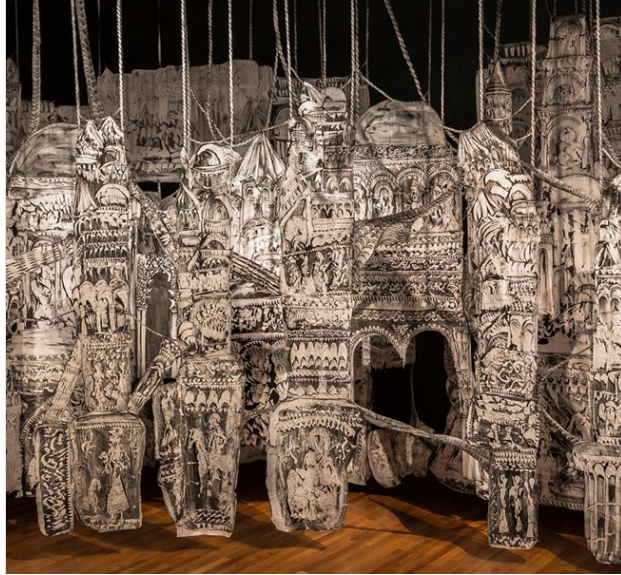


‘The Echoes of Silent Bells’ by Kevork Mourad



Memories of the Stones; 2019; 2026; Installation, Diptych; 600 x 280 x 70 cm (each piece)

Dubai, UAE – Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to present *The Echoes of Silent Bells*, a solo exhibition by Kevork Mourad. Opening in Dubai in May 2026, the exhibition brings together a new body of paintings, sculptural works, installations, and hand-cut compositions that reflect Kevork Mourad’s ongoing exploration of memory, displacement, cultural preservation, and the emotional architecture of history. Through layered visual narratives and intricate material processes, *The Echoes of Silent Bells* traces the fragile intersections between personal remembrance and collective cultural identity.

Born in Qameshli, Syria, and shaped by the cultural richness of Aleppo as well as his Armenian heritage, Kevork Mourad’s practice emerges from a deep engagement with histories that have been fractured, erased, or transformed by time and conflict. Working across painting, animation, performance, and installation, Mourad constructs visual worlds where architecture, figures, and landscapes dissolve into rhythmic lines and layered surfaces. His works function as both testimony and meditation—spaces where memory is preserved not as static documentation, but as living emotional experience.

In *The Echoes of Silent Bells*, Mourad reflects on the endurance of culture through fragmentation and reconstruction. Across monumental installations such as *Memories of the Stones* and *Tower*, alongside intimate works including *The Last Prayer*, *Echoes in Stone*, and *The Silent Bells*, the artist explores themes of absence, resilience, spirituality, and transformation. Architectural forms appear suspended between ruin and renewal, while human figures emerge and disappear within densely layered compositions that evoke the passage of time and the persistence of memory.

Central to Mourad’s practice is his unique visual language of line. Inspired by the musical traditions and oral histories of the Middle East and Armenia, his compositions unfold rhythmically across surfaces, often resembling musical notation or calligraphic movement. Through hand-cut canvases, layered textiles, recycled denim, and sculptural forms, Mourad expands painting into physical space, allowing shadows, voids, and negative space to become active elements within the work. These spatial interruptions suggest both loss and continuity—what remains visible and what lingers beyond sight.

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

The exhibition also highlights Mourad's longstanding interest in storytelling as a communal and sensory act. Rather than presenting history through fixed narratives, his works invite viewers into immersive emotional landscapes shaped by memory, mythology, and imagination. Pieces such as *Kalila wa Dimnah*, *The Conference of the Birds*, and *When Time Was Like a River* reference literary, spiritual, and folkloric traditions while simultaneously addressing contemporary experiences of migration, exile, and cultural survival.

Throughout *The Echoes of Silent Bells*, Mourad considers art as a vessel for preserving endangered histories and intangible cultural memory. His layered compositions resist linear readings; instead, they propose memory as fragmented, fluid, and constantly reconstructed through personal and collective experience. In doing so, the exhibition reflects on the role of art in carrying histories forward—transforming silence, loss, and displacement into spaces of reflection and connection.

Immersive, poetic, and deeply resonant, *The Echoes of Silent Bells* continues Kevork Mourad's broader artistic practice of bridging visual art, music, performance, and narrative. Here, memory becomes both material and gesture—an evolving language through which forgotten places, voices, and histories are reimagined for the present.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Kevork Mourad (b. 1970, Qameshli, Syria) is a painter, performance artist, and animator currently based in New York. He received his M.F.A. in Book Illustration and Painting from the Yerevan Institute of Fine Art, Armenia, in 1996. Mourad is internationally recognized for his interdisciplinary practice that combines drawing, animation, live performance, and music.

His animated and live visual performances have been presented globally at institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Aga Khan Museum, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Elbphilharmonie, and the National Cathedral. A longtime member of the Silkroad Ensemble, Mourad was featured in the documentary *The Music of Strangers* directed by Morgan Neville.

His works are included in major collections including the Institut du Monde Arabe, Spurlock Museum, and the Aga Khan Museum. Mourad has exhibited internationally across the United States, Europe, and the Middle East, and continues to expand the boundaries between visual art, performance, and storytelling.

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 catalogs 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.