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English

The Art of Being Nude: Shafic Abboud Exhibit Explores the Erotic and Sensual

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on Nov 14, 2014
(<https://www.beirut.com/l/31622>) By **Christina Fakhry**

TRENDING

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The "Nudes" exhibition at Agial Art Gallery showcases different interpretations of the nude body from late artist Shafic Abboud's oeuvre. Abboud, who passed away in 2004, is considered one of the most influential figures of Lebanese and Arab contemporary art in the 20th century. The posthumous exhibition, curated by Saleh Barakat in collaboration with the Abboud Estate, does not only highlight an essential theme in Abboud's artistic journey but also opens the door for new insights and interpretations of his work.

"The drawings -- never displayed to the public before -- allow you to specify areas where abstract and figurative converge through pencil, pastel and ink lines," Abboud's daughter Christine told Beirut.com.



Shafic Abboud was born in the Mhaidseh region near Bikfaya in 1926. He studied at the Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA) before moving to Paris in 1947. And although he spent most of his life in France, his oriental roots were ever-present in his work. He died in Paris a decade ago, leaving a cunning legacy of paintings and poems behind him.

The exhibition, which consists of 35 artworks, is more concerned with the innovative quality of Abboud's work rather than the diversity of the bodies themselves. "He wondered in his intimate notes about the moment when the woman becomes pictorially fertile, I think he has always been driven by this issue and we tried in our own way to show how he responded to it," Christine explained.

Another striking feature of the exhibition is Abboud's subtle integration of nudity and chastity in his paintings. Abstract or evident, his nude figurations drive him away from the obscene. "His

paintings are extremely erotic and sensual, but with no anatomical details. It is the curve [of a line] or the shade of a color that creates trouble,” Christine said. “For him, the nude [body] could not be a plastic object.”



The artist employed various techniques in his work including acrylic, ink and mixed media. “Technical research is so intimately related to his work... in showing his mastery of different media, we wanted to express how inspired the artist was; free in his art but also a great technician and alchemist.”

When asked about her personal take on the exhibition, Christine described “Nudes” as “a source of discovery.” “The questions I asked myself in order to select from [my father’s] paintings have changed my view of some of the abstract work. For example, I can now discern a typology of

bodies that I wasn't previously aware of," she told Beirut.com.



Nudity was a recurrent theme in Abboud's work, but never limited to a single composition or style. From a simple initial sketch, each painting would evolve to deliver a complex, provocative approach to the human body. The unifying energy of Abboud's artistry is delivered in his unique perception of the nude body, brilliantly channeled through this exhibition.

"Nudes" remains on exhibit at Agial Art Gallery through November 14. It coincides with the

publication of a monograph on Abboud by Swiss publishing house Skira.



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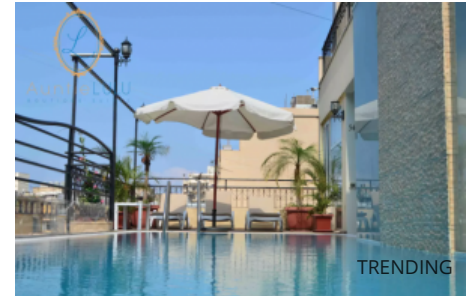
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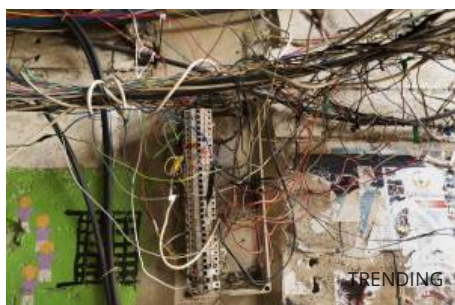
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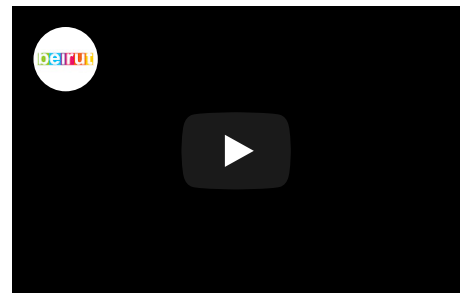
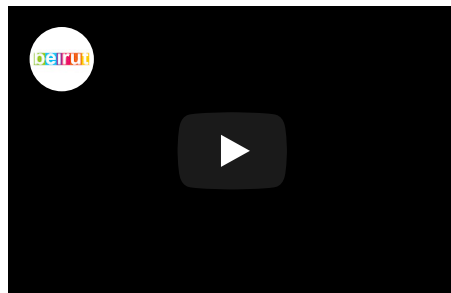
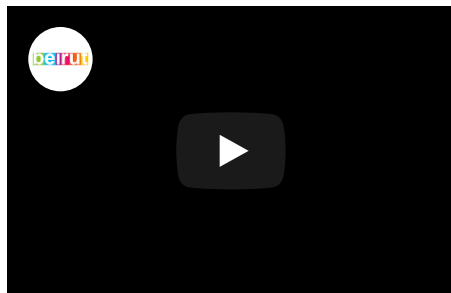


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