

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

'Colour Power'

By

Mouna Rebeiz



III, Oil on Canvas, 256 x 192 x 8 cm

Dubai, UAE – Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to announce artist Mouna Rebeiz's solo show 'Colour Power' opening on 20th January 2022.

What would the world be without color? How would we perceive reality without red, blue or green? Can we imagine living in black and white? Color is what gives life its intensity, its depth, but also the possibility of joy. It is light, a vital momentum, energy. In an attempt at total renunciation, in the exile of solitude and a silent retreat, Mouna Rebeiz endeavored to grasp what the purest, most authentic and "truest" in color is. Kandinsky had already noted that "Vermilion attracts and irritates the beholder like the flame, which has always moved man to irresistibly contemplate it. Bright lemon-yellow eventually hurts our eyes in the same way as the shrill sound of a trumpet pierces our ears. Our eyes blink, they can no longer bear to look and will seek relief in the tranquil depths of blue or green." (*Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, 1911). Later, Yves Klein invented a shade of blue that now bears his name...

Can painting be considered a form of metaphysics that attempts to solve the enigma of color? Merleau-Ponty aptly suggests, in *Eye and Mind*, a certain vision of the world: "Painting celebrates no other enigma than that of visibility." Mouna recreates this same vision in this attempt to penetrate the enigma of color, which is also that of visibility. But Mouna Rebeiz remains faithful to her own spirit, faithful to that mystery that characterizes her creative momentum, as shown by these twelve canvases in which we plunge ourselves: "We use colors but we paint with feeling" (Jean Chardin).

Elsa Godart
Philosopher and psychoanalyst
Research fellow at Université Gustave Eiffel



Hagen de Merak, 2020, Totem plexi - 7 puzzles, 242 x 50 x 6cm, Base: 55 x 55 x 6cm

The word "puzzle" not only denotes a game but can also refer to the mysteries of life. Rebeiz searches for the meaning of life and her latest series gives shape to this quest. Like the child who questions what seems obvious, Rebeiz is not easily taken in. Totems, symbols of power and unity, have only the ephemeral stability which the men who built them were willing to grant them. Put to the test by the artist's fundamental questions, these erect monuments are seen for what they are: a body of fragile beliefs.

A murmur of doubt, on a nationwide scale or within a couple's intimate relationship, suffices to sever the silken thread of trust. The artist is confronted by this disturbing fragility: the monumental totem crumbles into scattered fragments. Our world is volatile, and there is a great temptation to avoid loss of tranquillity. Rebeiz reminds us that the seemingly perfect arrangement of things and men is subject to chance. Empires suddenly collapse; the Colossus of Rhodes fell to the ground, as did Manhattan's Twin Towers, and our illusions of omnipotence can be dashed to pieces.

The artist's doubts thus awaken ours, yet Rebeiz also has hope. She reminds us that each part, albeit isolated, symbolises a whole. The piece of the puzzle towards understanding the stones of a temple destroyed thousands of years ago; the relic keenly contested, safeguarded and sanctified. This tiny little bit of almost nothing retains the original principle of a great work that no longer exists; the DNA from which it could be reborn.

When the pieces of the puzzle are reassembled, landscapes reappear in all their splendour, as if by magic. The faces take shape again, the genre scenes come alive once more, as in Flemish paintings. Life begins anew.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Mouna Rebeiz is a Lebanese-Canadian painter based in London. She grew up surrounded by musicians, painters and poets, who influenced her painting. Fascinated by the multiple facets of the human being and the human psyche, she studied psychology at the Sorbonne and at Saint Joseph University in Beirut. She travelled extensively, and then in 1995 met Alix de la Source, a lecturer at the Louvre specialising in 18th-century painting, who taught her about the techniques of the great masters. She perfected her mastery of patinas in the Renaissance courses, and studied with Abraham Pincas, a painter and teacher at ENSBA Paris, and with Mohamed El Rawas, a Lebanese painter and engraver teaching at the fine arts school in Beirut. In her works, both figurative and abstract, Mouna Rebeiz captures the energy of life itself, and the life of woman, expressed at its simplest, as a universal crucible of emotions. Her great sculptures, like revisited totems, are set to the rhythms of present time in the playfulness of space. Mouna has had numerous solo and group shows in the United States, Paris, London, Lebanon, and major European capitals. She took part in "Artistes à la une together Her" at the Monnaie de Paris (France). Her latest work was made for the Fondation Bic (France).

ABOUT THE GALLERY:

Since its establishment over three decades ago in New York, Leila Heller Gallery has gained worldwide recognition as a pioneer in promoting a creative dialogue and exchange between Western artists and Middle Eastern, Central and Southeast Asian artists. It has garnered a reputation for identifying and cultivating the careers of artists leaving a lasting impact on contemporary art and culture. Currently representing a diverse roster of Western and Middle Eastern artists, the gallery is also active in the American, European, and Middle Eastern secondary art markets. In November 2015, Leila Heller Gallery opened its first international location in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue. At 14,000 square feet, the state of the art gallery features three exhibition spaces, making it the largest gallery in the UAE. Showcasing leading regional and international artists, many of whom will be presenting their work in the Middle East