

[home >> latest news](#)

LATEST NEWS

ArtintheCity Speaks to Artist Kais Salman

Ayyam Gallery Dubai DIFC is currently showing 'Material World' until January 15 2011, the solo exhibition of Syrian artist Kais Salman. Known for his bold, expressionist explorations of human subjects, Salman is currently gaining the attention of regional art critics and collectors as he challenges notions of beauty and comments on our ever-growing dependence on materialism. ArtintheCity got the chance to talk to Salman about his new body of work.



ArtintheCity: Firstly can you tell our readers a little bit about your background as an artist?

Kais Salman: As an artist, I give a lot of importance to the human thought process, which I feel should always be treated with significance when painting. The art work made in this recent series mostly represents the typical Syrian / Arabic culture. I think that as an artist to have such a talent it is a gift from God.

AITC: The figures which populate your work are somewhat grotesque, what is it that leads you to depict these figures so unflatteringly?

KS: I usually define beauty in a different manner; beauty is quite a philosophical notion in this universe. My paintings do not show ugliness, they present psychological portraits that reveal their subjects' inner feelings.

AITC: The ugliness of these female characters is balanced with a fluid treatment of paint which is quite beautiful in itself. Do you see your work as a mixture of beauty and the grotesque? And if so, what is it that interests you about this relationship between the two.

KS: The paintings show that I bring out the best in women, which makes them beautiful since there is always an attraction no matter what she looks like. This combination of beauty and grotesqueness is both visual and psychological.

AITC: The title of this most recent body of work 'Material World', following on from your highly acclaimed 'Fashion Series', points to a fascination with today's commodity culture. Can you explain your fascination with the materialism of contemporary society? In your work I see a critique of this, but rather than coming across as sanctimonious I feel there is a lot of humour in these figures, with their exaggerated eyes and sexualised figures.

KS: The current "Material World" series highlights the contradictions in our lives which have become a dilemma. Mankind should use their mind rather than their emotions, since most people right now are only seeking wealth and possession. We have now also been split between both the East and the West which makes it strange.

The contradictions shown in the paintings comment on what we have become and what we have been doing to ourselves and our lives: how we love and have increasing desire for more wealth.

In the paintings the large eyes show astonishment and moreover let the viewers read these women from their perspective and see varying emotions such as innocence or fear. The message that I am trying to convey to the viewers is a humorous yet poignant critique of how Mankind currently lives in such a materialistic fashion.

AITC: There is currently a young generation of Syrian artists who are transforming regional painting; where do you see yourself fitting within this wider context of Syria's art scene, and what do you hope the future brings to the art world there?

KS: Contemporary Syrian art is transforming itself through referencing modern visual language that people can understand and relate to easily. In my personal role as a contemporary artist, I would like to share with people my thoughts and feelings through painting. I think this gives my work more integrity than some Middle Eastern artists who I feel are 'cashing in' with their art, and only making work for financial gain.

[Back to top](#)

LATEST NEWS

[ArtintheCity Speaks to Artist Kais Salman](#)

[Plot for A Biennial Artist and Participant List Announced](#)

[The National's Gallery - The Emirati Artists' Resource & Register](#)

[Get to Grips With the Dubai International Film Festival 2010](#)

ARCHIVE

[January 09](#)

[February 09](#)

[March 09](#)

[April 09](#)

[May 09](#)

[June 09](#)

[July 09](#)

[August 09](#)

[September 09](#)

[October 09](#)

[November 09](#)

[December 09](#)

