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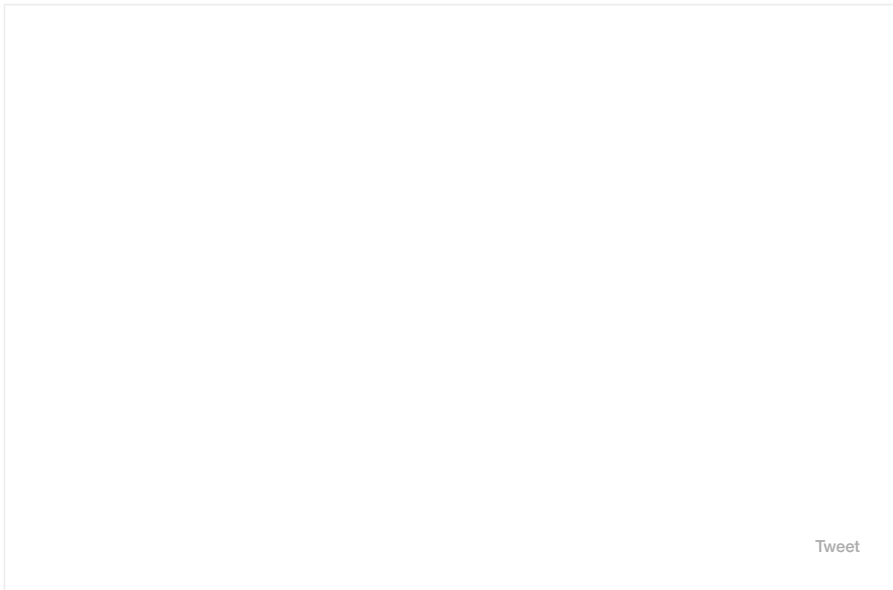
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AL ARABIYA NEWS



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The artist engages himself in politics



Youssef Abdelki is a Syrian artist born in Qamishli in 1951. He holds a BA from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus, a diploma in sculpture from the High National School of Fine Arts in Paris in 1986 and a Ph.D. from the University of Paris VIII.

His first individual exhibition was in 1973 in Damascus. The British Museum in London, the Museum of the Arab World Institute in Paris, the Digne-Les-Bains Museum in France, the Kuwait National Museum and Oman Modern Art museum all have his work in their collections.

He began as a cartoonist in 1966, with drawings published in children's books and magazines, before moving on to fine art.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Abdelki is today considered one of the most famous Arab sculptors, as well as one of the most prominent graphic artists. Many of his studies regarding Arab caricatures have also been published and acclaimed.

The chopped head of a fish, with its wide open eye, along with empty mugs and pots, a woman's pair of shoes, and shadows of worn out wood are but a few manifestations of Abdelki's realm of art. All are depicted only in black and white.

Youssef Abdelki: I do not choose to use to black and white as a specific technique, but rather as a tool that to open up tragic windows.

Since his early childhood, Abdelki's life has been overshadowed by a series of misfortunes that have been aggravated by his political leanings.

Youssef Abdelki: By virtue of affiliation to the Syrian Communist Party, my father was arrested 12 times in the 40s and 50s.

Such a distressing upbringing left Abdelki with only one alternative in a wretched life devoid of choices.

Youssef Abdelki: I engaged myself in politics to swim with the tide.

But in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, politics has a high cost. His experience behind bars brought to his paintings indelible expressions of protest against his prison guards.

Youssef Abdelki: The situation changed from outcry to exercising freedom, which deformed the image of prison guards. It is a watershed in my career that liberated me from fear.

Abdelki's life has passed through years of darkness and light, serenity and confusion, frustration and confrontation and all the related paradoxes. Against this background, he created his paintings which mirrored his inner soul.

Youssef Abdelki: Roses then bear different meanings in life, and the same applies to fish. They reveal the sentiments of denial of death.

Artist's gallery



Youssef Abdelki



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