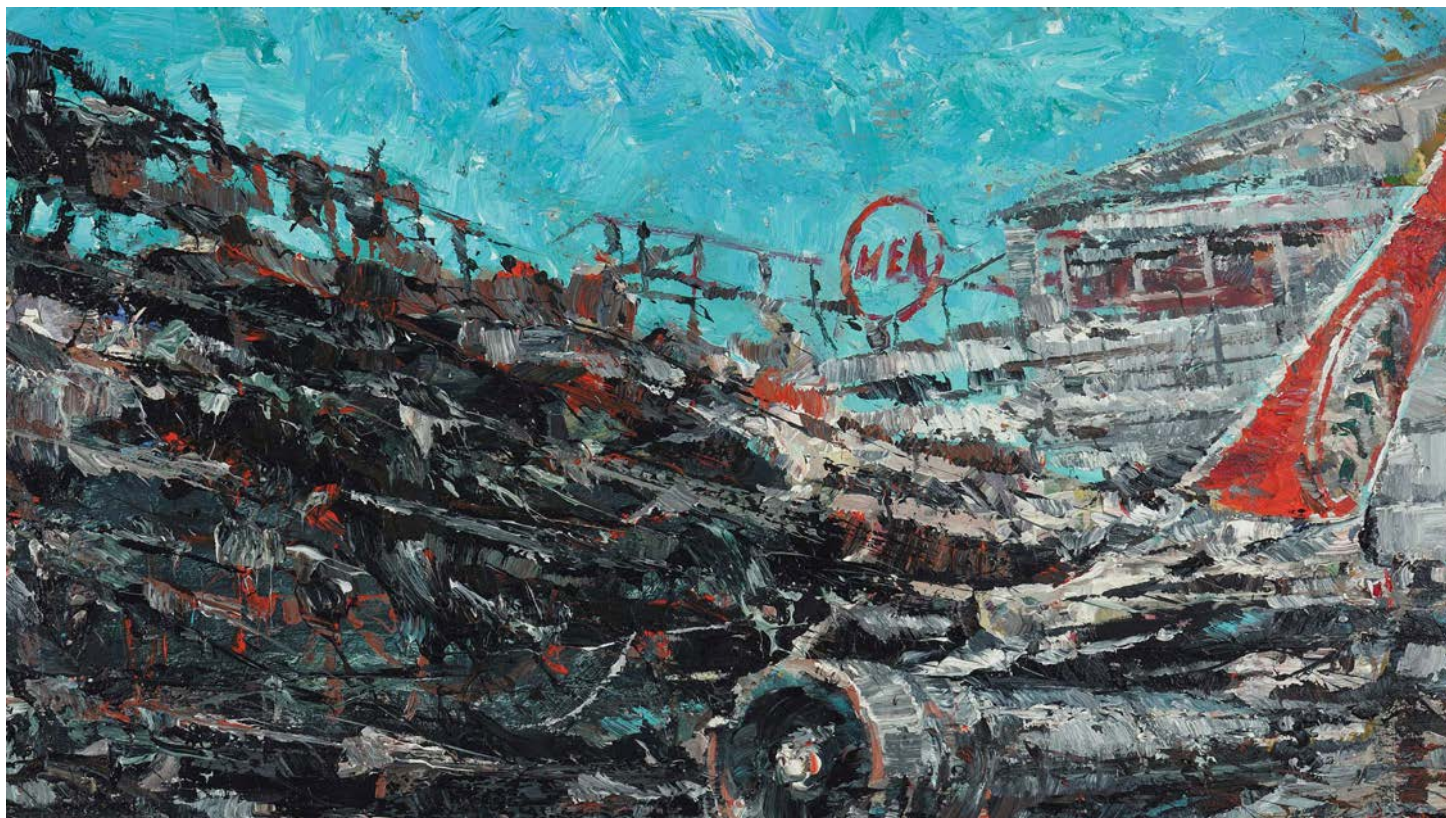


# Thin Skin. Six Artists from Beirut

3 Jun — 2 Jul 2014 at Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York

12 JUNE 2014



Ayman Baalbaki, *The Middle East*, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 31.5h x 47.2w in (80h x 120w cm) / Courtesy of Walid Siti and Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York, NY

“It suffices that we dissipate ourselves a little, that we be able to be at the surface, that we stretch our skin like a drum.” – Gilles Deleuze

To document, tame and confront a ghostly space is to define a surface that carries within it abyss and utopia. Presented by Taymour Grahne Gallery, this exhibition examines the relationship of a generation of artists within the living, breathing city of Beirut. Following years of civil war and the evolving reality of contemporary Lebanon, the skin of the city is becoming increasingly porous, intricate and fragmented, as echoed by its physical landscape – pock-marked and at times interrupted by cavernous holes gouged into the urban fabric.

This is the central subject of *Thin Skin*. Curated by Saleh Barakat, the show samples paintings from the oeuvres of six artists who live and work in Beirut: Ayman Baalbaki, Mohamad-Said Baalbaki, Oussama Baalbaki, Tagreed Darghouth, Omar Fakhoury, and Nadia Safieddine. In individual and at times very intimate ways, the

artists consider their living environment as the subject of their paintings, representing the textured surface of daily life. Their works together reflect a state of stasis. Stasis, a term used in Ancient Greece to designate a political, moral or social crisis resulting from an internal conflict within a state or city, can also be translated into terms of discord, decadence, civil war and revolt. It does not recognize any law, nor any limit.

Renowned curator Saleh Barakat is an expert in contemporary and modern Arab art. Through Agjal Art Gallery, which he opened in Beirut in 1991, he has been a pioneering force behind the growing global understanding of and appreciation for Arab artists. In 2007, Barakat co-curated the first Lebanese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, which included Taymour Grahne Gallery artist Lamia Joreige, among others. Barakat has also curated several groundbreaking shows at the Beirut Exhibition Center, including retrospectives for Lebanese modern masters Shafic Abboud in 2012 and Saloua Raouda Choucair in 2011.

Ayman Baalbaki was born in 1975 at the start of the Lebanese Civil War, a brutal conflict that has both affected and inspired his work. He studied Fine Arts in Beirut at the Institut des Beaux Arts and at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Art Decoratifs in Paris. Baalbaki is well-known for both his paintings and his installations.

Mohamad-Said Baalbaki was born in South Lebanon in 1974, however during the Lebanese Civil War, Baalbaki was forced to relocate with his family to Beirut. In 1994, the artist pursued his fine arts education at the Institut des Beaux-Arts in Beirut. In 2002, after moving to Berlin, Said graduated from the Berlin University of Fine Arts with a Master of Arts from the Institut für Kunst im Kontext.

Oussama Baalbaki, born in 1978, graduated from the Lebanese University's School of Fine Arts in 2002. In 1997, Baalbaki began drawing illustrations for several Lebanese newspapers. From 2003 to 2009, the artist was featured in consecutive exhibitions at the Sursock Museum in Beirut, Lebanon. Tagreed Darghouth, born in 1979, earned her Diploma in Painting and Sculpture from the Lebanese Institute of Fine Arts in Beirut in 2000. In 2000 and 2001, Darghouth participated in the Ayloul Summer Academy at Jordan's Darat Al Funoun, under the supervision of the renowned Syrian-German artist Marwan Kassab Bashi.

Omar Fakhoury was born in Beit Chabab, Lebanon in 1979 and received his Master of Fine Arts from Paris I in 2004.

Lebanese artist Nadia Safieddine was born in Dakar, Senegal in 1973, and currently lives between Beirut and Berlin. Safieddine received her diploma in painting from the University of Fine Arts, Beirut, Lebanon in 1997.

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Opening hours

Tuesday - Saturday

From 10am to 6pm

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1. Omar Fakhoury, Self-Defense, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 71h x 94.5w in (180h x 240w cm) / Courtesy of Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York, NY
2. Mohamad-Said Baalbaki
3. Omar Fakhoury, Self-Defense, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 35.4h x 43.3w in (90h x 110w cm) / Courtesy of Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York, NY
4. Mohamad-Said Baalbaki
5. Tagreed Darghouth, "Rainbow of Death" series, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 59h x 78.7w in (150h x 200w cm) / Courtesy of Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York, NY
6. Mohamad-Said Baalbaki

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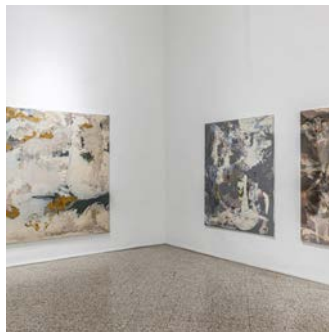
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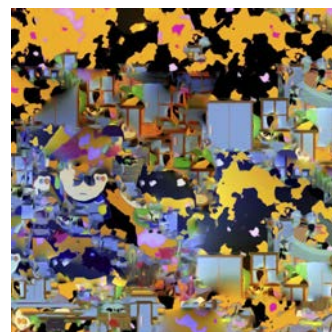
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