

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

September 21<sup>st</sup>

*"I Guess I Am Still Angry"*

By

Ali Cha'aban



*Twelve PM Class, 2019, Persian carpet suspended on plywood, Edition 5/10, 150 x 90 x 60 cm*

Dubai, UAE – Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to announce Lebanese artist Ali Cha'aban's solo show titled *"I Guess I Am Still Angry"*, opening on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023.

Exploring the evocative theme of childhood nostalgic utopia; delving into the complexities of memory, longing, and the yearning for an idealized past, *"I Guess I'm Still Angry"* unveils the captivating concept of childhood nostalgia. Within the depths of our memories lie fragments of our childhood utopias. This exhibition seeks to examine the potency of these recollections, exploring how they shape our understanding of the world and influence our desires for a better future.

Embracing anger as a catalyst for change and self-discovery, when harnessed constructively, can fuel artistic expression and ignite a powerful dialogue. Drawing from his own life experiences, Ali delves into the complexities of anger, inviting viewers to engage with this often-misunderstood emotion and to reconsider its role in our lives.

Childhood nostalgic utopia often emerges from a longing for lost innocence—a time when the world seemed simpler and more hopeful. Ali through his work, aims to challenge societal narratives and stereotypes surrounding identity and anger, while highlighting its potential as a catalyst for positive change and personal growth. Through this collection, the artist wants to revisit old memories as well as old artworks, that shaped him to become who he is today.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Lebanese artist born and raised in Kuwait, an observer of culture and traditions which are often reflected in his work. With a background in anthropology, some seem to recognize Ali as a pop-culture analyst. His work revolves around the notion of nostalgia which is depicted so intricately in his art, tackling socio-political issues such as the Arabian identity and the state of dystopia.

The impression that "Arabs are strangers everywhere," resides with diasporas; the struggle of identity amongst the masses is a never-ending research. Through art is where one finds a common language that displays what is seen but never told. Ali as an artist has exhibited with galleries such as Ayyam (Jeddah), Mark Hachem (Beirut) and Galerie Nikki Diana Marquardt in (Paris). As an artist, Ali likes to create 'space' that provides an opportunity to create a model of dialogue interest; exchanging ideas and notions, creating discussions that transcend inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary boundaries.

## ABOUT THE GALLERY:

Since its establishment over four 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, Central Asian, Southeast Asian 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 16,000 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.

In addition to presenting a dynamic exhibition schedule, Leila Heller Gallery actively organizes shows with world-renowned curators, hosts educational panels and film screenings, and produces catalogues and books with scholarly essays. Each year the gallery participates in major international art fairs and stages off-site projects as a platform for exploring new conversations within a wider context of galleries, artists and institutions. Gallery artists have consistently participated in international museum exhibitions and biennials, and are included in leading institutional collections worldwide.

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