

**Nihad AL- Turk**  
**21<sup>st</sup> of November – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2009**

Ayyam Gallery, Damascus is proud to present Nihad Al-Turk's latest solo exhibition, which asks the viewer to enter a magical world that unfolds like a science fiction movie.

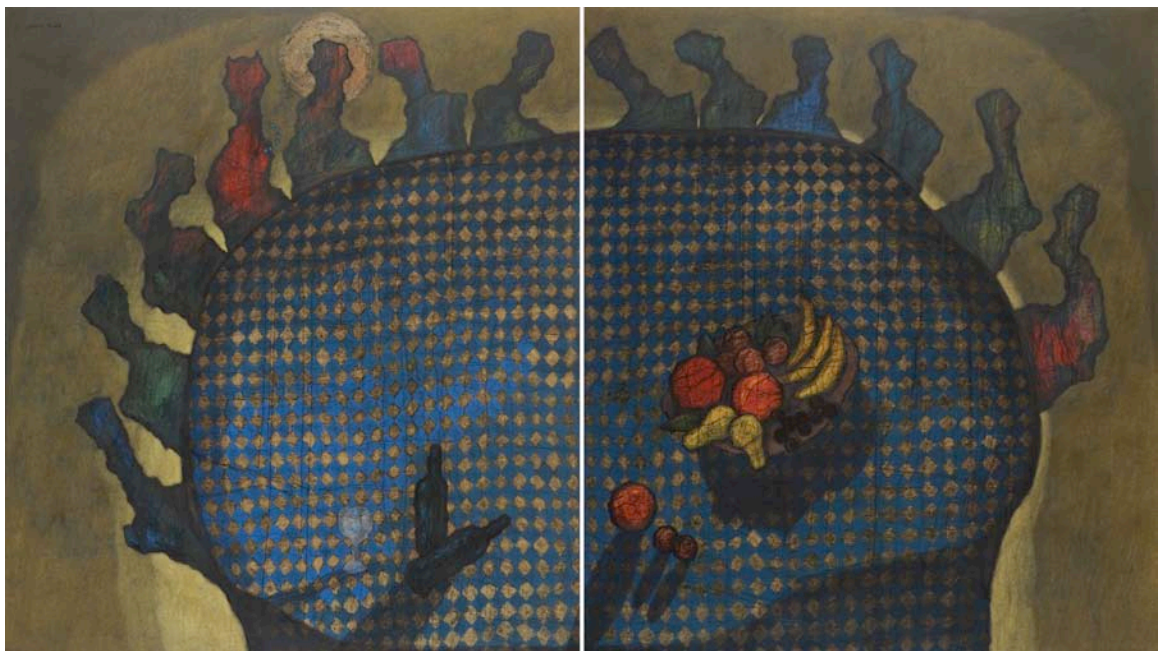
Creatures are universal to all his paintings. As bizarre as they may appear, these strange distorted forms often are a self-portrayal. His paintings often deal with evocative themes of his upbringing and childhood. The artist describes himself as always having had an innate need for self-expression. Al-Turk never had a formal art education yet this has never hindered him. In fact it has led him to the formation of a technique that is unique and extremely personal to himself.

One of Al-Turk's greatest strengths is his use of colors. His works embody naïve flatness and the lines he draws always emerge tormented. Even the simple bowl of fruit that has frequently appeared across the ages of still life seems to scream out in distress.



'Close' – 145x113cm – Mixed Media on Canvas - 2009

For the connoisseur this is evidently a self-portrait. The seven beads appearing around the creature's neck denote each member of the artist's family, which by the way is an artifice the artist always wears in real life. The creature's head appears bloated, enlarged with the two horns acutely evident. It yells desperation in the face of humanity that often lacks fairness and a sense of remaining helpless and unable to change circumstances. The two chipper birds appear peaceful and innocent and as the beast in the work is conversing with them, a sudden equilibrium of hope and calm is reached.



'The Secret Dinner' 190x340cm – 2 canvases – Mixed Media on Canvas - 2009

In the Secret dinner, with its bowl of fruit and checkered tablecloth, it appears like a contemporary take on Jesus' last supper. Amongst the beasts the saint carries a halo over its head - but who may the traitor be? This can be a simple gathering amongst friends where one is concealed under fake guise unworthy of assisting the evening. It remains endless mind play to the onlooker.

Al-Turk is unique. It is rare for an artist's work to tackle the drastic and thorny questions of life with such a playful and fictional brush.

Come and experience the opening show on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2009 at Ayyam Gallery, Damascus.