

Mohammad El Rawas
Stop Making Sense

Mohammad El Rawas: Stop Making Sense

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www.elrawas.net

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*I don't know why people expect art to make sense
when they accept the fact that life doesn't make sense.*

David Lynch



Mohammad El Rawas

A Deformed World

He said, the artist said, war is immediacy.

I admit war is on my mind.

As I write, parts of Lebanon are being bombed, residents of the south have been told to evacuate. It is March 5.

As I begin to write again, Lebanon is being bombed, residents of Beirut's southern suburbs have been told to evacuate. It is March 6.

At my kitchen table in Beirut, I wonder how to begin.

It is morning again, Beirut on March 8, and I am awake, writing. Bombs are falling, but not quite here.

Stop making sense, but make something.

Let us suggest simply, and for the sake of argument, that sensations are immediate 'input' and feelings are the subsequent 'output' or interpretation, together creating a conscious experience of the world.

In the work of Mohammad El Rawas, such circles of sensation and feeling appear disrupted. On approaching, looking at, his work, sensation arises, yet any subsequent reading or interpretation, the feeling, let's say, is always a little disturbed; a disruption created through the careful juxtaposition of references that subtly shifts how we read, interpret, see.

I think of the title of this exhibition, stop making sense. We laughed over the song, watching the video, the bodies moving strangely to dissolve meaning into sound.¹

I think, stop making sense, but make something

Shift feeling from a casing of interpretation and nudge back to sensation. Try again, differently.

We are talking now of the attempt of art, and art of a particular type.

The assemblages of Mohammad El Rawas fold within them an intentional dialectic of the personal and global. For El Rawas, these careful works respond to a need to express his

¹ Talking Heads (dir. Jonathan Demme), Stop Making Sense, live album (1984)

thoughts, worries and preoccupations. Equally important, he maintains, in terms of aesthetic, is that they should respond in a way that should not resemble other work around them, but specifically seek something new.

What are you trying to say to this carrier of art, he asks, before continuing, do anything to break the convention; it is a game of the mind, a serious game.

Of this most recent series, at least one third are a direct comment on the culture of Lebanon or the wider region of the Levant. Themes include the aftermath of war, the 2020 Beirut port explosion, and the construction of luxury homes in the Lebanese countryside, as well as more general histories of media and culture. Other works, for example, 'Sisyphus as a Ghostbuster', 'Artemis Gentileschi in her Studio' and 'Artemis and the Elf', take a different perspective, considering the world of art, museums and apparently personal moments. All encompass a sense of historical play.

Each assemblage connects apparently disparate historical threads, and each includes a juxtaposition of art forms, histories, types of art and life. Many works include representations of the artist's own paintings, always as giclee prints, or paintings by other artists, which he renders himself in oil. Almost every work contains one or more dolls, or doll-like figures, taken from various genres, from Japanese anime characters to Marvel's Frozen, unnamed plastic figures to Betty Boop and her dog.

The narrative and aesthetic casing of the series is consistent, each work containing the same size and structural integrity, a visual language of lines, angles, compartments, simple geometric shapes, each fitted to the particularities of their contents.

This new series of paintings is exhibited in chronological order, a diary of mood shown in the rhythm of composition. Indeed, El Rawas returns again and again to time, an anchor running through his process and what he produces.

During our conversation the word mythology lodged in my mind, yet as we conversed in his studio the word receded. Still, something remained more to do with the weight of the word mythology than its exact meaning. And there is historical weight in the work of El Rawas, a search for something wider than history, which might be myth or allegory, fable, lore, warning, parable.

Yet, within this search for story, a personal relation to what he depicts, his works hold a deep appreciation for the conceptual in art, particularly, perhaps, for British art of a certain type, that which attempts to allow sense itself to dissolve under its own weight. It is an affinity with black humour that seeks to express the absurdity of the human condition.

While such interest in the conceptual in art is clear, a forceful collision of aesthetic and ideas, the work of El Rawas does not reach towards a complete conceptualism, it is on a different track. Rather, he retains a sense of the personal, perhaps as a foil for the exploration of his own deformity in the face of the horror that he sees in the human mind.

His is an archaeology of personal art and art history, a hidden infrastructure of narrative, source elements; here, personal history and art history combine to create a split in perception, a moment of uncertainty through which a shift might occur.

For El Rawas, the old and new work together, form a continuous line or circle. He puts his own painting into his paintings, lives within his own past as he delves into an archaeology of the future. Most important, perhaps, he seeks to pique interest, grab attention, to animate the viewer towards another way of seeing.

Are we dolls, he seems to ask, or can we be human.
Are we artworks, or can we be human.

He is searching for link, story, connection.

He said, war is immediacy.

Stop making sense, but make something.

Make something new.

Since the late 1970's El Rawas has worked with collage, beginning when he was based in Morocco. He describes this as the time that he became a professional artist rather than a student, when he took charge of his own work and mind. For El Rawas, freedom is linked to collage, the relationship of things to be altered.

Then, he explains, a photo had a credential which it does not have now; there was a link between a photograph and reality. For El Rawas, this meant that every single element was real, and for him, real things are important.

Circling back to the present, dolls are representations of real things, perhaps a means to get to the reality that the photograph has lost, perhaps an indicator of a moment that we have arrived at in relation to an idea of reality.

Even as artists, he says, we are becoming victims of consumer society.

The art of the past is not dead, just ignored, he considers, asking for a pause, to look again at what has been done. For El Rawas, such a visitation occurs through a juxtaposition of images, constellations of references and objects, photographs and paintings, housed in neat geometric cradles.

With El Rawas we cannot sit within one moment in time, and indeed he is a reminder that such stability is not possible. There is a continual circling, yet a disrupted circle that goes back to the past and forward into a projected future.

Beyond modernity, he says, banality is the enemy

divert the attention somewhere else

don't forget, I think

stop making sense but make something.

Take destruction, as seen in 'The Apple of Discord'. Here, according to El Rawas' 'source elements', is a figurine of Eris, the Greek goddess of strife and conflict holding the apple of discord. She is set in front of a photo of the Israeli bombardment of Beirut in 2025, and above giclée prints of two men wrestling taken from a book by Eadweard Muybridge, *The Human Figure in Motion* (1955). Syringes stand in regimented rows among the wrestlers, and what appears to be the head of a plastic doll rests on the shoulder of Eris. Below the apple is a pool of red, and the geometric casing for the assemblage is red, black, grey and white.

Simplify for a moment, because the story is complicated, but look.

Here is a human figure representing conflict.

And below, an artwork depicting human figures wrestling, a posed fight, a game.

A fight, but of another kind.

Another work in the series, *Stop! U Can't Touch This* (2026).

Giclée prints of the scene of an Israeli bombardment in Beirut 2025. Below the print a doll lies broken on the ground, a photo of Hans Bellmer's work, *Die Puppe* (1934) inset beside her. A photo of a painting by Tagreed Darghouth depicting a limbless doll (2005) settles on the destruction, held in place by a Mickey Mouse figurine. Alongside these elements, a porcelain figure of Princess Mononoke of Studio Ghibli raises her hand to her face, standing inside the destruction in which the doll is also lost. The title is borrowed from MC Hammer's hit song, *You Can't Touch This* (1990).

Simplify this too.

A doll is destroyed in a bombing.
Find another image of a deformed doll.

This is a work by Hans Bellmer,
a doll deformed, but not by war.

Place one kind of deformity beside another, one kind of fight beside another,
observe the absurdity, the different possibilities for horror, how we look at

them, how we look. Here, the juxtapositions are there to remind us of the many limbs of deformity, of conflict, to lift us from one type of horror into another, perhaps more profoundly disturbing.

As I look I begin to see. What is a deformed doll, a fight between two men. What is between the image of the burned doll in the suburbs of Beirut and Bellmer's eroticised deformity, what does Mickey Mouse have to do with Darghouth's limbless doll.

What the mind does, a continual deformity of thought.

I am reminded suddenly of a conversation with a friend about how to communicate, his feeling that such an attempt was somehow inevitably psychoanalytic.

I find such thinking strange, yet familiar, have often felt that a psychoanalytic reading can hijack an attempt to communicate what could be something quite other, perhaps even a quite straightforward thought or idea.

El Rawas and I also discuss this, as he tells a story about the painter Balthus, who claimed that Freud deformed his thoughts – turning his painting into paedophilia.

One work, 'The Experiment', explores this theme, including a detail of Balthus' famous painting "Thérèse sur une banquette" (1939), which, incidentally or not, sold at Christie's for nineteen million dollars in 2019. In El Rawas's revised version the protagonist, a young girl, reclines on a box-like construction, a part of his familiar background geometry. The emphasis here seems to lie in the attempt to construct a figure as a mechanical object, and this construction is juxtaposed with several images of the female form, or parts of it. The girl in the painting holds up a slender stick, which appears to come from the model of herself upon which she is also sitting. Perhaps the idea here is that she participates in her own creation. Here, the artist shifts the focus from the Freudian, highlighting the precise difficulty of challenging this weighty perspective, how this way of thinking has changed even the way one looks at one's own thoughts, perhaps irrevocably, perhaps often unknowingly.

Deformity.

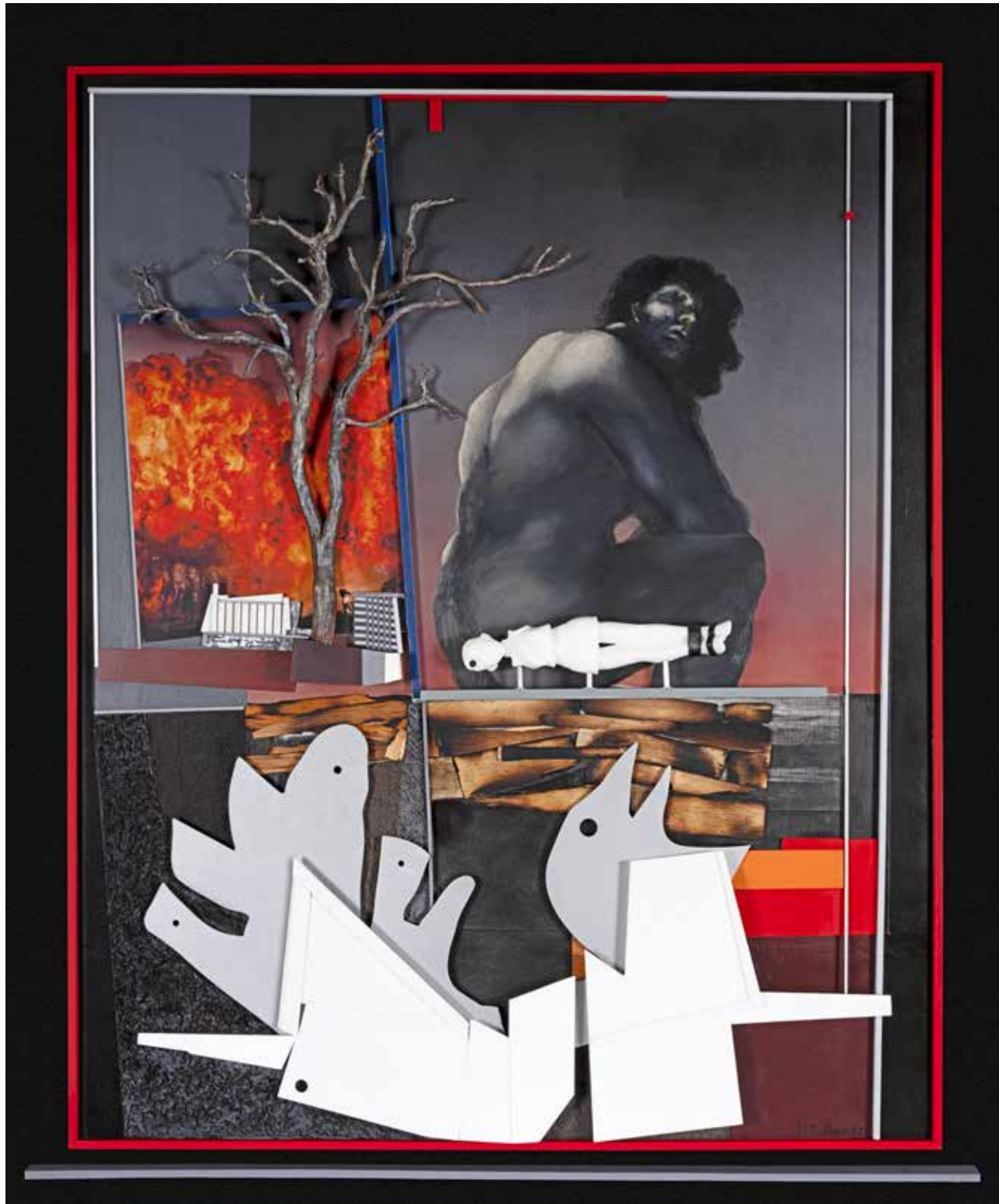
Look again at the dolls, the fights, the gap between art and life, between a thought and seeing what is put into our minds.

Look again at the possibility of reducing what we think to one reading or another.

A disrupted loop of sensation and feeling, a return to sensation.

Stop making sense.

For El Rawas, our thoughts are deformed, and it is his work to show us how.



The Era of Evil II, 2026, 153 x 125 x 4 cm, Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée print, dry branches, 3D printed figurine on plywood panel

El Rawas ou l'inventaire de l'inventaire

On raconte qu'un homme, ayant voulu faire l'inventaire du monde, commença par un croquis au crayon d'un quartier de Beyrouth dessiné cinquante ans plus tôt par un autre lui-même. Puis, qu'il y rajouta une femme assise, à onze heures du matin, empruntée aux univers solitaires d'Edward Hopper, puis le géant de Goya assis, lui aussi, mais sur le bord de la Terre, le visage sombre, tourné vers l'explosion du port de Beyrouth, la Grèce, sous la forme d'une femme aux bras ouverts sur les ruines de Missolonghi pendant la révolution qui mit fin à quatre siècles d'occupation, bras ouverts, corps offert, impuissante face à la destruction, et Caprica Six de *Battlestar Galactica* qui reprend la même posture. La figure allégorique devient figurine, l'héroïne devient jouet, la révolution, simulacre.

Il est dix-huit heures zéro sept. Les horloges se sont arrêtées. Tout n'est que ruine. Au même moment une jeune fille marocaine d'Imilchil observe Artemisia Gentileschi dans son studio peignant son autoportrait en allégorie de la peinture. Mais là, s'inspirant d'une photo de Serge Romanenko, c'est le croquis d'un couple qu'elle peint, huile sur carton, de Mohammad El Rawas qui, lui, poursuit sa quête d'un inventaire du monde pour (dé)faire sens. *Stop Making Sense*.

Cherchez le lien entre le vacarme de la guerre fixé sur une photo d'un bombardement de Beyrouth en 2025, et le silence intemporel de Hopper un matin de 1926 ; l'Œdipe d'Ingres expliquant l'énigme du Sphinx à une figurine en PVC de l'Assassin Shuten Dōji, personnage du jeu mobile free-to-play *Fate/Grand Order*, et les ébats d'Éros déposant un baiser sur le front de Psyché épiés par Jaycee Bishoujo de Tekken par Kotobukiya.

Jaina Solo, chevalier Jedi, entourée de fragments architecturaux de façades blanches, de plans inclinés, de modules, de plaques métalliques, en train d'assembler une ville, de la reconstruire à partir de morceaux épars, bâtisseuse gantée, elle manipule les ruines.

Jaina Solo donc, fille de Han Solo et Leia Organa, sœur jumelle de Jacen Solo, et plus loin Tanios Chahine Saadé al Rayfouni muletier et chef paysan du Mont-Liban qui dirige la révolte paysanne de 1859, dans le Kesrouan, au cours de laquelle il chasse le zāimat et proclame une république paysanne.

Quatre-vingts ans plus tard, à Paris en 1939, c'est Thérèse Blanchard qui est peinte par Balthasar Kłossowski de Rola, dit Balthus, étendue sur une banquette, dernier des dix tableaux de Thérèse avant que la Seconde Guerre mondiale ne mette fin à la série. Et Marcella Sprentzel fille d'un employé des postes, elle aussi peinte assise à côté d'un chat blanc sur une banquette à Dresde en 1910 par Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

Mais là-bas, à Paris, à côté de Thérèse étendue, une femme photographiée par un inconnu se tient debout près d'une autre photo, partielle celle-là, d'un torse de femme par Anna Bodnar.

Dance to the Music, The Orchestra, mémoire personnelle de l'écoute d'un concert en 1966, et deux figures féminines de la performance, Samia Gamal, corps dansant de l'âge d'or du cinéma égyptien, et Antonia Brico, première femme cheffe d'orchestre, et, entre elles, le corps spectaculaire d'Anna Williams, elle aussi de *Tekken*, tueuse à gages irlandaise, aikidoka aux cheveux bruns coupés au carré, reconnaissable à son qipao rouge.

L'épreuve giclée d'une photographie publiée par le quotidien An-Nahar dans un article d'Israa Hassan consacré aux séries télévisées d'Abou Melhem, tarbouche, sarouel, moustache, et d'Oum Melhem fichu sur la tête, avec son mortier et son pilon, et la sexualité acidulée de Nami, cowgirl cambrée, en minijupe, manga *One Piece*, ainsi qu'un mortier et un pilon en bois sculptés pour elle, sur mesure.

Et les Buggles chantaient *Video killed the radio star*, et Bob Dylan chantait *Man gave names to all the animals*, M.C. Hammer *U Can't Touch This*, Mohammad El Rawas *Stop making sense*. Mais au commencement, c'est Ève, qui a nommé les animaux, couchée sur le ventre, impression giclée d'un détail de *Forging a bond*, peint par l'homme lui-même qui s'applique à faire l'inventaire du monde. Un cochon, un serpent, un agneau, un taureau et un ours accompagnent la figure d'Ève dans une scène où des noms sont donnés aux images du monde. Nommer le monde devient un jeu d'enfant, un inventaire des signes.

Stop making sense. C'est l'injonction de Mohammad El Rawas qui décida que son inventaire ne serait pas un catalogue, mais un carnaval qui fait apparaître, sous la même lumière, l'universel et le dérisoire, le sacré et le ludique, l'archive et le simulacre, la guerre et la musique pop, le musée et l'entrepôt.

Tout cela simultanément mais sans confusion, avec une clarté confondante. Et c'est cela que montre cette folle machine à inventaire : la multiplication absurde du sens où une pléthore de signes s'empilent, se citent, se parodient, se contredisent. Ils se transforment par leur juxtaposition.

Une déesse devient figurine, une révolution devient décor, une explosion devient giclée. Une ville monte ou descend, ou les deux à la fois, elle se fait en même temps qu'elle se défait. Le monde n'est plus lisible comme un récit, non pas qu'il serait dépourvu de sens, mais que tous les sens possibles s'y expriment simultanément.

Infatigable, l'homme El Rawas poursuit son inventaire. Ne cherchez plus le lien, il n'y en a pas, sinon que tous, les trois philosophes de Giorgione et Sayuri Kawamura, le Fifre d'Édouard Manet et La Belle Fatmah, La Liberté guidant le peuple, Artémis, la Princesse Mononoké et Mickey Mouse, la révolution russe et la grecque, l'âne du cauchemar de Johann Heinrich Füssli et le troisième Faune musicien de Picasso, le Sisyphes du Titien et la femme algérienne de Landelle jouant de la darbouka, Lei Fang de *Dead or Alive*, et *Nafea faa ipoipo ?* de Paul Gauguin, une poupée mutilée de Tagreed Darghouth, Lady Loki déesse Marvel de la Malice et Éris déesse grecque de la Discorde, la fontaine de Trevi, le centre Pompidou, Kazami Mizuho, Misa Amane, Asuka Langley, Masane Amaha, Pygmalion et Galatée, Harley Quinn, un coq, un houla-hop, le Discobole d'Athènes, la fusée de Tintin, une idole syro-hittite en terre cuite, Calamity Jane, la Vénus de Milo, le rhinocéros de Venise...

Ne cherchez plus le lien, il n'y en a pas, sinon que tous sont dans le monde, et que Mohammad El Rawas a choisi d'en faire un inventaire.

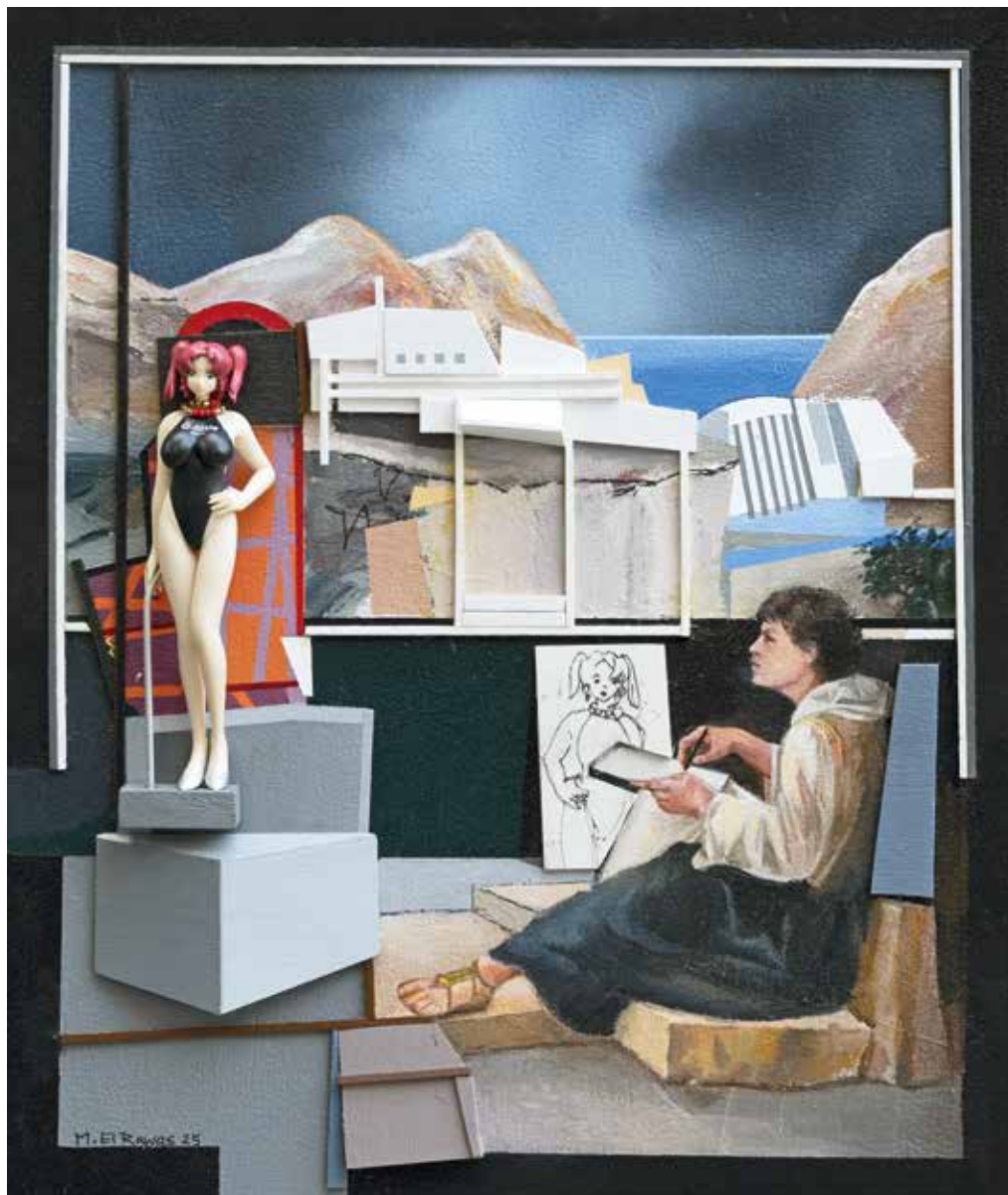
Camille Ammoun
Beyrouth, 2026



No 01
Title **Eleven a.m. Ain Al-Mraaysseh, 1973**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic and wood on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

The background scene is based on a crayon sketch of Ain Al-Mraaysseh I did in 1973.
The seated woman is borrowed from Edward Hopper's painting "Eleven A.M.", 1926.



No 02
Title **Life Drawing**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood and a ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail from "The Three Philosophers" painting by Giorgione c. 1508.
G- Taste figurine Sayuri Kawamura 2001.



No 03
 Title **Music, Call and Response**
 Date 2025
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, metal rivets and a ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

An Algerian colonial postcard "La Belle Fatmah".
 "The Fifer" by Édouard Manet, 1866.
 A bookmark plastic figurine.



No 04
Title **Liberty is in the Air and Everywhere**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum and a ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail from "Liberty Leading the People" by Delacroix, 1830.
Psylocke Bishoujo figurine (Designed by Shunya Yamashita).



No 05
 Title **Ruins; Everywhere**
 Date 2025
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, digital print and a ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail from "Greece on the ruins of Missolonghi" painting by Delacroix, 1826.

Caprica-Six figurine from Battlestar Galactica.

A Black and white digital print photo of Beirut port explosion, 2020.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

06
The Rehearsal

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Oil, acrylic, wood, digital print and a plastic ready-made figurine on plywood panel

(Not Included in the Exhibition)

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Detail of "Algerian Woman Playing a Darbouka" by Charles Landelle ca. 1887.

A sketch by Pablo Picasso "Musician Faun No.3" Lithography 1948.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

07
Fantasy

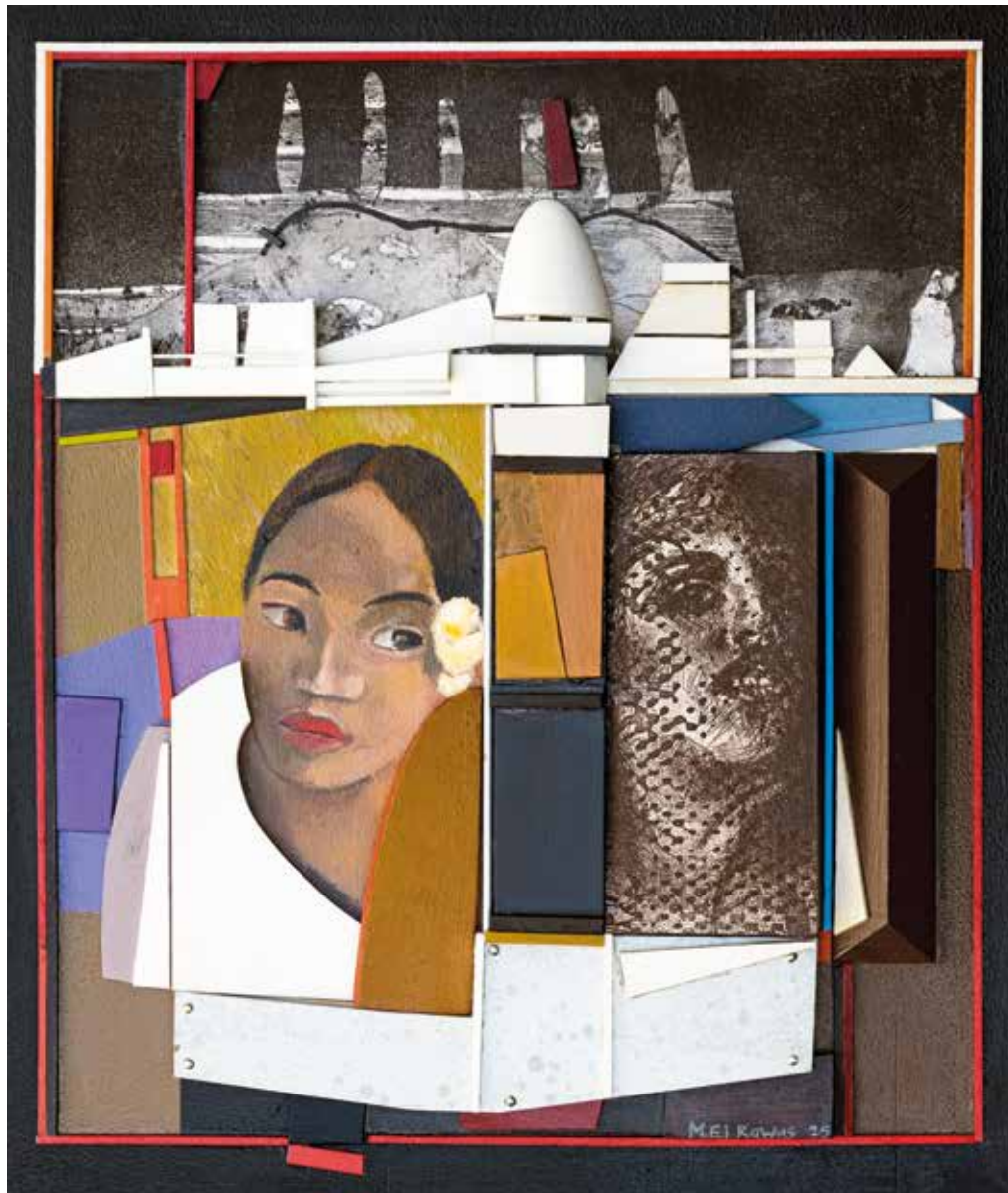
2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, etching print, silkscreen print and a miniature metal figurine of Betty Boop and her dog, on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

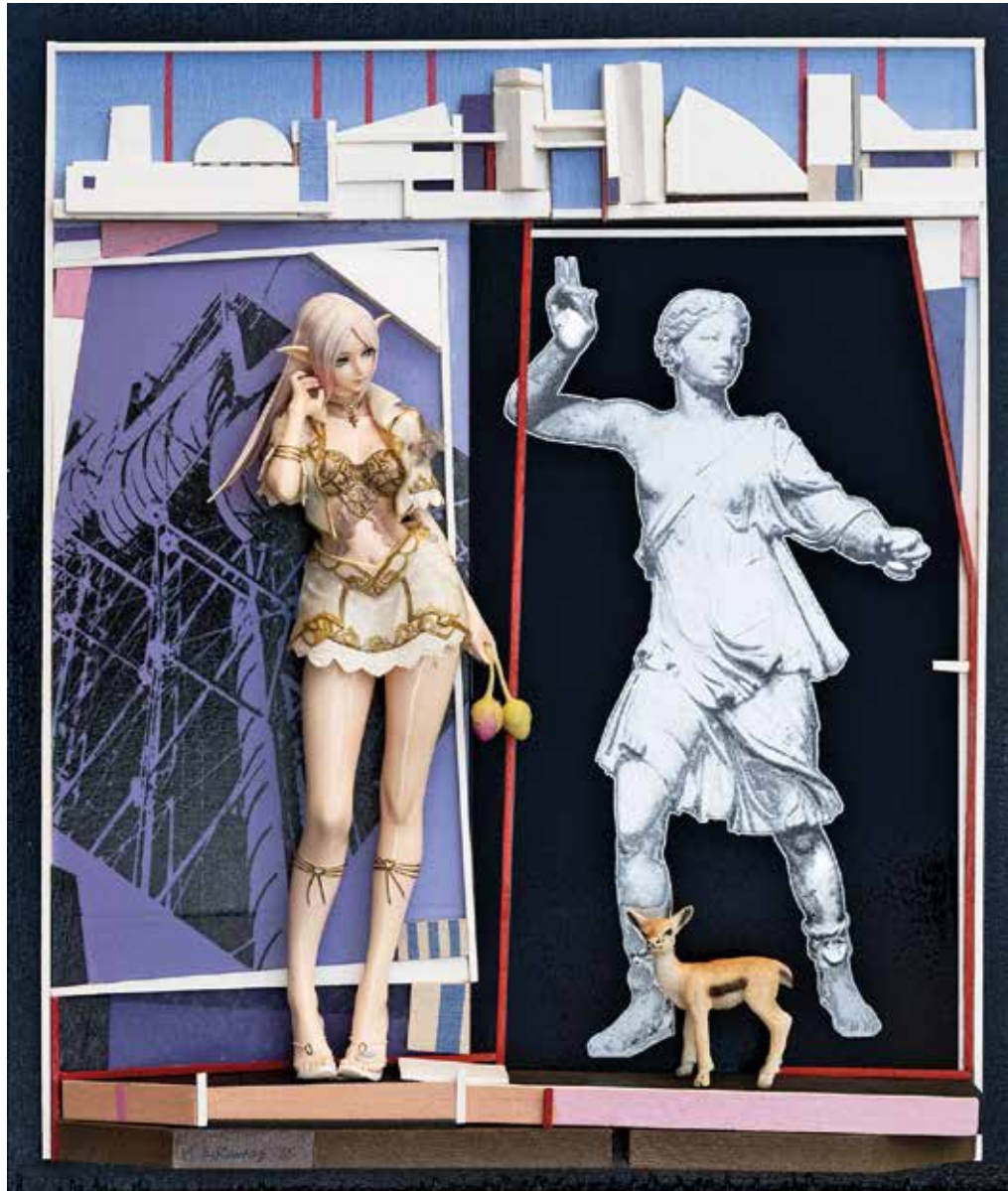
Details of an early silkscreen print of mine.



No 08
Title **Quantum Friends**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, etching prints and metal nails on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail from Paul Gauguin's painting "when will you marry?" 1892 painted in oil.
Details from old etchings proof prints of mine.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

09

Artemis and the Elf

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, silkscreen print on paper and silkscreen print on aluminum, PVC and plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

The elf from lineage II figurine.

A photo of the Greco-Roman statue Artemis / Diana, the goddess of hunting.

A photo of a detail of the Pompidou Centre building, Paris.



No 10
Title **Jaycee Bishoujo Sneaking at Cupid and Psyche**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum and a ready-made PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Cupid and Psyche, 1798 by François Gérard, oil on canvas 186 x 132cm repainted in oil.
Jaycee Bishoujo from the Tekken series manufactured by Kotobukiya.



No 11
Title **Jaina Solo as a Constructor**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Acrylic, wood, aluminum, copper rivets, stainless steel, dry branch and a ready-made PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS
Jaina Solo of STAR WARS, BISHOUJO PVC figurine.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

12
People of the Revolution
2025
33 x 28 x 4 cm
Watercolor, acrylic, oil, wood, aluminum and a ready-made PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

1918 vintage Russian revolution poster (detail).
Masane Amaha PVC figurine from the anime series "Witchblade".
Tanios Chahine portrait from a vintage photo 1859 repainted in oil.
Watercolor landscape, work of mine painted around 1972.



No

Title

Date

Dimensions

Technique

13

The Two Sisters

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Oil, Acrylic, Watercolor, China ink, wood, aluminum, polished aluminum and a ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTSDetail of *Artistin – Marcella* by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, 1910.Watercolor of *Ain Al Mraiseh, I* painted around 1972, enhanced with China ink.A plastic figurine of *Marvel Frozen*, from the anime series *Aura Battler Dunbine*.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

14

Revisiting Fuseli's World

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Oil, acrylic, etching, China ink, wood, aluminum and ready-made plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Detail from Henry Fuseli's painting "Milton When a Youth" Circa 1796 / 1799.

The sketch of the donkey's head is inspired by Fuseli's painting "The Nightmare".

Ready-made plastic figurines.



No 15
 Title **The Era of Evil I**
 Date 2025
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Acrylic, China ink, wood, aluminum, dried branches, digital print and ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail from Francisco de Goya's etching "Seated Giant" circa 1814 / 1818.

A photo of Beirut port explosion August 4, 2020.

Ready-made plastic figurine.



No 16
Title **An Incident in a Cemetery**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, dried branches and 3D printed figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS
Detail of Eugène Delacroix painting "Jeune orpheline au cimetière" 1823 / 24.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

17
Artemisia Gentileschi in her Studio
2025
33 x 28 x 4 cm
Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum and a black and white digital photograph
on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

My sketch of a couple, oil on cardboard, circa 1972 / 73.
Detail of "Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting" by Artemisia Gentileschi, 1638-39.
Detail of vintage Moroccan postcard featuring "jeune fille d'Imilchil" painted in oil.
Photo of a couple by photographer Sergey Romanenko.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

18

The Experiment

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

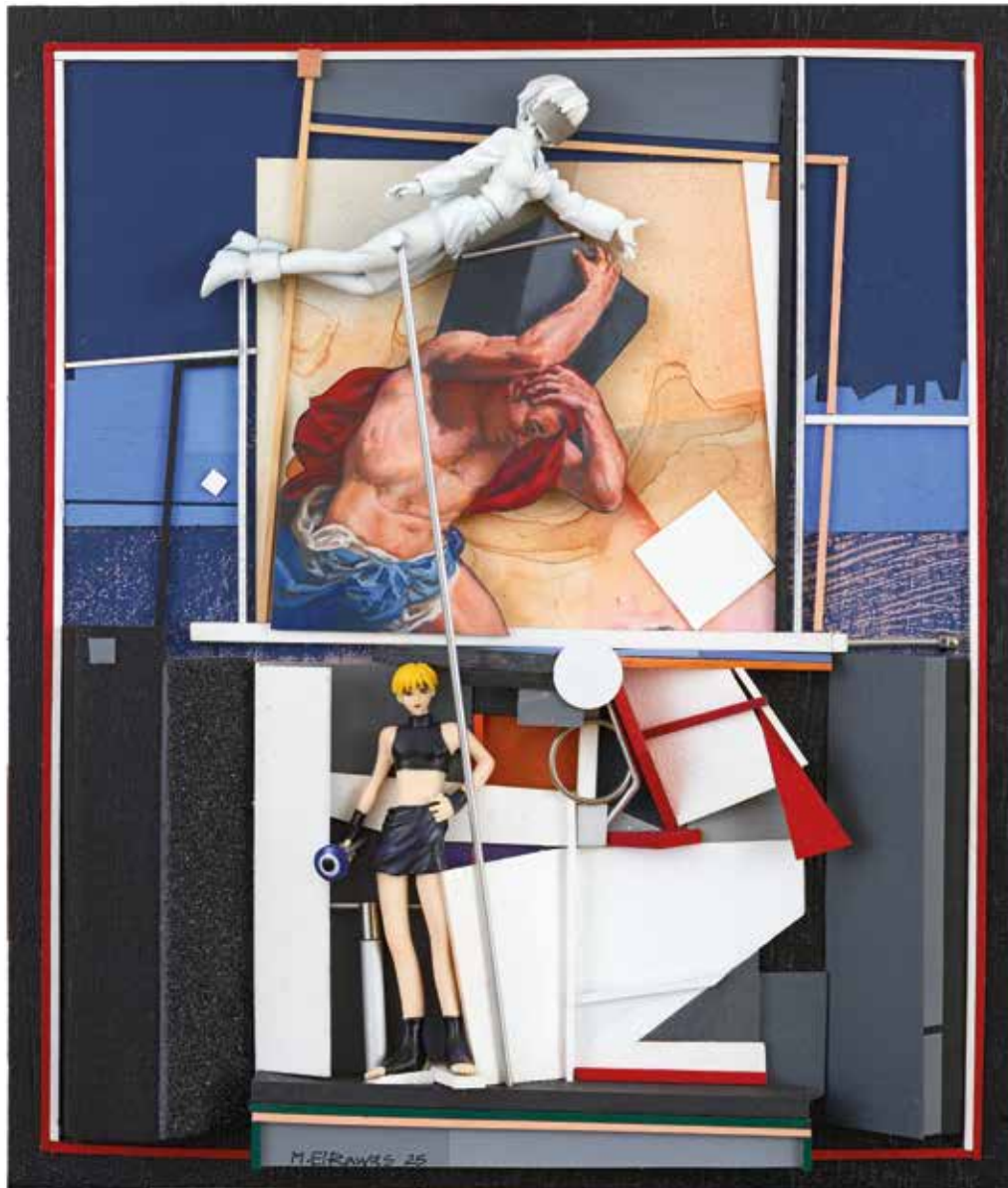
Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, plastic, black and white digital photos and ready-made PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Detail of Balthus painting "Thérèse sur une banquette", 1939.

Photo of a standing woman (Photographer unknown).

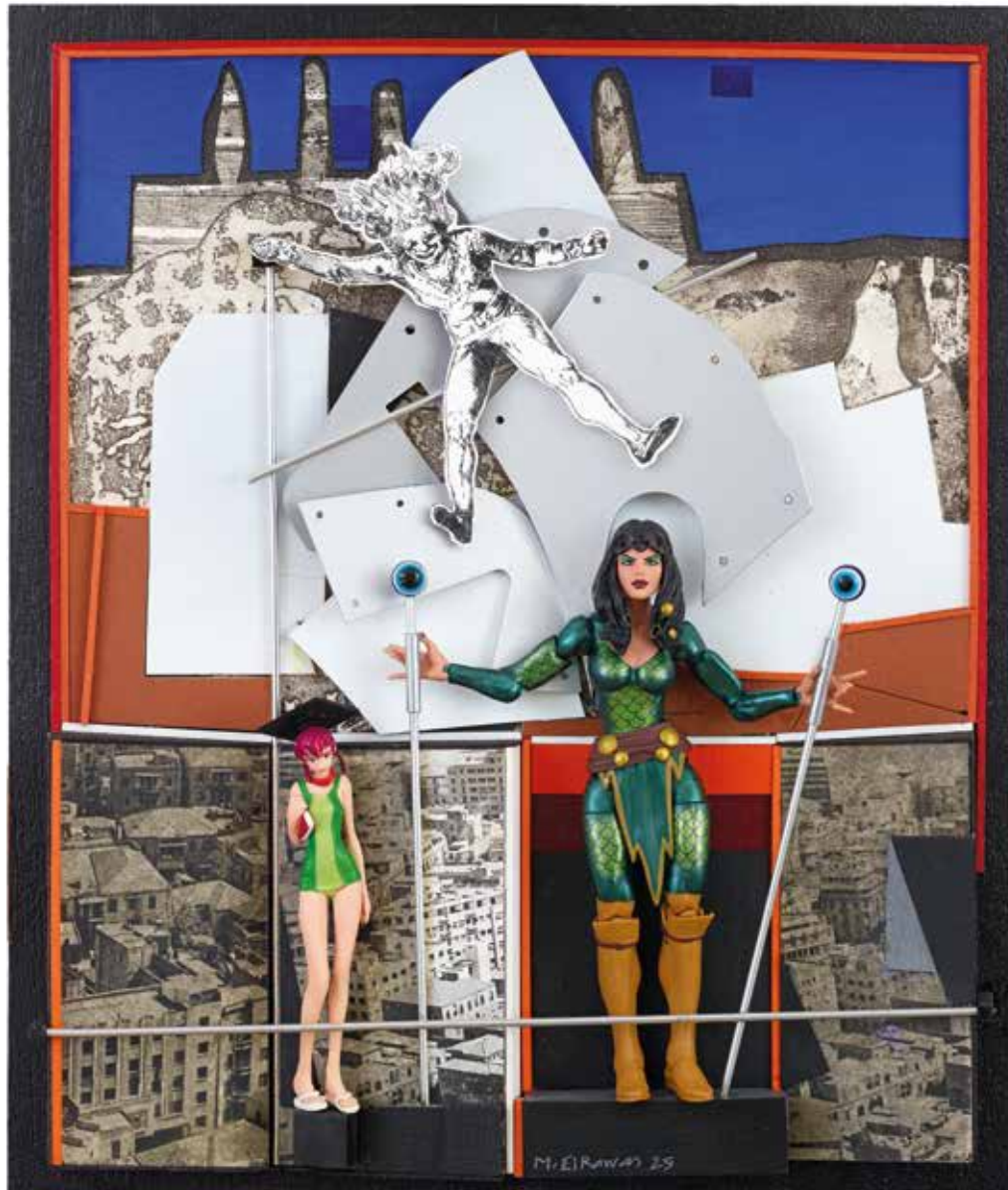
Partially shown photo of a woman's torso by Anna Bodnar.



No 19
 Title **Sisyphus as a Ghostbuster**
 Date 2025
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Oil, acrylic, lithography, wood, aluminum, carborundum, glass bead and ready-made plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Detail of Titian painting, "Sisyphus" 1549.
 Figurine of Lei Fang action figure from the Dead or Alive video game series.



No 20
Title **The Rise and Fall of a City**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Acrylic, etching, giclée prints, wood, aluminum, glass beads and ready-made plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

An etching trial print by myself.
Giclée prints of archival photos of old Beirut.
Giclée prints of an ink drawing I did after Francisco Goya's etching "Subir y Bajar" 1799.
A plastic figurine of LOKI the shapeshifter from Marvel Legends series.
A plastic figurine of Kazami Mizuho figure from the anime series Please Teacher (modified).



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

21
Dance to the Music

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints, ready-made polyresin and plastic figurines on plywood panel

(Not Included in the Exhibition)

SOURCE ELEMENTS

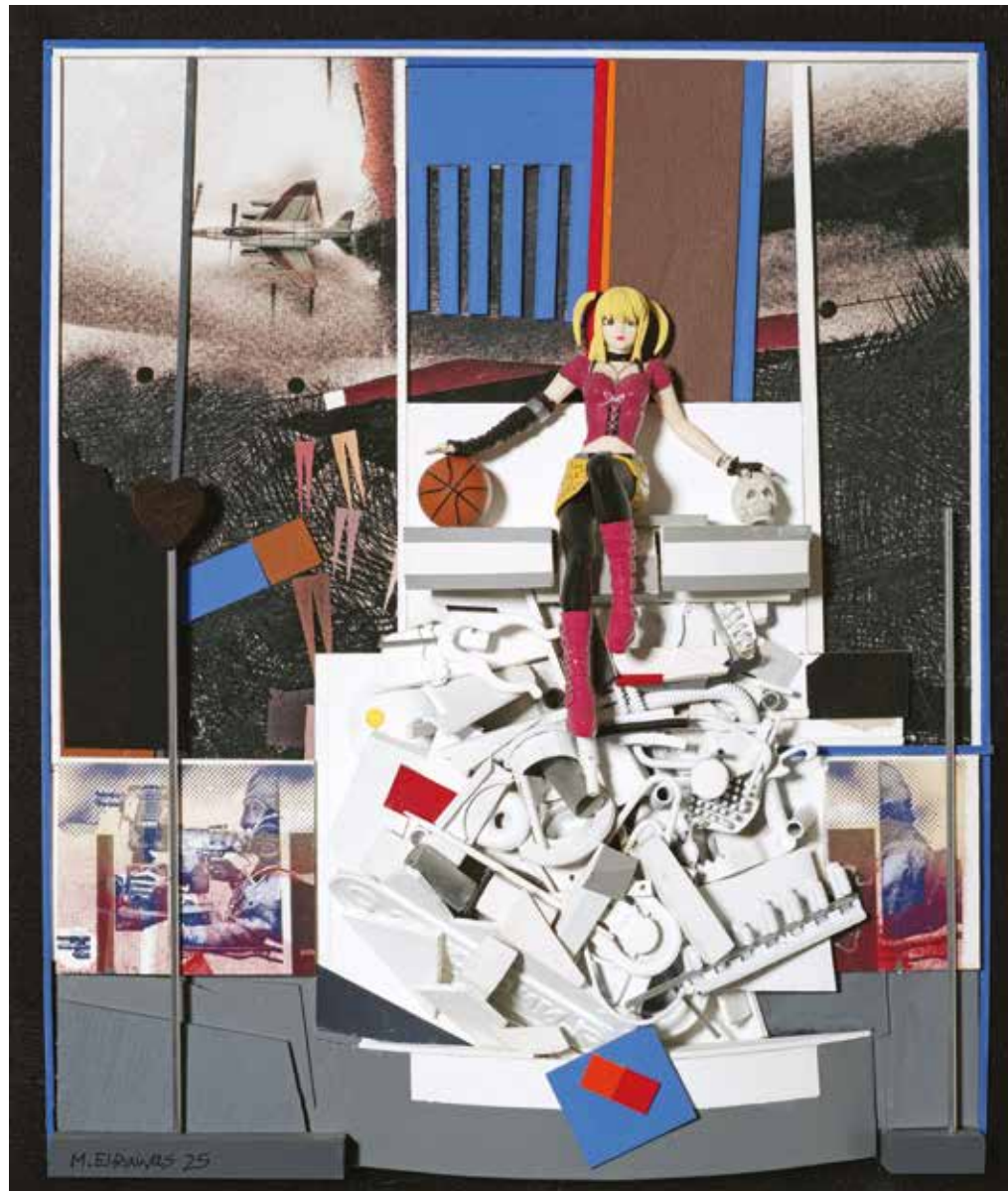
A digital print of "The Orchestra" a chalk pastel that I painted in 1966.

A giclée print of a photo of the dancer Samia Jamal 1924 - 1994.

A giclée print of a photo of Antonia Brico (the first female orchestra conductor) 1902/1989.

A plastic figurine of Anna Williams from the Tekken series.

A polyresin of an angel figurine holding a lyre.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

22

There is Sadness in the Air

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, giclée prints, wood, aluminum and ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Giclée prints detail of my etching and silkscreen print "The dream of wartime" 1980, and a detail from my book cover design "Lebanon, Lebanon" published by Saqi books 2006. Figurine of Misa Amane from Death Note anime series.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

23

A Museum Visit

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, giclée prints, wood, aluminum, terracotta, and ready-made plastic and resin figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

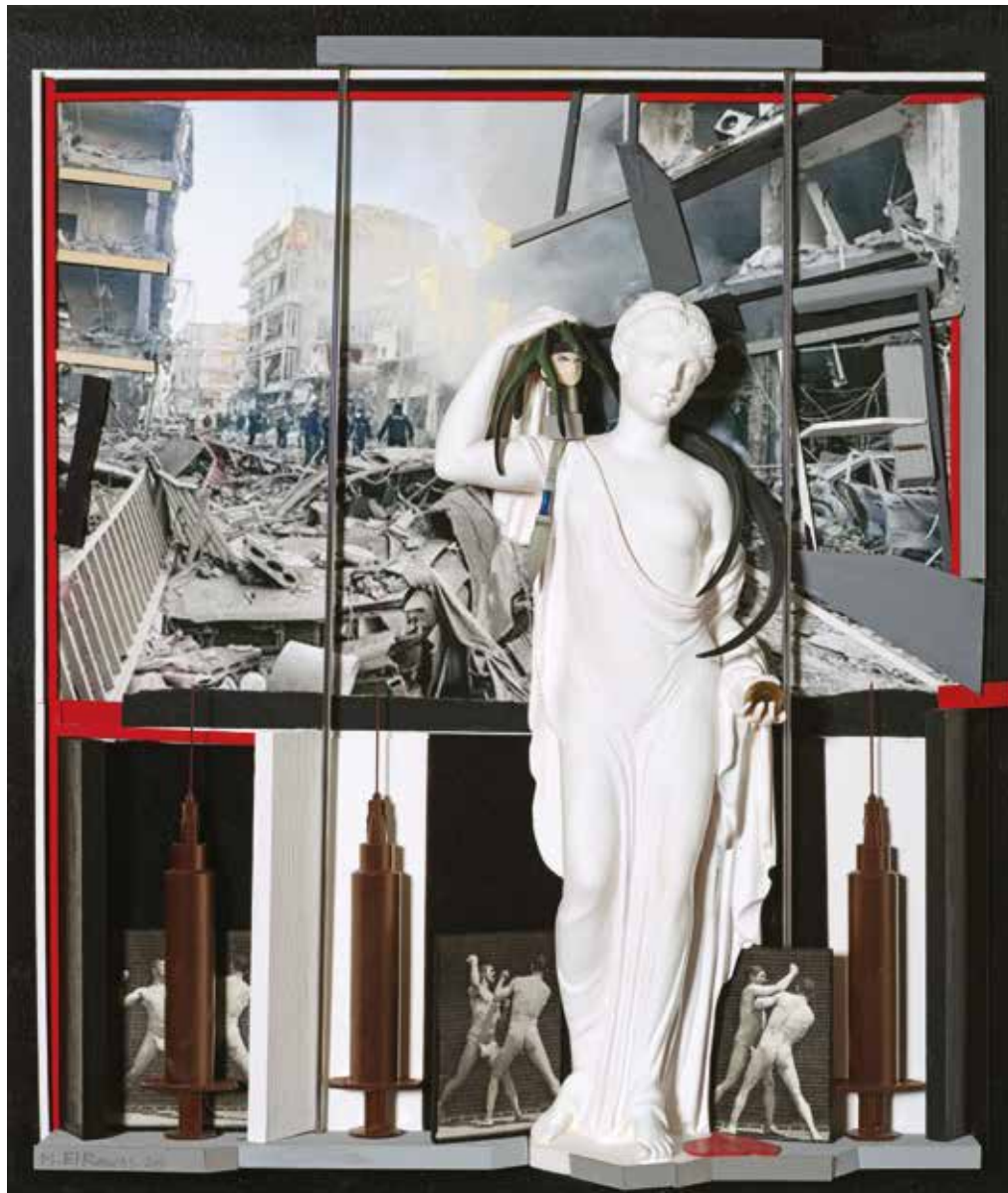
Giclée print of "Pygmalion and Galatea" painting by Jean-Léon Gérôme 1890.

Giclée print of a child painting.

Figurine of Asuka Langley from "Evangelion thrice upon a time".

Resin figurine of the "Venus de Milo" (Detail).

A Syro-Hittite terracotta head statuette.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

24

The Apple of Discord

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

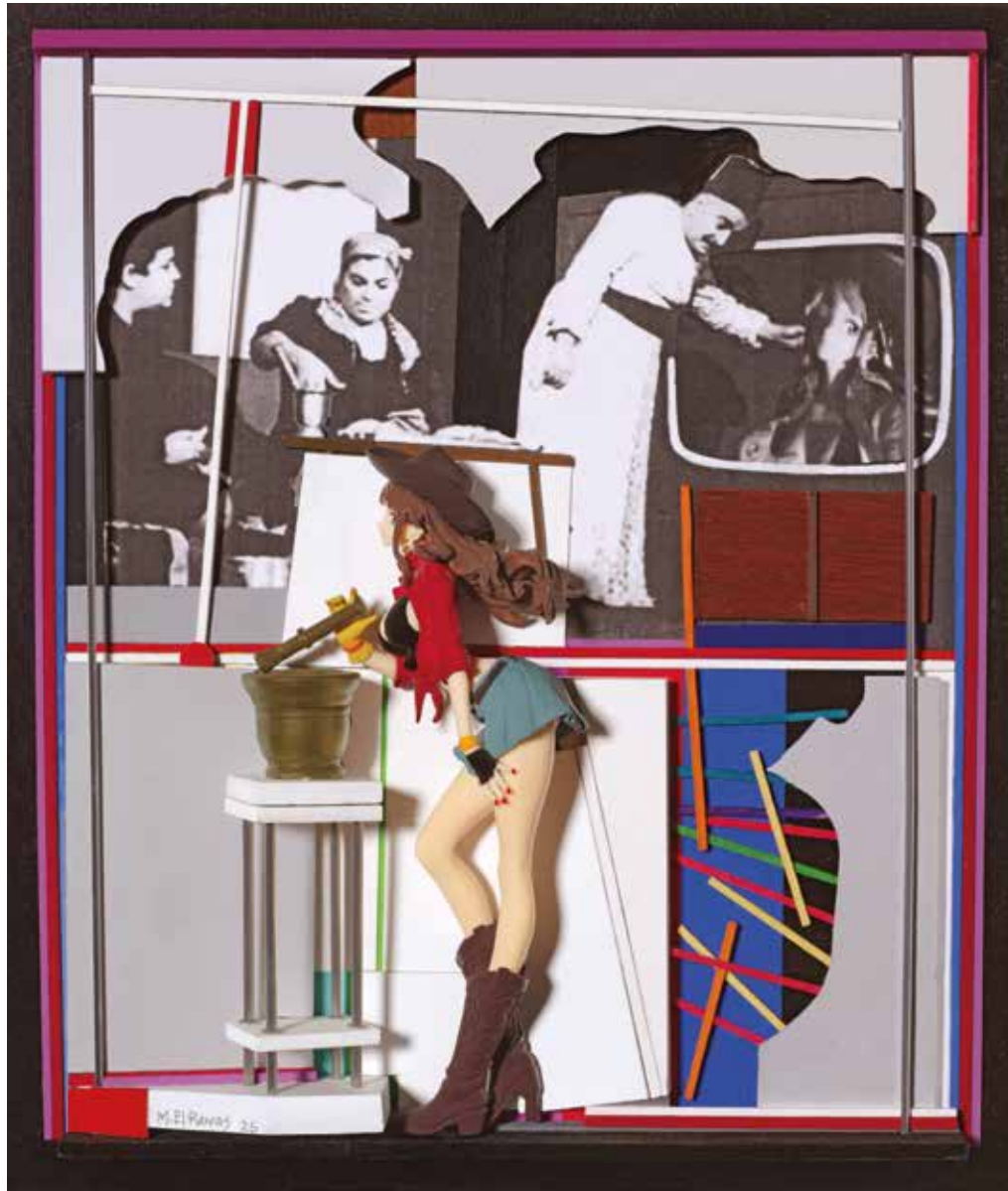
Acrylic, giclée prints, wood, aluminum, syringes and ready-made resin and plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Figurine of Eris the Greek goddess of strife and conflict holding the golden apple of discord.

A giclée print of a photo of the Israeli bombardment of Beirut in 2025.

Giclée prints of two men wrestling from Eadweard Muybridge's book "The Human Figure in Motion" 1955.



No 25
 Title **VR Killed the Video Star**
 Date 2025
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Acrylic, giclée print, wood, aluminum, and ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A giclée print of a photo published in Annahar daily on September 13, 2024 in an article by Israa Hassan about the TV series (Abou Melhem & Em Melhem, Yes3éd Massakoum) on channel 7.

A PVC figurine of Nami from the Anime and Manga series "One Piece".

A custom carved pestle and mortar in wood.

Title inspired by The Buggles' single "Video killed the radio star" 1979.

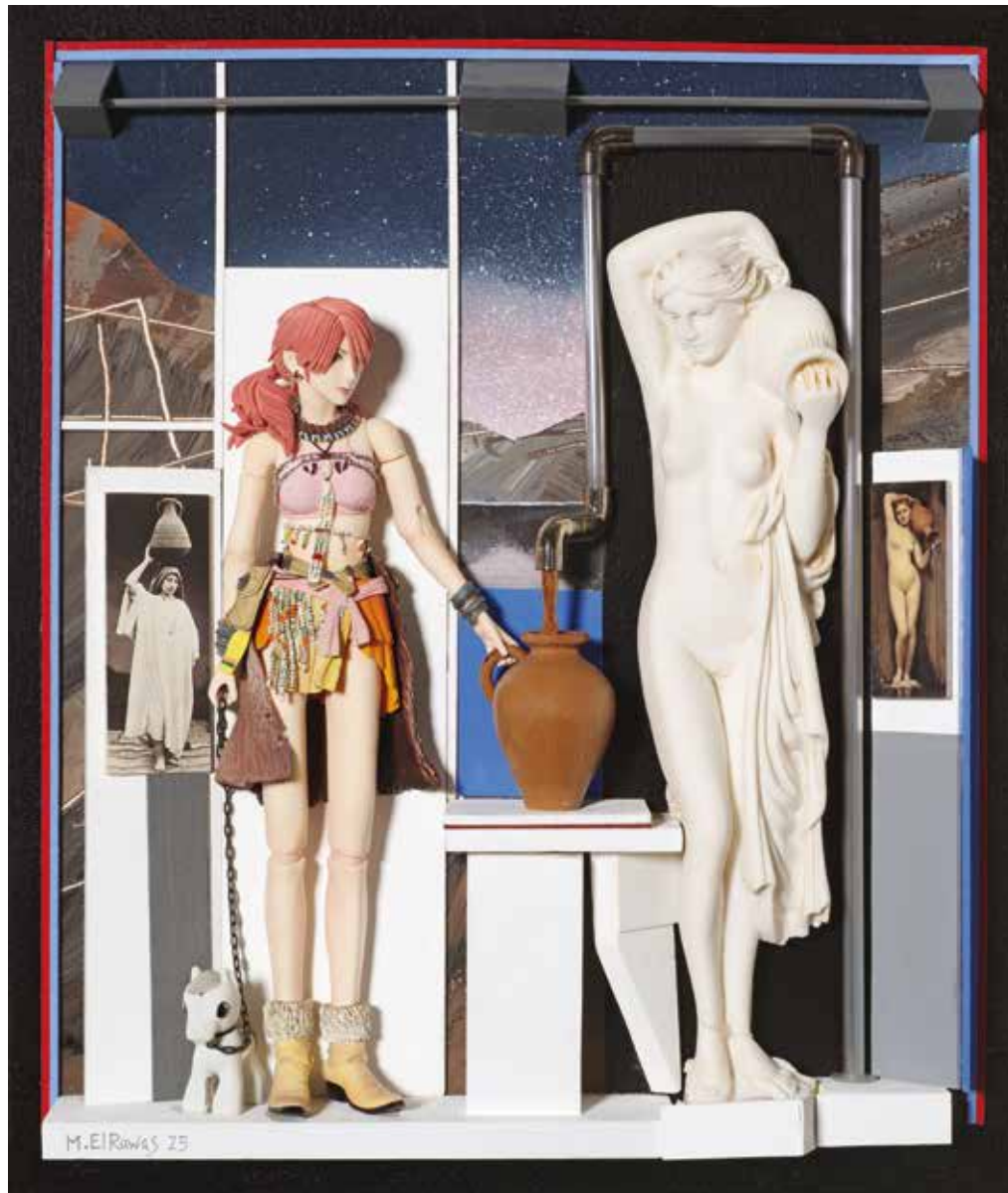


No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

26
An Unusual Client at the Folies Bergère
2025
33 x 28 x 4 cm
Oil, Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée print, ready-made plastic miniature table
utensils and ready-made PVC and ceramic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail of "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère" 1882 painting, by Édouard Manet painted in oil.
Shirley Fenette PVC figurine from the anime series Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion.
Three-horned ram ceramic figurine from Japan often produced mid-century (c. 1950s-1960s).



No
Title
Date

Dimensions
Technique

27

At the Liquid Gold Spring

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum. Giclée prints, metal chain, ready-made alabaster and PVC figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Alabaster figurine of the Greek goddess Aphrodite holding a pitcher.

A PVC figurine of Oerba Dia Vanille from Final Fantasy XIII.

A vintage photo of a Nubian woman carrying a jar by Roger Fenton, 1858.

A photo of "La Source" painting by Ingres, 1856.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

28
Nissa Revane Salvaging a Statue in Palmyra

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints, bronze antic statuette, gold leaf and ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail of Titian painting "The Assumption of the Virgin" circa 1516 - 1518.

Giclée prints of Palmyra ruins and the destruction caused by Isis in 2015 / Queen Zenobia (Queen of the Palmyrene Empire, 3rd Century) by the digital sculptor Jorge Silva Fortes.

Nissa Revane, ready-made plastic figurine from the Magic: The Gathering Universe.

A Greco-Roman bronze antique statuette of Hercules.



No 29
 Title **Kasumi White's Design for her House in Meyrouba**
 Date 2025
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints and ready-made PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A giclée print of Omar Onsi's oil painting "Meyrouba in Autumn" circa 1947 (in color and a detail in black and white).

A ready-made PVC figurine of Kasumi White from the video game Dead or Alive.



No 30
Title **Le Chat Méchant**
Date 2025
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée print, 3D printed figurine and ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail of Balthus' painting "Les enfants" 1937 (repainted in oil).

A 3D printed figurine of Pharaoh cat.

PVC figurine of Tsukiko Tsutsukakushi from the series "Hentai prince and the Stony cat".

A giclée printed composed photo of Catwoman against a sunset view of Ain Al-Mraaysseh corniche.



No
Title
Date

Dimensions
Technique

31

Tension

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, stainless steel, plastic, ready-made metal cast figurine and PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Nancy Callahan figurine from the graphic novel series "Sin City".

Figurine of Discobolus (discus thrower) by the ancient Greek sculptor Myron.

A modified vintage paper weighing manual device.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

32

Femme Fatale

2025

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, etching, giclée prints on canvas and on paper, a felt heart sticker and a ready-made PVC figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

An AI generated image of a couple in a bedroom (painted in oil).

A detail of an old etching proof of mine and giclée print details from my painting "Husband and Wife" 1995.

A giclée print of Jim Dine's etching "The little heart in the landscape" 1991.

A giclée print of Ain Al-Mraayseh night scene.

Femme Fatales: Steampunk Lexi, a ready-made PVC figurine by Diamond Select.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

33
The Republic of Chaos

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints, glass bead and ready-made plastic, terracotta, PVC, stone and plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Giclée prints of: A color photo of the Israeli bombardment of Beirut in 2025 / "Hercules and the Nemean Lion" a woodcut print by the Italian printmaker Ugo da Carpi / Two rough images of a dancing couple.

Ready-made figurine of a cartoon cat made of painted pebbles / A vintage Syro-Hittite terracotta figurine / A PVC figurine of Cupid on an egg / A plastic figurine of a dragon.

Ready-made plastic figurines of the character of Thomson in The Adventures of Tintin comics series / A plastic figurine of the character Calamity Jane from the Lucky Luke comic book series.



No 34
Title **Shuten-dōji Healing Oedipus from his Complex**
Date 2026
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, dried branches, giclée prints and ready-made PVC and plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail of Dominique Ingres' painting "Oedipus explaining the enigma of the Sphinx" 1827 (repainted in oil).
A PVC figurine of the Assassin / Shuten-dōji from the smartphone game Fate/Grand Order.
A ready-made plastic figurine of the character "Mature" from the video game series "The King of Fighters".
A giclée print of a B&W photo from the sequence of stop-motion photography by Eadweard Muybridge 1901.



No 35
 Title **Moonlight Serenade, Interrupted**
 Date 2026
 Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
 Technique Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints, china ink, 3D printed figurine and a ready-made plastic figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

The title is borrowed from Glenn Miller composition "Moonlight Serenade" 1939.

3D printed figurine of Pauline Bonaparte as Venus Victrix.

A giclée print of a detail of Henry Fuseli's drawing "Brunhilde Observing Gunther" 1807.

Ready-made plastic figurine of "Light Lawliet" a male character of the manga series "Death Note".

A giclée print of the Chamberlain standing figure in the open door from Velázquez painting "Las Meninas" 1656.

A little plastic figurine of Barbie singing.



No

Title

Date

Dimensions

Technique

36

Stop! U Can't Touch This

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, sawdust, aluminum, giclée prints and ready-made porcelain and plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

Giclee prints of: A Photo of an Israeli bombardment scene in Beirut 2025, a photo of Hans Bellmer's work "Die Puppe" 1934 and a photo of Tagreed Darghouth's painting depicting a doll 2005.

Ready-made Porcelain doll from The Welsh Porcelain Collection.

Ready-made plastic figurines of Ghibli Anime Princess Mononoke and Mickey Mouse.

The title of this work is borrowed from M.C. Hammer's hit song "U Can't Touch This" 1990.



No
Title
Date

Dimensions
Technique

37

Auguste Rodin Observing the Composite Sculpture of Natasha Romanoff

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, thread, giclée prints and ready-made PVC and plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A PVC figurine of Motoko Kusanji of the Ghost in the Shell manga series, tied in the Shibari Japanese style of rope bondage.

A plastic figurine of The Black Widow Natasha Romanoff from Avengers: Infinity War film.

A giclée print of a detail of my painting "Forging a Bond" 2017.

A giclée print of a photo of Auguste Rodin in his studio by Jules Richard around 1901 and 1906.

A 3D printed figurine of The Thinker statue by Rodin, 1880.



No 38
Title **For the Love of Artemis**
Date 2026
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints, ready-made PVC figurine, 3D printed figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A giclée print detail of my painting "Woman" 1975.
An oil painted detail of Paul Delaroche painting "The Execution of Lady Jane Grey" 1833.
A PVC figurine of Freddy vs Jason Freddy Krueger from the collection Bishoujo of Kotobukiya.
A 3D printed figurine of the classical Greco-Roman goddess Artemis.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

39

Homo sapiens

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, giclée prints, ready-made PVC & metal figurine, 3D printed woman figurine and a ready-made plastic monkey toy on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A giclée print of a detail from a crayon sketch of 3 dancing women I did in the early seventies and a giclée print of a detail from my painting "Forging a Bond" 2017, a giclée print of an image of an artist's impression of a Homo sapiens couple and a giclée print of a photo of a dancing monkey. A ready-made PVC and metal statuette of Leonardo da Vinci's drawing "Vitruvian Man" 1490. A 3D printed figurine of a standing woman. A plastic toy of a monkey.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

40

Trust is a Must

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée print, plastic and metal pieces, plastic ready-made figurine, and 3D printed figure on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A giclée print of a black and white photo of Nikita Boris and Gilles Delellio, photographed by Tina Gutierrez.

A plastic ready-made figurine of Scarlet Witch from Avengers: Infinity War, I replaced the face of Wanda Maximoff in the original figurine by the face of Scarlet Johansson, The Black Widow figurine of the same series.

A 3D printed figurine of an ancient Greek sculpture the disk thrower by the Athenian sculptor, 5th century BC.

A modified ready-made eyelash curler device.

The title of this painting is borrowed from Ian Dury's song "Trust is a Must" 1981.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

41

Mother and Son

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

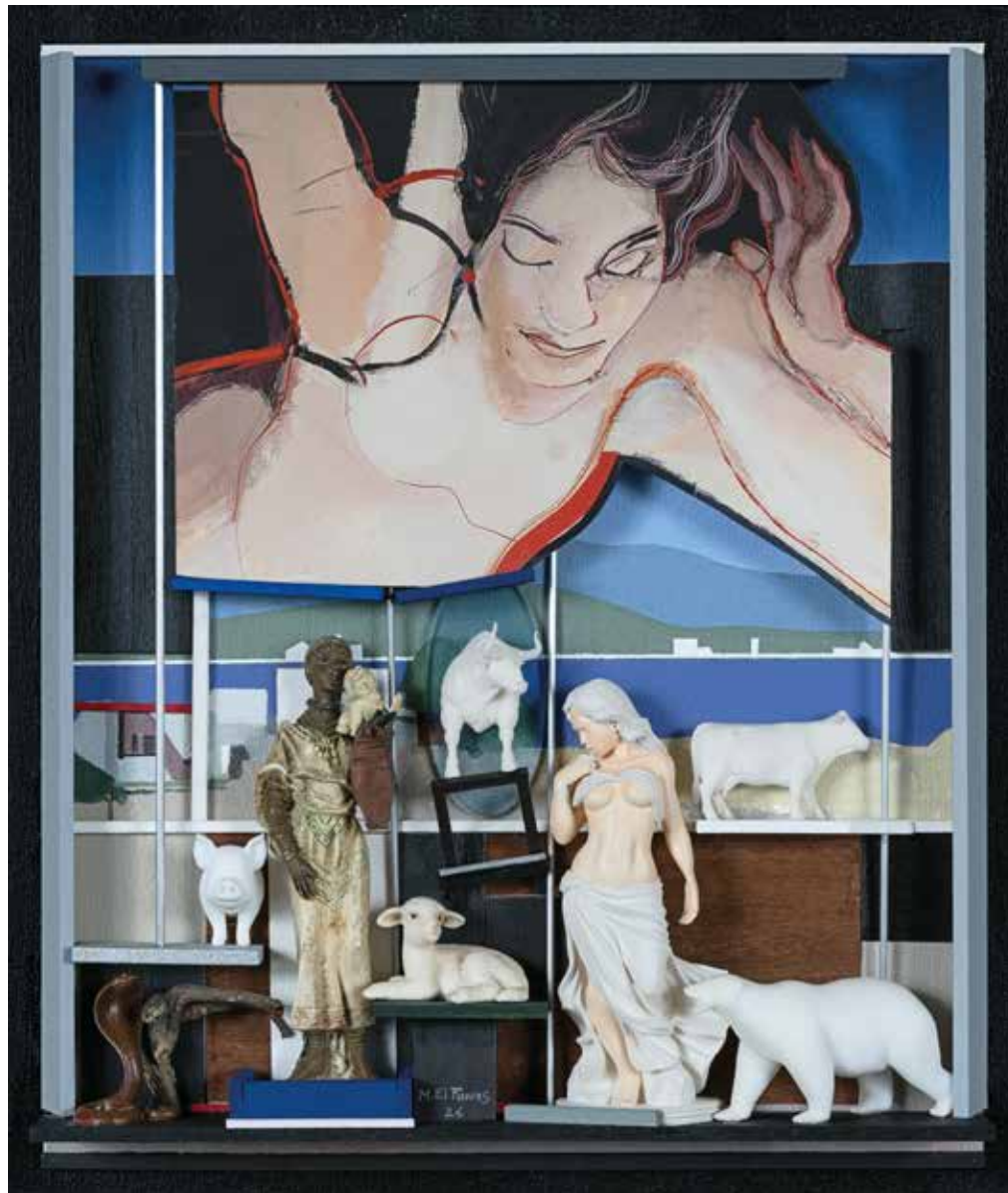
Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, ready-made cloth doll, plastic figurines and plastic sword on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A detail of Jacques-Louis David's painting *The Sabine Women* 1799, repainted in oil.

A cloth doll by Syrian/American fashion designer Aida Dalati. The featured doll was one of 75 created in the Nineties for New York fashion week. Dress textiles Amethyst French cloqué, Sukhneh Tadmur silk antique embroidery and Danish vat dyed lambswool.

A plastic figurine of Kenshiro of the animation series *Fist of the North Star* and a plastic dog figurine.



No 42
Title **Eve Gave Names to All the Animals**
Date 2026
Dimensions 33 x 28 x 4 cm
Technique Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée print and ready-made figurine, 3D printed figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A giclée print of a detail of my painting "Forging a bond" 2017.
A ready-made plastic figurine of traditional African folk art, a sheep and a dog plastic figurines.
3D printed figurines of a mythological goddess.
3D printed figurines of 5 animals.
The title is inspired from Bob Dylan's song "Man gave names to all the animals" 1979.
The five animals in the painting are mentioned in the lyrics of Bob Dylan's song.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

43
The Carnival

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Oil, acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée print, ready-made plastic figurines, 3D printed figurine, a rubber wheel, a ping pong ball on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A photocopy of a detail of Peter Blake's painting done in 1996-1997 after Pietro Longhi's "Exhibition of a Rhinoceros at Venice", 1751.

3D printed figurine of classical Greco-Roman goddess.

A ready-made plastic figurine of the character Light Yagami from Death Note anime series (modified).

A ready-made small figurine of toy hippopotamus and a woven basket with eggs.

A 3D printed figurine of a rooster and a hula hoop.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

44
Eve's Transition from Venus to Earth

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, dry branches, plastic, ready-made PVC and plastic figurines, 3D printed figurine on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A ready-made PVC woman bust figurine "Pure calm" by the Spanish porcelain brand Lladró.

3D printed figurine of another version of "Pure calm" statuettes.

A ready-made plastic anime figurine of the character Rider (Medusa) from the Fate / Stay Night franchise.

A ready-made plastic model of Tintin rocket and a miniature plastic figure of a monkey.



No
Title
Date
Dimensions
Technique

45

This Too Shall Pass

2026

33 x 28 x 4 cm

Acrylic, wood, aluminum, giclée prints, ready-made PVC and plastic figurines on plywood panel

SOURCE ELEMENTS

A miniature sculpture of the Trevi fountain, Rome.

A giclée print of a detail of "Subir y bajar" (to go up and down) etching by Francisco de Goya 1799.

A giclée print of a detail of my painting "Forging a Bond" 2017.

A 3D printed figurine of a seated woman on a chair.

A ready-made PVC figurine of Harley Quinn by DC comics.

Mohammad El Rawas

Born in Beirut in 1951. He studied painting at the Institute of Fine Art of the Lebanese University, and graduated in 1975 with honours, receiving the Lebanese University Scholarship to study abroad. The year of his graduation marked the beginning of the civil war in Lebanon, leading the artist to stop painting and to leave his country for Morocco where he stayed for two years in Rabat and where he resumed painting and taught art at a local school.

He returned to Beirut in 1979 to hold his first solo show before joining the Slade School of Fine Art in London in the same year.

Upon his return to Beirut in 1981 with a Masters Degree in Printmaking, he started his academic career that lasted for 27 years at the Lebanese University, Institute of fine art and the American University of Beirut.

Now he lives and works in Beirut.

Solo Exhibitions

2019	Saleh Barakat Gallery, Beirut
2016	Agjal Art Gallery, Beirut
2012	Art Sawa Gallery DIFC, Dubai
2010	Art Sawa Gallery, Dubai
2007	Aida Cherfan Fine Art, Beirut
2004	Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Beirut
2000	Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Beirut
1997	Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Beirut
1995	Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Beirut
1991	Platform Gallery, Beirut
1990	Kufa Gallery, London
1979	Rencontre Art Gallery, Beirut

Selected Group Exhibitions

2026	Art Dubai, UAE
2025	Print & Printmaking, Dalloul Art Foundation, Beirut , Sep 5 2024 - Feb 12 2025
2025	Art Abu Dhabi
2023	Art Dubai, UAE
2022	Buy Me A Tree, Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Beirut, Dec 7 - Jan 7 2023
2022	Hiya, Saleh Barakat Gallery, Beirut, March 4 - May 7
2021	Lumieres du Liban, The Museum of the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, Sep 17 - Dec 31
2014	Art 14, London, UK
2013	Abu Dhabi Art Fair, UAE
2013	Art 13, London, UK
2012	Overture, Miami Art Fair, USA
2012	Abu Dhabi Art Fair, UAE
2012	Le Corps Découvert, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France
2012	Thirty-first Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut

- 2011 Rebirth, Lebanon 21st Century Contemporary Art, Beirut Exhibition Art Center, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2011 Menasart Beirut Art Fair, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2010 Convergence, New Art from Lebanon, The American University Museum, Katzen Arts Center, Washington DC, USA
- 2009 The Road To Peace, Painting in times of war. 1975-1991 Beirut Art Center, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2009 "Virtuellement Reel" Reflection, in contemporary painting and photography. Alice Mogabgab Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2009 Contemporary Lebanese Artists, ESCWA 35th Anniversary, UNESCO Palace, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2009 The Responsive Hand, Drawings 1, Maqam Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2008 Art Paris Abu Dhabi, Modern and Contemporary Art Fair, UAE
- 2007 Exhibition of Lebanese Art, Algeria, Cultural Capital of the Arab World, Algeria
- 2007 Twenty-fourth Alexandria Biennale of the Mediterranean Countries. Alexandria, Egypt. (Prize of the Biennale)
- 2006 Word into Art, Artists of the Modern Middle East. The British Museum, London, UK
- 2004 Twenty-fifth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 2003 Twenty-fourth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 2003 First Beijing International Art Biennale, China
- 2002 Tokyo Mini Print Biennale, Japan
- 2002 Southern Graphic Council Conference, New Orleans, USA
- 2000 93e Salon de la Société Internationale des Beaux-Arts (SIBA), La Mairie de Paris, France
- 1998 Twenty-second Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1998 Nine International Graphic Artists, Trondheim Art Center, Trondheim, Norway
- 1998-2000 Art Beyond Borders, UNESCO and TIMOTCA (The International Museum of Twentieth Century Art)
- UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France, 1998
 - Mitra Municipal Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal, 1998
 - Las Vegas Art Museum, USA, 2000
- 1997 Twenty-first Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1997 Nineteenth International Independent Exhibition of Prints, Kanagawa, Japan
- 1997 Eighth Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- 1997 Krakow International Print Triennale, Poland
- 1996 Contemporary Lebanese Artists, Sharjah Art Museum, UAE
- 1996 Twentieth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1995 Eighteenth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1995 Second Qarin Cultural Festival, Kuwait
- 1994 Seventeenth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1993 Sixteenth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1993 Eighteenth Alexandria Biennale, Egypt
- 1993 & 96 First and Second Egyptian International Print Triennale, Cairo, Egypt
- 1993 First International Print Biennale, Maastricht, Holland
- 1992 & 95 Tenth and Eleventh Norwegian International Print Triennale, Fredrikstad, Norway
- 1991-92 Fifteenth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1989 Liban, Le Regard des Peintres, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France
- 1989 Lebanon, The Artist's View, Concourse Gallery, Barbican Center, London, UK
- 1989 Ninth Norwegian International Print Triennale, Fredrikstad, Norway (Honourable Mention)
- 1988-89 Fourteenth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1988 Présence de la Gravure, Centre d'Art Vivant de la Ville de Tunis, Tunisia
- 1988 Contemporary Lebanese Artists, Kufa Gallery, London, UK
- 1987 Thirteenth Salon d'Automne, Surssock Museum, Beirut
- 1986 Contemporary Arab Art, The Mall Galleries, London, UK

- 1986 Twelfth Salon d'Automne, Sursock Museum, Beirut
 1985 Arab Art Biennale of Kuwait
 1985 Eleventh International Independent Exhibition of Prints, Kanagawa, Japan
 1985 Cabo Frio International Print Biennale, Brazil (Prize of Honor)
 1984 The First Contemporary Arab Art Exhibition, Centre d'Art Vivant de la Ville de Tunis, Tunisia (Third Prize)
 1984 & 86 Eighth and Ninth British International Print Biennale, Bradford, UK
 1983 World Print Four, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, USA
 1982 & 84 Sixth and Seventh Norwegian International Print Biennale, Fredrikstad, Norway
 1983 Contemporary Arab Graphics and Works on Paper, Graffiti Gallery, London, UK
 1982 Tenth Salon d'Automne, Sursock Museum, Beirut
 1982 Contemporary Arab Graphics, Graffiti Gallery, London, UK
 1981 Slade Folio Show, Greenwich Theatre Art Gallery, London, UK
 1981 West Surrey College of Art & Design, postgraduate students from Royal College of Art, Slade School of Fine Art and the Royal Academy Schools
 1980 Third World Biennale of Graphic Art, Iraqi Cultural Center, London, UK (Honourable Mention)
 1974 Ninth Salon d'Automne, Sursock Museum, Beirut

Public Collections

Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
 The National Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad, Iraq
 Centre d'Art Vivant de la Ville de Tunis, Tunisia
 The British Museum, London, UK
 Trondheim Kunstmuseum, Norway
 The International Museum of Twentieth Century Art Collection (TIMOTCA)
 Mathaf, Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar
 Sharjah Museum of Contemporary Arab Art, UAE
 American University of Beirut Art Center Collection, Lebanon
 Darat al-Funun, Amman, Jordan

