

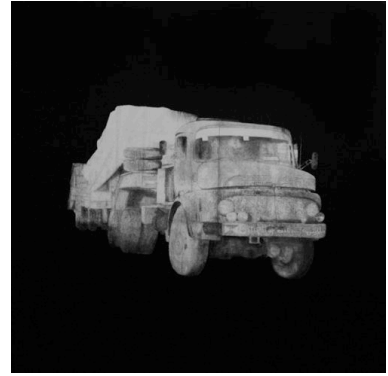
## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: Thayer Helal "In Army We Trust"

Location: Ayyam Gallery, Dubai (DIFC)

Dates: February 7 – March 15

Opening: February 6



On February 6, Ayyam Gallery, Dubai (DIFC) will proudly present " In Army We Trust " an exhibition featuring recent canvases by Syrian painter Thayer Helal. Known for his large mixed media canvases that perpetually demonstrate the evolution of his artistic style, the artist will present an entire new body of work incorporating photographs of the Syrian military forces originally taken by the media. Helal's photographs are re-staged and enlarged in ways that provoke a direct - physical encounter with the images. The works presented have a shared quality under which is heavy and deeply meaningful, which will only immerse the viewer even deeper in his thoughts.

Over the last decade, the ongoing political turbulence, military conflicts within the Middle East and their uneasy aftermath have impacted on a generation of contemporary artists which led Helal to consequently explore such a theme as the Army's role in today's society. His work is arguably cerebral, concentrating on issues of power, expression and liberation. Through these works of art, he therefore reflects and reveals that which is integral to the Army's foundation, mythology and daily functioning.

Born in Syria in 1967, the distinguished artist has become a significant member of the Arab and Gulf Art scene since moving to the United Arab Emirates in the 1990s. A senior faculty member of the University of Sharjah, Fine Arts College, he has participated in prominent exhibitions and events throughout the region, including the Sharjah, Alexandria and Tehran Biennials and Christie's and Bonhams auctions.

A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus, his prominence is confirmed by the countless honors that have been bestowed upon him, such as the Al Burda International Award from the Emirati Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development (2008), the Grand Gold Award at the Tehran International Biennial (2005), the Award for Painting at the Sharjah International Biennial (1997) and the Distinguished Works Award at the 15th General Exhibition of the UAE Fine Arts Association (1996). Yet Helal's long exhibition history is not limited to the Middle East, as he has been featured in international art fairs, biennials and exhibitions throughout Asia and Europe.

Since its founding in 2006, Ayyam Gallery has become one of the Middle East's leading contemporary art spaces. With a selection of cutting-edge painting, sculpture and photography that represents some of the Arab world's most exciting talent, the gallery has sought to promote the region's dynamic cultural scene at home and abroad. For more information visit [www.ayyamgallery.com](http://www.ayyamgallery.com)

For interviews with the artist or any further details, please contact us at +971 4 4392395 or email [difc@ayyamgallery.com](mailto:difc@ayyamgallery.com)