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# Ayyam Gallery, London challenges perceptions of Arabic art

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The first exhibition to grace the newly opened Ayyam Gallery in London is "Shooting the Cloud" by acclaimed Lebanese artist Nadim Karam.

The show comprises a series of new paintings, rich in colour and presenting a playful, almost satirical, perception of love and war.

Karam's multi-disciplinary approach incorporates painting, drawing, sculpture and writing. Fusing various cultural influences, Karam's works transcend social, political and national borders.

The artists says: "I grew up in Lebanon. I experienced war then, I'm experiencing it even now; it's all around us in the region.

"Through the work I'm doing here, you can feel in the paintings the absurdity of war and there is this continuity of optimism that we should give to all people around us.

"It shows also in the glitter that I have used and the fresh colours, to take us beyond what is presented there and to find joy and life."

Founded in Damascus in 2006, the Ayyam Gallery sought to nurture Syria's dynamic contemporary art scene.

The decision to open in London reflects the Gallery's mission to challenge the popular perception of Middle Eastern art and aims at an aesthetic with global resonance.

The gallery was co-founded by Khaled Samawi, he says: "(The)art and culture coming out of the Middle East is a very good story and that's why people are interested in it because the Middle East is a great place and what's happening there right now, well it's violence I think will lead hopefully to a better place that gets what it deserves, a good life."

More than 700 people attended the gallery's first day, a testament to the interest in Middle Eastern art.

Nadim Karam, "Shooting the Cloud" runs until March 9.

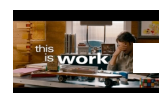
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