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Artist of the Month



Khalil Rayyan

Absorbed in the search for beauty... driven by emotions and impressions... revealing optimism and hope... this is Khalil Rayyan, a veteran artist who has been spared pretentious grandeur and narcissism. His work is always a reflection on simple themes, content, and lineament, and he shows passionate sensitivity and awareness of the reality faced by Palestinian artists living inside Israel.

Rayyan was born in 1946 in Addamoun, a village that was destroyed by the Israelis; during 1948 he had to flee with his family to the nearby village of Tamra. Being a displaced Palestinian, Rayyan has worked throughout his entire career on forming and shaping his own vision of the cultural and social identity of the Palestinians of 1948 - a vision which is plagued with political, social, and cultural challenges, despite the simplicity of the symbols he uses in his shiny bronze characterised sculptures.



Rayyan has his own philosophy for analysing his creations, "I cannot avoid our lived reality, the details of human pain and suffering. Through my sculpture and painting I communicate both real stories and fantasies, and I express my connection to parenthood, land, life, thirsty creatures, trees, women, and motherhood."



Rayyan seems to be largely influenced by two worlds of art: the realist and the abstract. In both worlds he relies on his feelings and emotions, which brought him to the realisation of beauty in tangible objects, and the ability to create beauty from the familiar. From Rayyan's perspective the true artist is the one who sustains his humanity and uses the



mundane - pencils, oil colours, copper, wood, etc. - to express the sublime, in particular, the depths of human emotion.

Rayyan believes in the importance of studying art: "Although learning does not make an artist, it narrows the gap between art and its creator

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through offering ideas and widening the artist's imagination and capabilities.”

Rayyan is one of the first artists to receive professional training at Beit Al-Karma in Haifa in 1964 and later in 1967. He graduated from Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, where he lectured in the Department of Sculpture for three years. He has been the art instructor and teacher of many renowned artists across different generations.

Courtesy of Palestinian Art Court - al Hoash.



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