



Al Mahha Art

The "Loud & Silent" Contradiction of Reality by Mohammad Rawas

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Known for his notorious, loud and expressive artworks, Lebanese artist Mohammad Rawas showed his latest project "The Loud Majority / The Silent Minority" at Beirut Art Fair July 2012. "The Loud Majority / The Silent Minority" is a two plywood panel artworks, each is 130.00 X 120.00 X 4.00 where the artist used Oil, Acrylic, Aluminum, Copper, Wood, Salix Branches, Twine and Plastic Figurines.

"The Loud Majority" shows man destruction through killings, wars, weapons and soldiers representing the violence man kind practice against each other. On the other hand "The Silent Minority" shows a peaceful city, beautiful woman wearing a traditional Lebanese dress smiling and playful toys instead of the soldiers.



Mohammad El Rawas. "The Loud Majority | The Silent Minority". 2012

I reached an understanding of "The Loud Majority / The Silent Minority" when I first saw it in BAF and wanted to discuss it with Rawas, luckily enough I met him personally the next day and had this quick chit-chat:

Al Mahha: It is very obvious that the "The Loud Majority" is the aggressive face of reality or the ugly truth and you choose Male symbols to show it. But Female symbols is used in "The Silent Minority", the peaceful and beautiful side of life. Why did you choose Man as destruction & Woman as creation?

Mohammad Rawas: I don't mean to point a random finger at men, but man's greediness and selfishness are behind the world's mass destruction we live. There is also another reason for war which is religion represented in the painting of Sacrifice Incident of Prophet Ibrahim sacrifices his son Ismail to God – worldwide leaders and terrorist groups start wars and conflict under the name of their religion, even though you later on find out that religion is only a mean to reach Power and hold on it.

You are right in understanding woman as a reason of creation in "The Silent Minority", that's how I see women! Women

and sea is Beirut, or maybe the bright side of it.



"The Loud Majority" Medium: Medium : Oil, Acrylic, Aluminum, Copper, Wood, Salix Branches, Twine and Plastic Figurines on Plywood Panel.

Al Mahha: The title is quiet interesting, is it how you see reality?

Mohammad Rawas: Absolutely, the voice of violence and hate is much louder than the one of peace and love! We hear news about war and fights all over the world, but rarely about a country's interesting side, a side we might find out after it is destroyed.

Al Mahha: Going back to how I read the artwork, I also felt Men's voice is louder than women's especially in terms of rights...

Mohammad Rawas: It could be that too, or let's put it in other words; discrimination & sexism, a problem that even the most liberated societies face.



"The Silent Minority" Medium: Medium : Oil, Acrylic, Aluminum, Copper, Wood, Salix Branches, Twine and Plastic Figurines on Plywood Panel.

What makes "The Loud Majority / The Silent Minority" a remarkable piece of art is in addition to the effort and complicated mediums used in it, it carry out all the contradictions of life: war vs peace, destruction vs development, evil vs good, suppression vs freedom... etc. Once again, Mohammad Rawas bravely rise his voice and points a very bold view on the core of mankind problems.

About Mohammad El Rawas

Mohammad Rawas, painter and printmaker, was born on the 26th of May 1951 in Beirut, Lebanon. In 1971 he joined the Institute of Fine Arts at the Lebanese University in Beirut, Lebanon, and graduated with a BA in painting in 1975. At this time the civil war in Lebanon broke out, and el Rawas fled the country. The war had a drastic effect on el Rawas and he stopped painting for two years. In 1977 he traveled to Morocco, where he worked as an art instructor at the Ecole Normale des Institutrices, Rabat, until 1979. It was at this time that he started painting again. In 1979 he returned to Beirut, and held his first individual exhibit. Benefitting from a scholarship from The Lebanese University, he enrolled at The Slade School of Fine Art, University College London, United Kingdom, and graduated with an MA degree in printmaking in 1981. In 1981 he returned to Lebanon and started teaching in 1982 at the Lebanese University, Institute of Fine Arts in Beirut, a post he held till his resignation in March 2009. From 1983 until 1992 Mohammad Rawas served as Secretary General of the Association of Lebanese Artists and was a founding member of the Syndicate of Lebanese Artists in 2004. From 1992 until 2004 he taught at the American University of Beirut, Department of Architecture and Design, and founded the etching, engraving and silkscreen studios. Mohammad el Rawas is currently living and working in Beirut.