

GALLERY 2

El Beit El Kabir Sherin Guirguis

November 2 – December 10, 2016

The Third Line is pleased to present *El Beit El Kabir*, Sherin Guirguis' second solo show in Dubai. Sherin's new body of work, built in three parts over the past two years, incorporates a combination of sculptural forms, paintings and works on paper. Shown together for the first time, they continue an interplay between personal and public histories, more specifically taking cues from her Egyptian heritage and her experience as an Egyptian-American immigrant. Framed through the lens of her diasporic identity, the exhibition recreates the last vestiges of a connection with her homeland



Sherin Guirguis, *Untitled (Hexagon)*, 2015, Mixed Media on hand-cut paper, 101.6 x 117 x 5 cm

The series is anchored in three concepts – site, text and lost history. Here the *site* is the last architectural connection with her birthplace; the *text* is a Rumi poem that talks about placelessness/tracelessness that embodies the immigrant/nomadic experience; and the *lost history* is the narrative of many immigrants that leave behind their home, heritage and familiar faces, and have to live in a permanent liminal space of otherness.

In 2007, the local government in Luxor, Egypt demolished the Guirguis family house to widen the road, in an effort to mitigate the growth in the city's population and to accommodate the growing tourist industry there. For Sherin, who left Egypt more than two decades ago,

this severed the last remaining ties to her home and, hence, her homeland. What exists now is a synthesis of memories and photographs – the ethereal and the tangible – and she uses these as the basis of her new work.

Included in the exhibition are several works on paper where she moves between fervid gestural painting and a highly controlled manipulation of the surface. The formal contrast between the painted marks and structured geometry, the act of removal (cutting) and addition (thick, opaque paints), and the way the “darts” cut through the compositions with sharpness and speed alludes to moments of transition and transformation. Moments where dissonance and harmony exist simultaneously.

While the shape of each piece is inspired from sacred geometry that is prevalent in many ancient cultures of the East, Sherin lends a layered nuance through intricately cutting into the paper, and producing delicate latticework reminiscent of the *mashrabiya*. This reference to a very specific architectural detailing nods towards the lines of division drawn between the public and private spaces; the works titled *Beitana*, literally meaning *our home* in Arabic, seem to be providing a glimpse in to this lost space.

Accompanying the works on paper are a small sculptural bodies that recreate the *Ollal*, a traditional water vessel that is found in older households in the south of Egypt. Winged, geometric patterns, seen in her earlier large-scale sculptures, are fashioned by laser cutting

PO Box 72036, Dubai, UAE

T +971 4 341 1367

F +971 4 341 1369

www.thethirdline.com

aluminum panels that are then mounted on wooden bases. These vessels, unlike their very nature, do not have an opening, belying their very purpose for containing a liquid. Hence they lose all utilitarian functions and adopt only ornamental ones. The forms take on a more architectural character, monumentalizing these fragments from Sherin's heritage. Yet they appear as ghosts of the objects they reference – the white makes the base disappear; the florescence above creates a hovering effect – suspended between presence and absence.

Through *El Beit El Kabir*, Sherin continues to explore what it means to identify with an idea of belonging and identity – both which bring them an imagined sense of affiliation, attachment and displacement.

*I am not of the East, nor of the West, nor of the land, nor of the sea;
I am not of Nature's mint, nor of the circling heavens.
I am not of earth, nor of water, nor of air, nor of fire;
I am not of the empyrean, nor of the dust, nor of existence, nor of entity.
I am not of India, nor of China, nor of Bulghar, nor of Saqsin;
I am not of the kingdom of 'Iraqaïn, nor of the country of Khurasan.
I am not of this world, nor of the next, nor of Paradise, nor of Hell;
I am not of Adam, nor of Eve, nor of Eden and Rizwan.
My place is the Placeless, my trace is the Traceless;
'Tis neither body nor soul, for I belong to the soul of the Beloved.
I have put duality away, I have seen that the two worlds are one;
One I seek, One I know, One I see, One I call.
- Rumi*

About Sherin Guirguis

Sherin Guirguis (b. Egypt, 1974) received her BA from the College of Creative Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1997 and her MFA from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 2001.

Sherin's solo projects include *Qasr El Shouq* at LAXART, Los Angeles, CA, USA. Selected Group exhibitions include *We Must Risk Delight*, La Biennale di Venezia, Italy; *The Avant-Garde Collection*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA, USA; *Color Dialogue*, Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, UAE; *Southwestnet: Sherin Guirguis and Carrie Marill*, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Arizona, USA; *Quadruple Consciousness* at Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA, USA; *Under The Knife* at the Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA, USA; *Las Vegas Diaspora* at the Las Vegas Art Museum and the Laguna Beach Art Museum, USA; *Quickening* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tuscan, AZ, USA and *The Dreams Stuff is Made Of*, Art Frankfurt, Germany. Sherin has participated in a series of public programs in conjunction with the 11th Cairo Biennale in 2008. In 2012, she was awarded several prestigious grants and fellowships including the California Community Foundation Visual Artist Fellowship, the Artists' Resources for Completion Grant and the Investing in Artists Grant from the Center for Cultural Innovation.

Sherin's work has been acquired by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA; the Houston Museum of Fine Art, Houston, TX and the Las Vegas Museum of Contemporary Art, NV.

Sherin lives and works in Los Angeles, USA.

GALLERY 1

Laleh Khorramian, *Saturns Neckless*

November 2 – December 10, 2016

About The Third Line

The Third Line is a Dubai-based art gallery that represents contemporary Middle Eastern artists locally, regionally and internationally. The Third Line also hosts non-profit, alternative programs to increase interest and dialogue in the region.

The Third Line 's book wing *Works on Paper* publishes books by associated artists from the region. Books published to date include *Presence* by photographer Lamyia Gargash (2008), *In Absentia* by Tarek Al-Ghoussein (2009), *Cosmic Geometry*, an extensive monograph on Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarman, edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Karen Marta (2011), and the self-titled treatise *Huda Lutfi* about the artist's Cairo based practice.

Represented artists include: Abbas Akhavan, Ala Ebtakar, Amir H. Fallah, Arwa Abouon, Babak Golkar, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Golnaz Fathi, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Laleh Khorramian, Lamyia Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarman, Pouran Jinchi, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sara Naim, Sherin Guirguis, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al-Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, Youssef Nabil and Zineb Sedira.

Media Contact

Saira Ansari, Director of Communications

saira@thethirdline.com | +9714 3411 367

press@thethirdline.com