

GHASSAN ZARD

Mare Astra

L'île où est né le soleil

(The island where the sun was born)

From 15 October to 31 December 2022

Opening with the presence of the artist

Saturday 15 October from 5pm to 8.30 pm

Developed in view of the context of socio-economic collapse that Lebanon has been experiencing since 2019, this exhibition presents through the metaphor of the island, a reflection on the representation of the genesis of the world and its possible cycles of new beginnings.

In the Lebanese collective imagination, Lebanon could well take the form of an island, a small territory of the Levant suspended between communities and continents, battered by the waves of history. Land marked by multiple civilizations and full of myths: of a legendary bird flying over the sea and consumed by the flames which is always reborn, of forests with eternal trees which watch over the gods, the mountains and the valleys. Fertile Lebanon, devoted to the Sun god as to the white of the snow, is now sinking into an inexorable and tragic fall.



Ghassan Zard
Untitled 24, 2020
Acrylic on canvas - cm 100x 150

In fabulous traditions, the island embraces these fascinations for an isolated territory, a forgotten or never found miniature world where the best and the worst are possible, a dreamed or alienating territory, hatched in the middle of the oceans. The island, in its promise of an elsewhere, is also this guardian of long and circular temporalities where the forces of good and evil mingle with geological curiosities, magical flora and fantastic fauna to bear witness to a creative consciousness of before men.

The exploration of myths, cosmogonies and stories related to the creation of the world is one of the common threads of Ghassan Zard's approach. In the continuity of a sculptural production linked to fantastic bestiaries and a pictorial practice dedicated to the shore, to the imaginaries of water and land, the thought of the island has become since January 2022 a central mechanism of his approach. . For Zard, the island forms the topos (the place) of withdrawal as the place of all possible renewals. This would be in the same movement, intimately linked to the metaphor of creation. Indeed, the island in its isolation evokes a mystery: that of a telluric, oceanic and celestial genesis. In the cosmogonic and then cartographic imagination, it is a complex suspended world or a lost point that has become an allegory of a territory to be reached, a quest that is as much geographical as psychic and spiritual.



Ghassan Zard
"40 x 40", 17_4_2021
Mixed media on canvas - cm 40 x 40



Ghassan Zard
"40 x 40", 23_4_2021
Mixed media on canvas- cm 40 x 40

Through a pictorial and sculptural language that borrows from the aquatic, geological and alchemical imagination, Ghassan Zard thus invites us to dive into the confines of the creation of the world. The large canvases presented question the horizon line in all its thickness to reveal the stratified richness either of a land that rises then collapses or of a sea that opens up. In a game of scales, earth, sky and sea merge to offer the cup of a possible original chaos. The sculptures and murals recall the extreme mobility of the quicksilver of the alchemists, a mercurial water that escapes to escape the fingers and works in the forms of the cosmos. The possible states of gaseous clouds or drifting continents are superimposed to describe the phases of star formation. Here and there, touches of color like small flowers - autumn then winter - affixed to washes echo the little things that grow at the bottom of the earth. They dream of these nameless flowers from the sky and secretly weave the path that separates them from the stars. Finally, the bronze spheres represent the solar disk like a compass whose magnetic field would orient our lives and our imaginations.

Irruptions, clouds, growths, crystallizations, masses, fragility, ramifications, arborescences, strata, each canvas and each sculpture explores here by fragment the plastic richness and the scales of representation of the universe. Through them, Zard summons hidden myths and depicts the games of space, time and matter. These fantastic games, dreams of stars and memories of stone, those which have been able to amaze and cultivate the balances and imbalances of the oldest thoughts on earth.

Clémence Cottard Hachem
Paris, October 2022



Ghassan Zard
O.A.S (on a shore) #60, 2022
Brass sand casting
Cm 35 x 35 x 2

Exhibition produced in collaboration with

GALERIE TANIT
MUNICH | BEYROUTH

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Founded in 1988 as PIECE UNIQUE, its original concept was to exhibit each time a single work of art created especially for the space by a contemporary artist.

In February 2000, the gallery expanded to a new space at 26, rue Mazarine in order to permanently display the works of the artists represented and to organize special events throughout the year.

Since February 2020, Marussa Gravagnuolo and Christine Lahoud have concentrated their activities at 26, rue Mazarine in the space now called "MAZARINE VARIATIONS".

Galerie Mazarine Variations – 26, rue Mazarine, 75006 Paris
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Heures d'ouverture : Mardi – samedi 14h30 – 19h et sur rendez-vous

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MazarineVariations>

Instagram: [mazarine_variations](https://www.instagram.com/mazarine_variations)