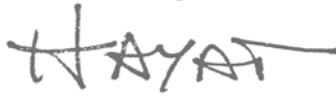


PASSION (s)

by



at

The logo for GAIA GALLERY features the word "GAIA" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "GALLERY" is written in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font, enclosed within a solid black rectangular box.

Istanbul, Opening Nov 13th, 2015
in association with Mark Hachem Gallery Paris/Beirut

Bodies, skulls, icons, faces, war, death, the world and love... Has image become a mythical monster whose cavern is being explored by Yves Hayat? Mixing inspirations of renowned classical painters with effective advertising codes of the modern world, the art of representation is at the center of his work as a subject but also as food for thought. Representations of icons or advertising images are numerically diverted and mixed together to report the image-inary surrounding us. This union and playing with today's ever changing codes of representation - swallowing and digesting the past to better spit it out - bring to the surface all the perversion of images in an obvious demonstration leaving the viewer to his own reflection, and opens a societal critique.

(...) Today's society corrupts, erases what exceeds and empties the content's container. Only the first plan would be left, if Hayat wasn't adding depth by bringing a new perspective. He follows the heart beat of the world with acuteness, multiple transparencies and by using his own tools of representation.

Despite the fact that he has worked a lot on symbols, symbolism, the representation of reality and its imaginary world, Hayat closes the eyes of his *Tired icons* to indicate their weariness, the loss of their meaning and true reality beyond their overexposure in the media. The artist is not in the evocation or symbolism anymore, his art is meaningful. In *Mythification* or *Maculate Conception*, he tattoos images evoking war and violence on the bodies of Christs and martyrs... These works have three levels of depth: religious, erotic and social or historical. They collide with one another, provoke the senses and from this mix of genres and shapes emerges the insight of a man and even more so, our own. This is when his work doesn't belong to him anymore. (Julien Camy, 2013)



« In *Mythification*, I have chosen to photograph a simple naked body, a model in flesh, as large as life and following the great tradition of Painting. These images are in Christ-like positions, etched in our collective memory like the Flagellation, Crucifixion, Deposition, Pieta, Entombment, and Resurrection. Leaving aside this pretentious environment, I tried to recover the essence and the humility of a solitary Christ / Man, who is crushed, lacerated and put to death by our daily worldwide violence. Facing up to a viewer made apathetic by the ceaseless flow of information and images, my reasoning try to zoom deep inside the suffering of a man surrounded by his dark universe, where the lighting seems to come from blood and fire, and lights of hope comes from angry graffiti.» (Yves Hayat)



In the text *“Rewriting of the Body in the heart of the Myth of the digital image”*, the art critic Viana Conti says about his work : Yves Hayat is real navigator in a virtual time, an Olympic swimmer in an ocean of pixel, a daring intruder in the history of Painting, like the Masters of the *Quattrocento*, of the *Cinquecento*, of the Mannerism, of the Renaissance, the Baroque, the Classic, the Neo-classic until the Contemporary. He lives in the spatial and temporal ubiquity through this Network, which is an inexhaustible and omnipresent reserve of images.

Having recourse to the most current technologies, Yves Hayat does not cease confronting, in his synchronous and provocative summary, these icons of the past with those of the present: History of art, Science, the religion, the psychoanalysis, the policy, the even subliminal media of

communication, the cinema and eroticism. He has an undeniable capacity to identify in the universe of the pictures and the signs, these illusory presences which haunted the collective imaginary of a mass society (...) and to assign a physical place to an immaterial procession of ghosts that come from the memory and the consciousness.

(...) With this radical handling of images the artist tells us, on the one hand the media of technology communication deteriorates our sensory perceptions and reality, and on the other hand can also reinvent a critical model for writing and reading of these signs. All these battlefields or craniums, prisons, tanks or satellite charts, military targets, watchtowers or national flags ... extracted from the Internet or from magazines, commercials and television, are later on printed on the skin of *Ecce Homo*. From these images, consumed by the media, he recreates for us a new reality.

Yves Hayat reshapes our old schema, and works out mechanisms that create a definite structure, helping us to re-signify the reality of the sign, investing it with provocation, humor and disenchantment. He forces us to face reality, which becomes more and more *telereality*, with a democracy about to become a *telecracy*, as Paul Virilio states it. Yves Hayat seems to wonder, and ask to the "regardeurs" of his work, if the signs take life in contact with the body (*semiology*) or if the body is erased in an irreversible way under the signs (*semiosis*). He does not select only the historical icons in the collective memory, but transforms radically the mode of appearance of an icon, as if it was a subject extracted from the religious ground and transferred in the everyday life, as a sacred subject transferred into the profane: his artwork should be read in this space.



The *Masks* series, is inspired by the book « Mémoires des enfants cachés 39-45 » (Memories of the hidden children), a collection of testimonies by Jewish women, staged and interpreted by Sophie Sergio and Isabelle Bondiau. Hayat produced a video where the faces of the two actresses are tattooed with images of violence resulting from the current conflicts around the world.

In this video, Hayat chose twenty "face-screens", eyes shot, tightly framed, identical, interchangeable and linear to say that if life continues, tragedy as well. In the end, it is one single face which shows through, the face of a silent woman confronting her own inner ghosts or perhaps the face of her daughter willing to share and understand.



A whole universe of signs inhabits this very intimate and feminine triangle which Hayat names with humour “**Bermuda triangle**”. This mysterious place where it is said that planes and ships are trapped in a fatal triangulation. With an acute metaphorical sense, Hayat applies it to the sex of the woman, this figure pointing down also symbolizing water. Should one make a parallel between the danger attached to the legend of this geographical space and the one that tradition has for long attributed to the feminine gender? He conceived this work like a stylistic composition, taking this feminine triangle also poetically called Mount of Venus, in a critical stroll in the heart of our society, confronting politics, religion, morals.



“**Parfum de Révolte**”. The Arab Spring is certainly a “popular” topic for contemporary artists to reflect upon in their work. It's highly relevant, it's in the news and many art institutions and galleries are eager to seize the moment and through these artists' visions present their own

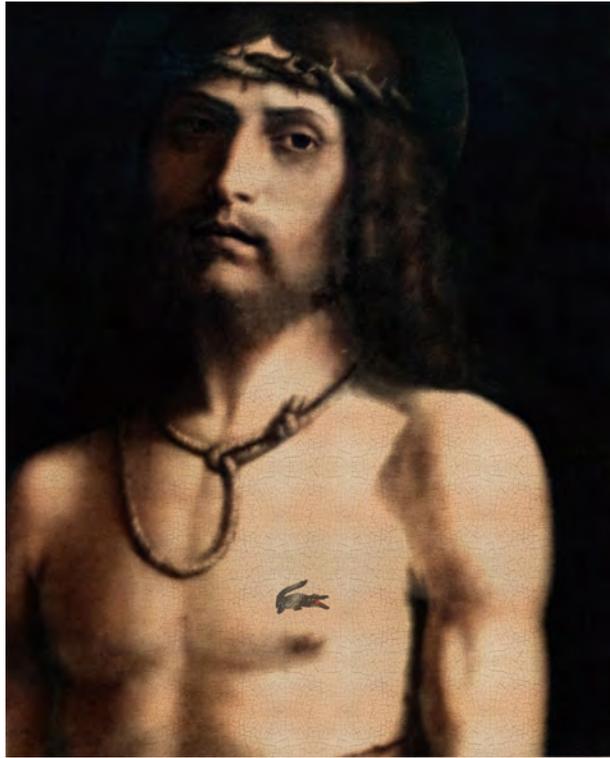
mirror to the global political unrest.

In the recent years many artists of Arab descent have chosen quite a few unique means for expressing their thoughts and feelings about the current events in the Middle East. Some chose graphic literal forms and language, and some found much more subtle yet no less powerful tools to express themselves. Such was the body of work by a French artist of Egyptian descent Yves Hayat.

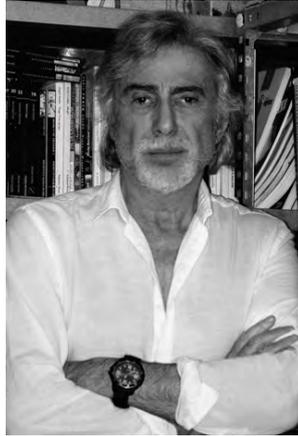
Hayat, an established artist best known for his photographic works, chose an iconic image recognizable the world over. But the true meaning of these layered transparent film prints, encased in clear plexiglass boxes, becomes apparent only if you give each image the careful consideration it deserves. Suddenly this object of beauty and desire assumes a far more sinister personality. Juxtaposed within one object the outlined images of the sculpted Chanel N. 5 bottles and the words Baghdad, Kabul, Homs, Istanbul, Lhassa in their clean, unobstructed, elegant fonts appear menacing. The artist's intention is to draw our collective attention to the West's underlying intention for launching wars, consumerization of the conflict zones and the imposition of a capitalist system, a Western culture of heightened consumerism onto cultures foreign to it. With elegance and subtlety Hayat points to these various forms of colonization using instantly recognizable imagery and allowing the viewer to complete the narrative without a single superfluous word. *(Kristina Nazarevskaia © galleryIntell 2013)*



(...) Enclosed in plexiglass boxes, « **Les Icônes sont fatiguées** » (the Icons are tired), are the sleepy faces of celebrities : Dali and Frida Kahlo, Che Guevara and Marilyn Monroe, Jim Morrison and Mao, Callas and Picasso. Those faces are marked by the deterioration of an old and burnt film. Yves Hayat, real navigator in a virtual time, doesn't hesitate to close the eyes of those ones he represents. This universe of consumed icons, finally shows in a mirror, through the system of advertising and fashion. Those celebrities receive the reflection of the same seductive look returned to Narcisse by the pond which reflected, sentencing him to solitude, and tends to exclude dialogue with the otherness. (Viana Conti (Hayat_nel Mito digitale dell'immagine per una Riscrittura del Corpo - Translated from Italian)



« **Sacré Tattoo** ». For the natives, tattooing marked the stages of their lives and their social status. Then the sailors tattooed pin ups, Popeyes, dragons ... dreaming of their abandoned life. Kafka had already imagined engraving the verdict of one condemned on his skin. In fact, an American senator, in the Nineties, proposed to mark the patients of AIDS with a Positive HIV tattoo. Faced with the loss of rituals, tattooing is used today to affirm a social or spiritual attachment to a group. One of those groups is the Brand names (Nike, Calvin Klein, Louis Vuitton, Apple.), venerated as a divinity so much so that few people dare to refuse to adhere to it. As it was the case for the belief of God until the 18th century and even today in the Moslem countries. One could imagine Jesus Christ or Virgin Mary dreaming one moment to adhere to this exclusive group, a little like the end of the Scorsese's film "The last Temptation of Christ", where Jesus on the cross dreamed, for one moment, finishing his life with Maria Magdalena and the children that they would have had together. The opposition between the technological matter as plexiglass and the crack and the gilding of Master works is there to accentuate the « Mise en abîme ». These tattoos of brands, like a divine print, reinvent this moment when Sacred gives in to Profane, and approaches the human being.



YVES HAYAT

Originally from Egypt, Yves Hayat first developed his aesthetic sensibilities living in a country enriched with history and cultural diversity. Art was his first love. In 1956, after the Egyptian Revolution, Hayat left for France. For five years, he studied Art at the *Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs* of Nice.

In 1973, Hayat chooses to go into advertising and marketing, which led him to open his own agency. The creative trade captivated Hayat. His experience in the field also enabled him to discover and learn to use new forms of technology, and master his techniques. In the 1990s, equipped with those skills, he decided to return to art, rediscovering the old masters, photographing people, the streets, society products, museum paintings and recuperating magazine and web images, which are carefully classified. Hayat is a perfect example of his time: an open mind on society, its streets, its media, its internet. While running his successful advertising business, he starts to show his artwork in galleries. Soon, his art practice took precedence over his profession, which he ended in 2002.

Although Yves Hayat does not consider himself a painter, photographer, or designer, he is widely known as a "*plasticien*," an untranslatable French term that refers to an artist who puts the meaning of his work to the fore and uses all the various media and techniques to express it.

Yves Hayat explains : *"I admit that I'm more interest in manipulating reality than in recording it. My artwork between photography, installation and "Figuration Narrative" proposes visions where theatricalization is a part of the project. I am a total visual consumer: I film, download, scan, retouch... as the director of a new reality. Using superimpositions, shifts, misappropriations, I confront past and present, beauty and horror, luxury and violence, indifference and fanaticism. Through a questioning about the art/ politic/ media relations, I try to conceive a critical art work where the attraction for the culture of media, cinema and advertising shows through. Using modern techniques, my work proposes a report of what our history and our society have thought, generated, transformed, destroyed... while always keeping in mind that when the work of Art creates unrest, it evacuates the common place".*

As François Birembaux wrote, YVES HAYAT belongs to that category of remarkable artists who have something to say and who says it with such talent that they stamp their impression on the art of our time. His works, modern, contemporary, are however the product of a deeply classical culture. Thanks to all the techniques which belong to our time: photography, superimposition of images, etc.... he creates an original work rooted in the human cultural heritage but which, through the strength of its subjects, conveys every dimension of our era.

Through a strictly artistic approach, Yves Hayat expresses a philosophical thought, not in complicated words but by speaking to our senses, in a clear, untortured way. He presents the essence of our human condition and of our time, bringing out its distinctive characteristics and its violence (...)

The originality of Hayat's works lies in the amalgam of artistic perception with the images from a communication and information based society. The titles he gives to his works (*Business must go on, Parfum de Révolte, the Icons are Tired, The Shadow of your smile ...*), utterly high jacked advertising slogans, have the effect of giving a meaning to the pollution of our everyday lives. They reveal our identity and display our own brand. Not a celebration of barbarity, but rather the fascination created by human ambivalence (...).

EXHIBITIONS :

Since 2006, Yves Hayat exhibited for solo shows in:

Paris, Vienna, Cologne, Geneva, Brussels, Greece, Kuwait, Beirut, Monaco, Cannes, London & New York,

and in institutions such as:

Paris City Hall, Venice (Palazzo Bonvicini, Biennale 2013 and Vittraria Glass+A Museum in 2014-2015), Alliance Française of Montevideo, Docks of Marseilles, Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna, Klosterneuburg Monastery Vienna,...

He was also presented in several international art Fairs : Scope Basel, Art Beirut, Art Miami New York, ArtFair Cologne (solo show), Art Southampton-New York, Contemporary Istanbul, Art Stage Singapore, Scope Miami, Art 14 London, India Art Fair, FotoFever Paris (solo show), ...

All details about the artist on : www.hayat-art.com

PRESS BOOK

http://issuu.com/hayatartist/docs/hayat_mark_hachem_gallery_press_boo

CATALOGUE 2014

http://issuu.com/hayatartist/docs/catalogue_hayat_galerie_mark_hachem

SHOWS

http://issuu.com/hayatartist/docs/yves_hayat_shows_2001-2015