

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Event: Asaad Arabi Solo Exhibition
“Nostalgia”**

Location: Ayyam Gallery Dubai DIFC

Vernissage: September 12 at 7pm

**Exhibition dates: September 13 – October 27,
2011, 10 am – 8 pm**



Ayyam Gallery Dubai DIFC is pleased to announce “Nostalgia,” the upcoming solo exhibition of Syrian painter Asaad Arabi from September 12 to October 27. A prominent regional artist and critic, Arabi’s latest series, presents a new take on a venerated subject—Egyptian songstress Oum Kalthoum. Known for her marathon “operatic” concerts that were often open to the public, Kalthoum was loved by the masses, making her one of the most popular Arab singers of all time. Arabi approaches this icon with colorist expressionism and rhythmic lines that seem to sway with the imagined sounds of her powerful voice. Portrayed in mid performance, Kalthoum is backed by a small orchestra, as Arabi toys with positive and negative space with various tones and forms.

In some instances a chair appears where a musician seems to be missing, in other compositions this inanimate object is shown upside down. These off-kilter representations suggest a break in the mood of the painting while pointing to a profound use of symbolism in which the psychological spaces of these historical moments are punctured by unseen forces. With each dramatic gesture of the Egyptian singer, the painter suggests the equally climatic response of her audience. Although implied as a body that lies beyond the picture plane, her fans have a tangible presence. Arabi extracts the emotive buoyancy of her voice through the visual as he searches for the lost hours of a bygone era through nostalgia-ridden compositions.

Born in Damascus in 1941, Asaad Arabi works have been featured in countless venues throughout the region and abroad and are housed in several prestigious collections. His most recent exhibitions include a handful of well-received solo and group shows with Ayyam Gallery to which he has contributed canvases with an impressive range. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus, Arabi went on to earn a PhD in aesthetics from the distinguished Sorbonne University in 1987. Residing in France since 1975, he has penned a significant collection of art writings in both French and Arabic and is also widely revered as a prominent aesthetic theorist. Beginning his career at the end of Syria’s modernist period in the 1960s, his paintings span decades of art and include numerous styles.

Since its founding in 2006, Ayyam Gallery has become one of the Arab world’s leading art spaces. With a selection of cutting-edge painting, sculpture and photography that represents some of the Middle East’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.

ayyam gallery

Asaad Arabi 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 4392395 or email difc@ayyamgallery.com