

THE KURIOS

Art from elsewhere.



Issue 4

November/December 2015

A family affair

Syrian artist Mohannad Orabi explores the psychology of memory in his latest body of work, *Family Portrait*, showcased in the following pages. The artist builds on previous themes in this work. He has long been interested in how children develop a sense of self while also becoming aware of the world around them. Orabi's interest in popular imagery is also once again evident in these paintings, which appear to allude to family photographs or, in some cases, passport-style photos.

Rendered in black and white, the *Family Portrait* paintings evoke the formal figuration of traditional portraiture. Family members sit in close formal poses, referencing studio photography. Orabi fled Syria with the start of the uprising, and the conflict that followed. In the work that followed, he became increasingly realist, and began using real-life photos as his source imagery including Facebook profile photos and other imagery showing Syrians that were under siege, in exile or displaced.

Orabi was born in Damascus in 1977, and currently lives and works in Dubai. He won first prize in The Syrian National Young Artists Exhibition in 2006. He was listed among Foreign Policy's '100 Leading Global Thinkers' in 2014.



Mohannad Orabi, Untitled from the Family Portrait series, 2014, Mixed media on canvas. Photo courtesy of Ayyam Gallery, Dubai.



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