

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: Safwan Dahoul “A Real Dream”

Location: Ayyam Art Center. Dubai

Dates: November 2 – November 30

Opening: November 2 at 7pm



From November 2 until November 30, Ayyam Art Center will proudly present “A Real Dream,” the solo show of Syrian artist Safwan Dahoul. Featuring several new paintings, this forthcoming exhibition will highlight a recent breakthrough in the artist’s “Dream” series, a large body of work that he began in 1982. Surrounding the gradual transformation of the artist’s reoccurring subject matter, which often takes on the form of a despairing woman in isolated interiors, this series has recently undergone a formative change. Emerging from the metaphorical suffocation of cramped quarters, Dahoul’s heroine has begun to overcome the very space that has defined her confinement for nearly thirty years. As the dimensions of the artist’s canvases have grown, she too has taken on a greater presence amidst the architectural details that mark the spatial properties of the each composition. Reaching mural-sized proportions in some cases, she has broken free from a world in which she has remained silenced, a marked sorrow having slowly submerged her into oblivion.

“A Real Dream” will contain the next chapter of this long-held narrative. Whereas her disappearance in the work *Dream 42* (2011) could be understood as her final transcendence of a stifling world, her reemergence in such paintings as *Dream 48 and 50*, show her return as a sort of angel above the night sky of Damascus. Descending upon the city, she watches over it closely with a wide-eye stare. This role as witness is further enunciated in the subsequent painting *Dream 51*, in which her eye is given a small pair of wings, suggesting the ability to soar above what she might see. Although she is once again imprisoned in the work *Dream 52*, this time behind a visible screen, these newly acquired wings have changed her forever, hinting at a newfound empowerment.



'Dream 42'
250 X 450 cm. Acrylic on Canvas 2011



'Dream 48'
193 X 232 cm. Acrylic on Canvas 2011



'Dream 52'
193 X 232 cm. Acrylic on Canvas 2011

Born in Hama, Syria in 1961, Safwan Dahoul has recently become one of Syria’s most prominent painters. After graduating from the Faculty of Fines Arts in Damascus at the top of his class in 1983, he went on to receive a scholarship to study abroad from the Ministry of Higher Education in 1987. Choosing to travel to Belgium due to its rich artistic heritage, particularly its 16th century Flemish school of painting, he obtained a doctorate from the Higher Institute of Plastic Arts in Mons in 1997. Since then he has participated in international art fairs and solo and group exhibitions throughout the Middle East, Europe and the US.

ayyam gallery

Founded in 2006, Ayyam Gallery is 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

Safwan Dahoul will be present on the opening day and during the first week of the exhibition. For interview with the artist or any further details, please contact us at +971 4 3236242 or email dubai@ayyamgallery.com