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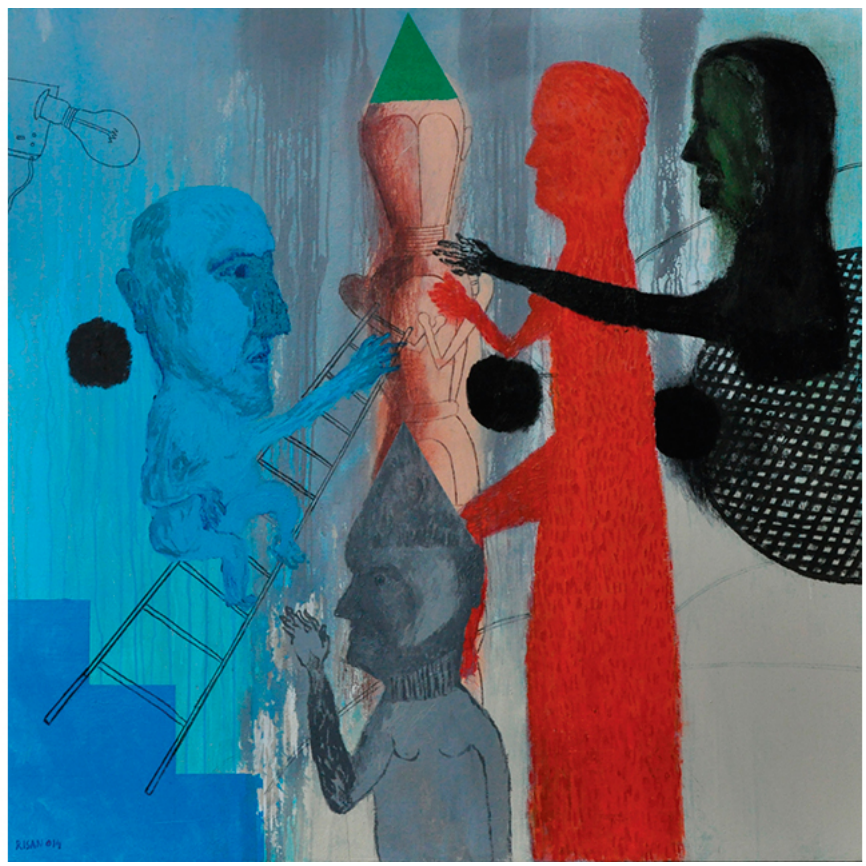
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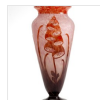
	1061 Le Verre Français Vendu Notarishuis Est 1 700 USD		Slim Aarons (1916-2006) 'Desert House Party' Catawiki Est 220 USD		GEORGE PRATT (B. 1960), "SPRIG" Austin Auction Gallery Est 1 500 USD		JOHN ENGSTEAD - Becall and Bogart Jasper52 Est 150 USD
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Kareem Risan's first solo exhibition at Meem Gallery on view in Dubai



A Difference of Opinion, 2014. Mixed media on canvas, 120 x 120 cm.

Barnebys®



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Vendu Notarishuis
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1 700 USD



Slim Aarons (1916-2006)
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Jasper52
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DUBAI. [Meem Gallery](#) is presenting Steps in Migration, Iraqi artist Kareem Risan's first solo exhibition at the gallery and in the United Arab Emirates. Since migrating from Baghdad to Toronto in 2008, Kareem Risan has visually documented his experience of living in exile while watching the destruction of his homeland from afar. Steps in Migration represents his recent series of work in which Risan reflects on the various steps he has taken, and the various phases of expatriation he has endured, to re-establish himself in a new country, society, culture, art world and life. Through the mixed-media paintings and China ink drawings displayed, the artist conveys his personal 'artistic and human vision' based on the experience of migration. The works, he states, 'tell of the difficulties and challenges in coping with a new environment, difficulties and challenges I have faced as an artist coming from the Arab world.' This ranges from the vexations of everyday life, such as adapting to a new climate and becoming accustomed to a new social setting, to the more profound feelings of displacement and isolation as demonstrated in No One Hears Me, a work which highlights the artist's feelings of loneliness and voicelessness in his new environment.

Risan's new position as a diaspora artist has altered his approach to art making, shifting his focus from pure abstraction to expressionist figuration. Partially rendered figures, mostly nude, clearly outlined and opaquely coloured, are arranged randomly across each canvas. Although figures and forms are the focus of each work, Risan still maintains a link to his early experiments with abstraction by creating visual narratives without using perspective; figures seem to float in spaces flatly layered with colour and texture, highlighting the surreality of exile. Within each composition, Risan depicts himself in specific scenarios. Additionally, the accoutrements of the figures aid in identifying their role and cultural background within each scene.

The arbitrariness of Risan's compositions is in fact deliberate as it is his 'aim to free the painting from any elements that could claim centrality or threaten to take centre stage even if some of these forms take a large part of the material surface of the painting. In most cases, even the configuration we consider incoherent is eventually arranged within one framework that brings together arbitrariness and different elements, and this is the case of some of the places and cities I have lived in, which are called cities of migration.'

This is Kareem Risan's first solo exhibition at Meem Gallery. In 2010, his Walls of Wartime series was displayed in the second instalment of the Art in Iraq Today series, held at Meem Gallery from 2010 to 2011, and the Beirut Art Centre in 2011 (organized by Solidere and Rula Zaki); in 2013, his work was included in the Modern Iraqi Art: A Collection exhibition held at the gallery. A catalogue for Steps in Migration, featuring essays by Maymanah Farhat and Dr Sonja MejcherAtassi, has been produced in conjunction with the exhibition.

Born in Baghdad in 1960, Kareem Risan studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Baghdad, graduating with a degree in painting in 1988. His work reflects his experiences of living through war and invasion; he was a soldier during the Gulf War and witnessed the post-2003 US invasion of Iraq. His solo exhibitions include the Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad, 1992; Dar Al-Mashriq Gallery, Amman, 1997; Al-Riwaq Gallery, Bahrain, 2005, and Gallery Hittite, Toronto, 2009. Risan has also participated in numerous international group exhibitions including Between the Tigris and Euphrates, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 1988; The Chair Exhibition, Darat Al-Funun, Amman, 1994; Contemporary Iraqi Art, China International Museum, Beijing, 2001; The Broken Letter: Arab Contemporary Artists, Kunst Gallery, Darmstadt, 2003; Dafatir: Contemporary Iraqi Book Art, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, travelling exhibition, 2005–08; Word into Art, British Museum, London, 2006; Modernism and Iraq, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York, 2009; Iraqi Artists in Exile, Station Museum, Houston, Texas, 2009; Beyond the War, LTMH Gallery, New York, 2010, and Art in Iraq Today (with Ghassan Ghaib and Nazar Yahya), Meem Gallery, Dubai, 2010. Risan's work is held in the collections of Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman; Kinda Foundation, Saudi Arabia; British Museum, London, and Athar Gallery, Baghdad. He has lived and worked in Toronto since 2008.

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