cm

*Tunisia*

2016  
Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass base and  
top  
73 x 21 x 21 cm







*Syria*

2016  
Mother of pearl on  
wood  
Brass base and top  
AP  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



*Australia*

2016  
Hand painted resin  
Brass top and base  
73 x 21 x 21cm



*China*

2016  
Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm



United Kingdom

2016  
Collage on resin  
Brass top and  
base  
75 x 21 x 21  
AP





*Germany*

2016  
Hand painted  
resin  
Brass base and  
top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 30 x 30 cm

## SIERRA LEONE

The Mende people live predominantly in West African countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone. These farmer-hunters are one of the two largest ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. Their cultural and oral traditions suggest that the Mende emigrated from Western Sudan in waves before the 16th century. They are famous for their wooden masks, which they wear on ritual occasions.

Unlike in the usual sub-Saharan tradition, only males are allowed to wear them. The black helmet mask is almost exclusively worn by women. It represents an idealized version of feminine beauty, with an elaborate hairstyle, large forehead and small facial features; the wood's gleaming surfaces denoting healthy, glowing skin.



2016  
Hand carved and  
painted wood  
Brass base and top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm









*Vietnam*

2016  
Hand carved marble  
Brass base and top  
Edition 1/6  
76 x 21 x 21 cm



*Korea*

Hand painted  
porcelain  
Brass base and top  
Edition 1/6  
73 x 21 x 21cm



*Ukraine*

2016  
Old hand  
embroidery on resin  
Brass base and top  
Edition 3/6  
73 x 21 x 21cm



*Saudi*

2016  
Hand carved marble  
powder  
Brass base and top  
Edition 5/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm





*Qatar*

2016  
Hand painted resin  
and brass sticks  
Brass base and top  
Edition 2/6  
73 x 21 x 21 cm

## Artist Statement



Born in 1960 in Lebanon, a country so absurd, so melted with Ongoing problems, so embedded with a history of war and survivals, I feel like I had lived many lives in the same time.

Art is my weapon for peace, my meditation, my armor.

Since my childhood, I knew this would be my path, but the years of war Which I grew up with, did not allow me to study my passion.

I am a self-thought artist, which took me long years of working on my artistic Expression, using various mediums to express different subjects.

Since 2000 my observations and inspirations shifted towards memory, identities, and socio-political subjects that concerns us all, ongoing present life.

Projects, 'Of others' 2011, 'Generation war' 2013, "Perpetual Identities' 2018 and 'Mother I'll be back' 2023, reflects our identity and my quest around the importance of this subject.

Life so far has been an inspiring journey through artistic expression.

Katya Traboulsi.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 "Rejaa Ya mama" Saleh Barakat Gallery  
2019 Anima Mundi at Palazzo Ca'Zanardi - Venice, Italy  
2018 "Perpetual Identities" - Saleh Barakat - Beirut, Lebanon  
2015 Art Space - Dubai, UAE  
2014 Art Space - London, UK  
2011 "Des Autres" Marc Hachem Gallery - Paris, France  
2011 "Des Autres" The Venue, Solidere - Beirut, Lebanon  
2009 Basement Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
2007 Vivendy Gallery - Paris, France  
2004 Green Art Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
2003 Green Art Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
1997 Epreuve d'Artiste - Beirut, Lebanon  
1995 Epreuve d'Artiste - Beirut, Lebanon  
1994 Majlis Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
1993 Epreuve d'Artiste - Beirut, Lebanon  
1991 Majlis Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
1986 Société Générale bank - Beirut, Lebanon

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2019 Middle East Institute Washington - Washington, D.C, USA  
2019 Anima Mundi at Palazzo Ca'Zanardi - Venice, Italy  
2018 Perpetual Identities - Beirut Art Fair with Galerie Dominique Fiat - Paris, France and Saleh Barakat Gallery - Beirut, Lebanon  
2018 Art Dubai - Saleh Barakat - Dubai, UAE  
2018 Art Paris - Dominique Fiat - Paris, France  
2018 Institut du Monde Arabe - Paris, France  
2016 Beirut Art Fair, Rose Issa Projects - Beirut, Lebanon  
2016 Beirut Design Fair, Namika Atelier - Beirut, Lebanon  
2015 Beirut Art Fair, Jennifer Norback Gallery - Chicago, USA  
2014 Beirut Art Fair, Jennifer Norback Gallery - Chicago, USA  
2014 Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Salwa Zeidan Gallery - Abu Dhabi, UAE  
2014 Roger Castang Galerie - Perpignan, France  
2013 Jamm Art - Kuwait  
2013 'Generation War' Curated by Katya Traboulsi at Beirut Art Fair -  
2013 X Biental Internacional de la Acuarela, Museo Nacional de la Acuarela – Mexico  
2012 This is not Wonderland, Beirut Art Fair – Beirut, Lebanon  
2011 Jamm Art - Kuwait  
2010 KATZEN Art Center, American University Museum - Washington DC, USA  
2009 Art DUBAI with Running Horse – Dubai, UAE  
2009 Desires, nightmares and dreams Running Horse - Beirut, Lebanon  
2008 L'art au Féminin Algiers Modern Art Museum - Algeria  
2008 The U.A.E through arab eyes, D.I.F.C - Dubai, UAE  
2007 Art from the Middle East, San Pedro Museo de Arte - Puebla, Mexico  
2006 Women in Art, Courtyard Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
2005 Art and Design, Mark Hachem Gallery - New York, USA  
2004 Les peintres a l'étranger, Galerie Jeanine Rubeiz - Beirut, Lebanon  
2004 Art & Development, La Rochefoucault - Paris, France  
2001 Contemporary Eye on Dubai - Dubai International Airport, UAE  
2000 Lebanese painters Green Art Gallery -Dubai, UAE  
1998 Green Art Gallery, Dubai, UAE Artuel – Beirut, Lebanon  
1997 Green Art Gallery - Dubai, UAE  
1996 Green Art Gallery - Dubai, UAE

Published on the occasion of the exhibition  
*'Perpetual Identities'* by Katya Traboulsi.  
April 26th, 2023

Images courtesy of the artist  
Catalogue design by Salma Dib

Cover Image: *Turkey*

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