

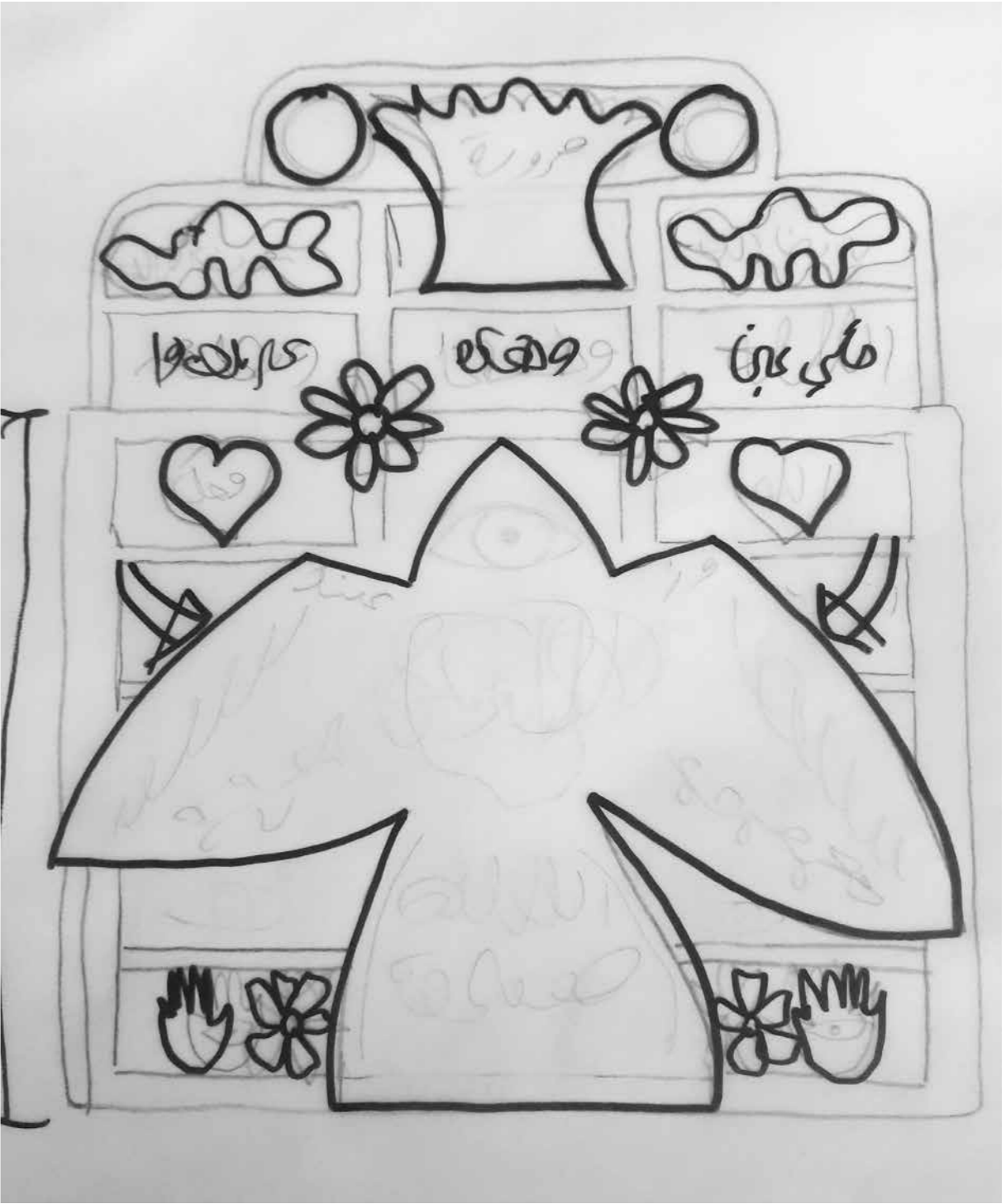


Katya Traboulsi

“Rej3a ya mama”

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“Rej3a ya mama”





Mother country, mother Identity,
mother family, mother traditions,
mother love, mother nurturing,
mother earth, mother comfort,
mother home. Ill be back safe.



The visuals on our trucks rear back doors belong to the Lebanese heritage and the identity of the drivers. This identity is translated by a decorative design or visual often symmetrical, like the human body. In the middle, the core is mainly dedicated to god willing and for the evil eye. It represents one of the most common visuals on these trucks, a five thousand year old concept, that has been adopted by many religions and cultures to protect main possessions and loved ones.

Throughout our dramatic Lebanese history, old and recent, the clash between invasions, dependencies, travels and migrations has created a national feeling of anxiety around the stigma that our children will never return. However, if this anxiety holds us hostage, it also represents a national hope, sometime the only remaining breath that we hold.

Within the context of this tumultuous history of war and departure, the Re-j3a ya mama statement is a reminder of the impatient wait for the return of our children, those who left their country, their homes and their roots... and their return to mother, family and homeland.

The departure trucks that criss-cross the length and breadth of Lebanon seem to seek a divine protection: ma cha'a Allah. In the hands of God, the trucks implore god and family reda Allah oua reda al walidain, and protect themselves from the envious al 3ein al hasoud toubla bil 3ama.

My question is, when does belief in religion begin and where does superstition end.



The trucks are the blood that run in the veins of many countries.

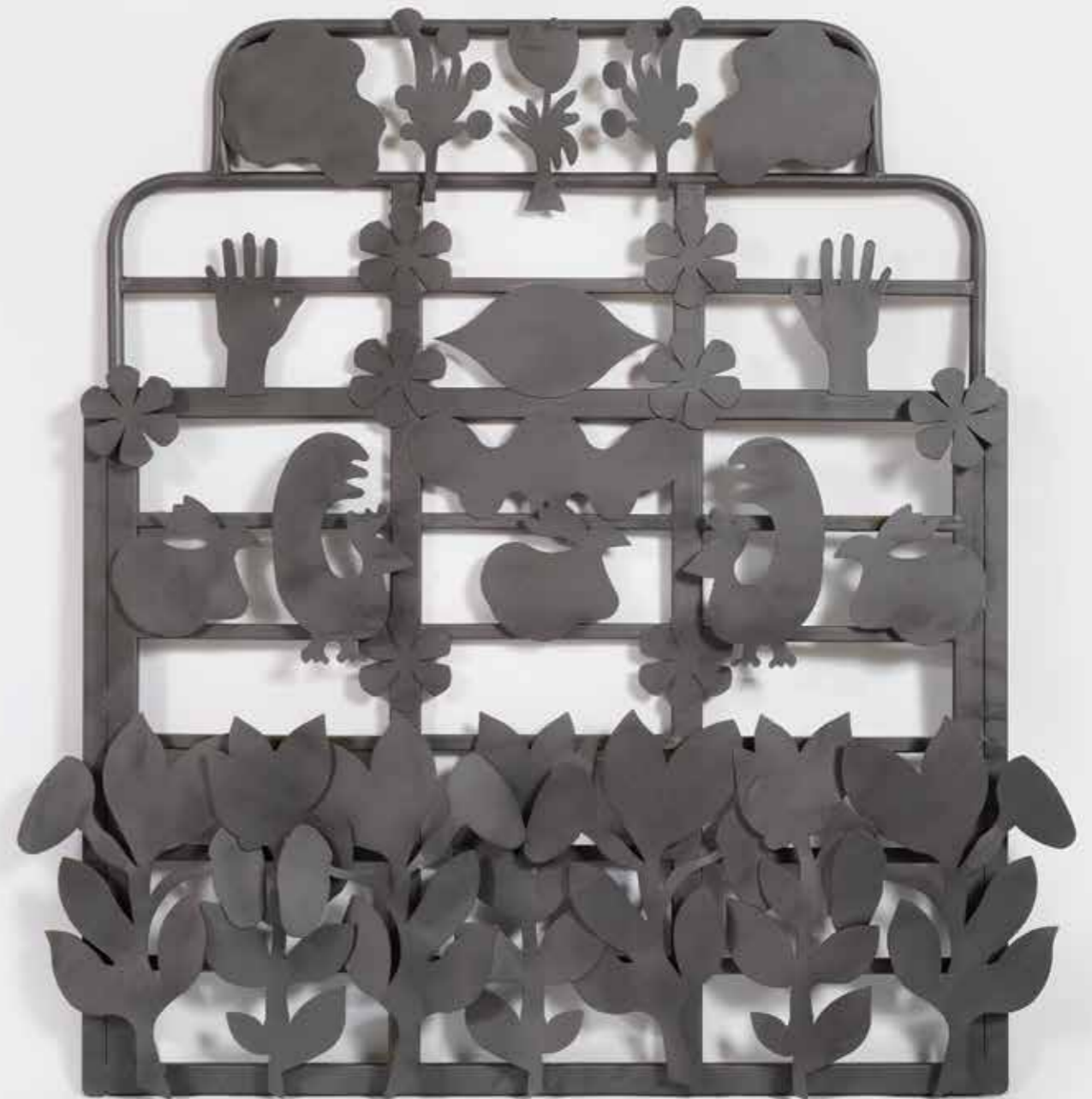
On each back rear truck door or tailgate, messages circulate;

advice, menace, a love word, a prayer, an amulet against the evil eye.

These words are for the driver like a teaching, a personal expression, an escape, a cry...

For us and for a brief moment in a traffic jam,

we connect, smile, learn and think.



Wouroud

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x150cm / Year: 2022-2023

Mama, Ummi

Each truck tells a story, a personal one, a story of a life, beliefs, love. Behind these trucks are lives like ours but sealed by a door that closes on the transported goods to be delivered.

For a brief moment, when we come driving behind a truck, in front of its rear back door, we will connect with the driver's story, his beliefs, his fears, his love, his wisdom, his success... Digging deeper we can identify a culture, a region that is proper to him...

Suddenly, the trucks take on a human dimension, a personality and a presence. Dressed and painted with the identity of their owner, the trucks become one, and a communication between them and us settles down through the images, the symbols and the lyrics marking our memory. The visuals of every truck become the pride of its conductor, like a tattoo drawn on a vehicle.

This project is an homage to the city of Tripoli and to their tireless truck drivers whose work connects our country, our regions and our lives without distinction for religious or political difference.



Ma Chifna Chi

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 140x160cm / Year: 2022-2023

The Trucks

My story with the departure trucks starts with an everyday fascination, a curiosity about the people behind the endless design and messages on these truck's rear doors. When did this practice start, who painted the first truck? Where do these sentences come from, who wrote them and why? I always thought that religion and superstition are a pair. Where does one begin and the other end?

Observation, curiosity, then inspiration and ideas. The artworks in this exhibition are an appropriation of traditional creations. These inspired creations transmit an almost identical visual into an artistic object that transport street and truck arts into our homes. Sharing remains part of our identity as the wisdom in the sentences, amulets of good luck, evil eye protection and decorative visuals are a part of our everyday life.

After months of research and attempts to execute my trucks reproduction idea into artworks with original flavor, I found the solution in Tripoli. The adventure started when I met Ali (abu al damar), a nickname for a famous hero in Tripoli, and his co-workers. When I showed them my designs, he replied: no problem. And my nickname became (emm al damar)... My desire to collaborate with the traditional creators of the truck's rear door designs and to share their knowledge with my art, became a project.

I had the immense pleasure to share a wonderful collaboration with the artisans of these trucks, working for a year and a half on a project that led us to the delivery of newly transformed visuals of their traditional work.

These designed doors and tailgates that close on life goods were an opening door for me on a new life and artistic experience.

I have the impression that the truck owner has a need to liberate his spirit and tell his story.

He will attract our view with bright colors and design to convict the evil eye and the jealousy on him.

Attraction is a must to destroy the evil eye.

The conductor fights the bad luck, he promised his mother to return safely. As if he was going to war and promised not to die.

They are like knights on a mission.



After war what comes after war

by Amy Todman

I.

After war what comes after war
turns out to be war. Return.

Did we come to a peace about war
I don't think

--

It is a breath between happened and next
but don't misunderstand

the breath might be the most
important moment.

To be in place
breathing home – what remains

a sacrifice or a giving in.
A simple succumbing.

II.

These artworks are hard to get behind.
One is turned to the wall, a scrappier,
note-taking sketch.
A dirty face. Blue.

The clean enamel painting-in-process
faces the wall.
It's still wet and Katya turns
to her paint table.

I love the back that faces
front – the feeling of the back
– but I can love the front too.

--

Decorative and symbolic she said.
It is hard to get through.

The art is in the
trucks the
sharing
her intentions

III.

Return is not inevitable.

Superstitions exist
to safeguard hope.

How to travel
how to leave.

Routes follow veins
or blood does.

The route of the body.

Follow.

Maybe it's this kind of return.

To go is provisional
almost prescribed

the body's route.

IV.

A hardness
is not hard.

Surfaces spark.

I am looking behind them

but they deflect, reflect.

If they are identity it is
a question that I will not ask.

Is identity like this – a surface –
a shine I would wash off the idea
of identity from.

--

There is something that
I don't want to say.

There are shapes embedded
within these works
she says

always the tree of life.

V.

What has happened
and what will happen.

Breath.

Return.

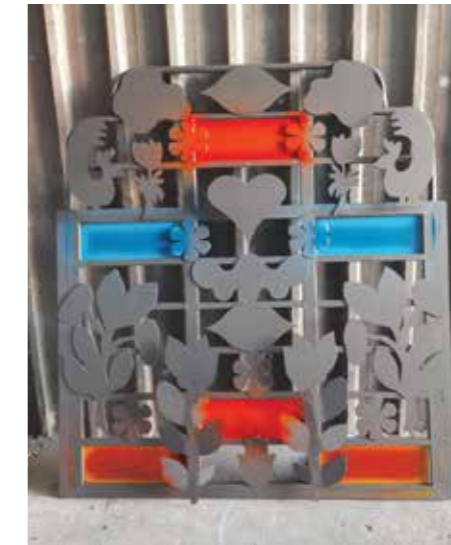
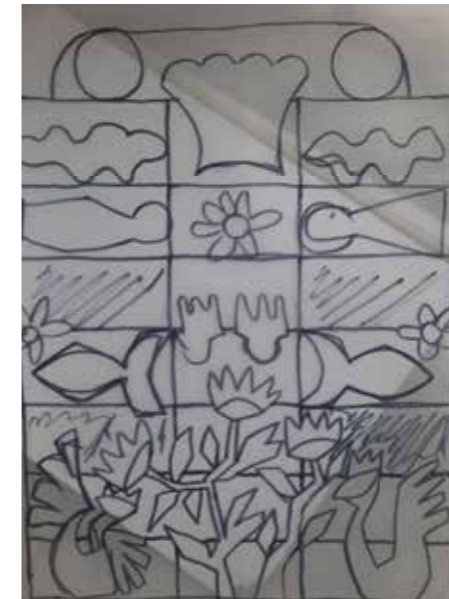
The shapes, her and not her
you and not you
her and not her.

You see what
what we need.

Repeat.

A simple succumbing.

Return.



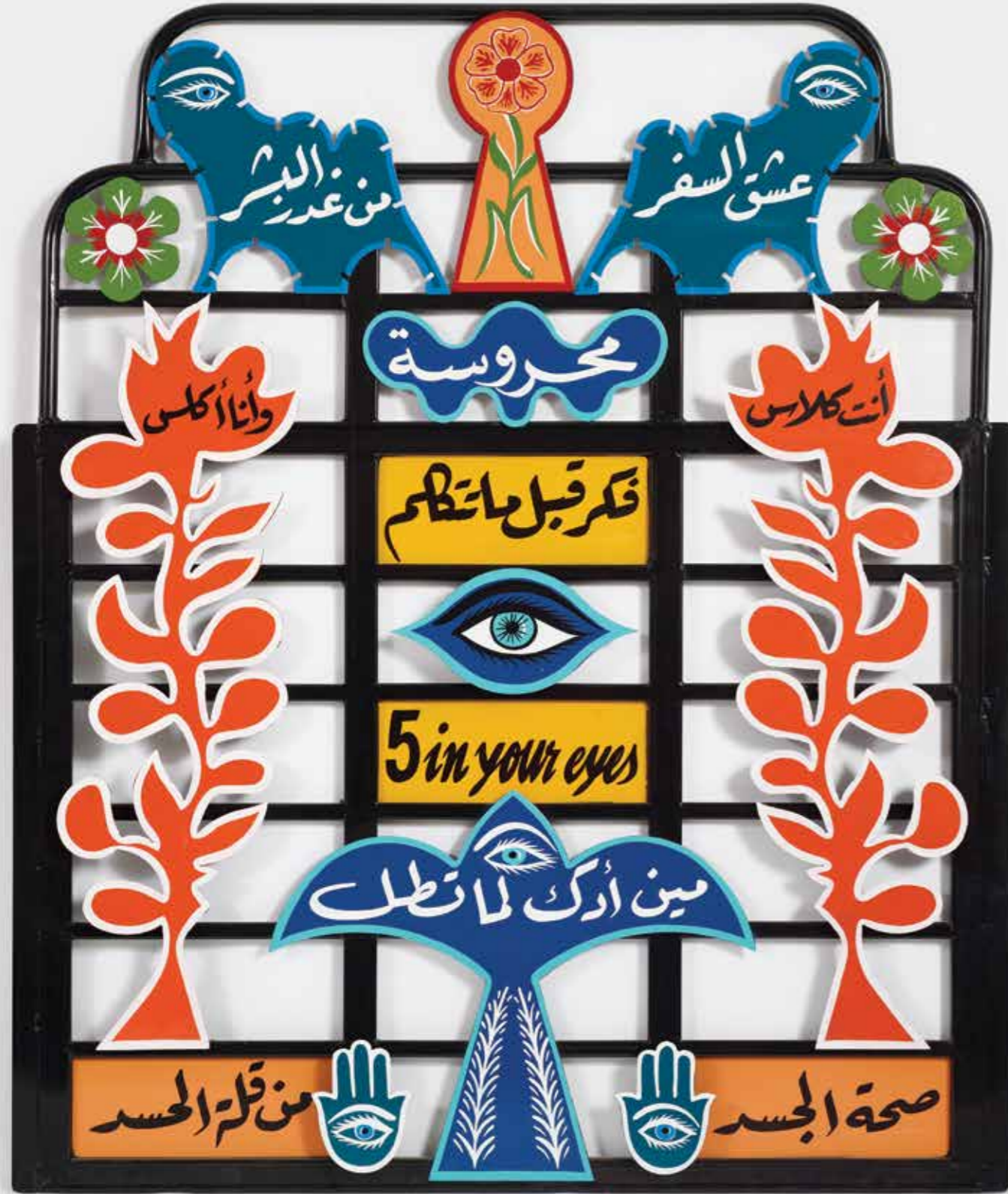


Bithoun
Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



About Zouz

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 140x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



Inta Class

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 140x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



Rajaa ya Mama
 Medium: Iron hand painted
 Dimensions: 130x100cm
 Year: 2022-2023



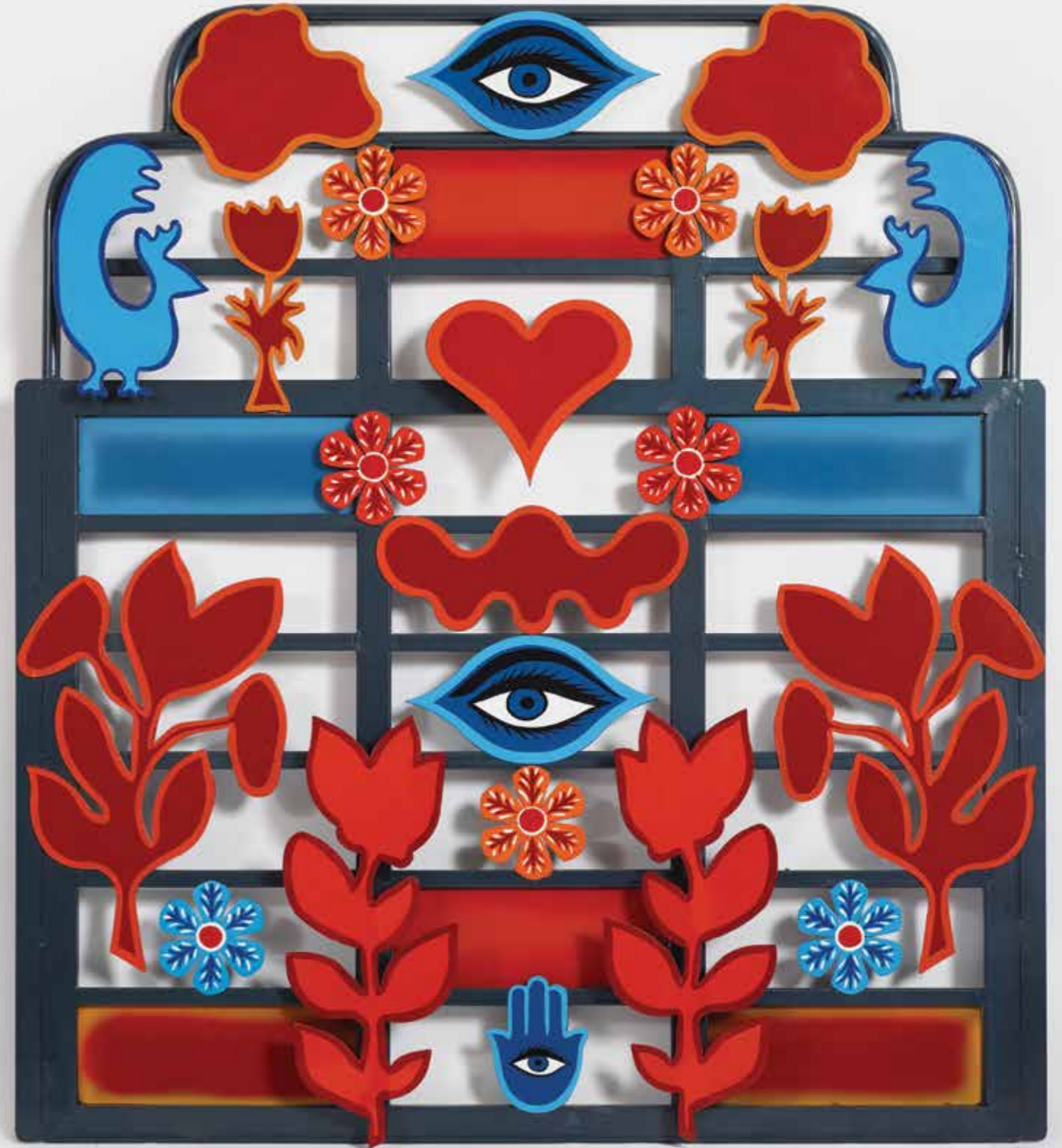
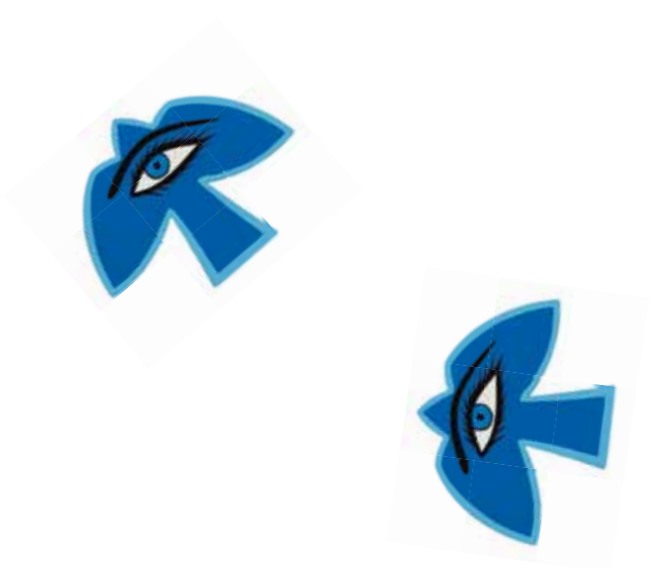
Bhebak ya Loubnan
 Ya watan bhebak
 Rajaa ya Mama
 Yakhzi al 3ein





Ya Zayni

Medium: Iron hand painted
Dimensions: 140x120cm
Year: 2022-2023





Mahrouse
 Ya red Allah
 wu red al waldin
 Ghadar ya zaman
 Yekhzi el 3ein



Mahrouse
 Medium: Iron hand painted
 Dimensions: 140x120cm
 Year: 2022-2023





Chil 3aynak
Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120cm / Year: 2022-2023





Wahiatak Bit Moun

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120cm / Year: 2022-2023

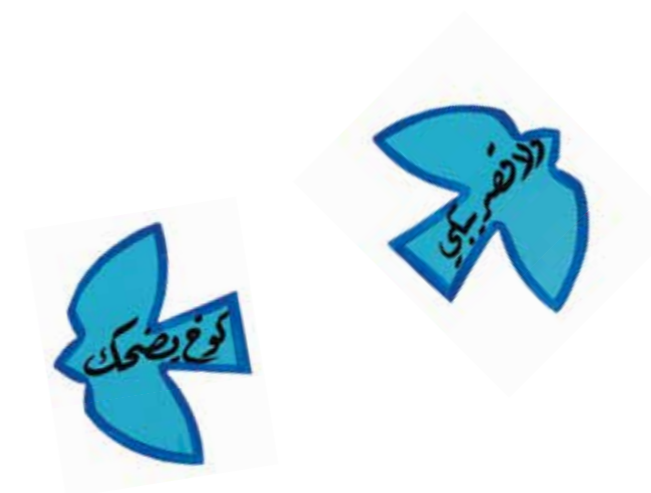


5 In Your Eyes

Medium: Iron hand painted
Dimensions: 140x120cm
Year: 2022-2023



Adat assad
Wu la indarat had
Tawlet al bab
Zeynm al rahal





Kamar Al Zaman
Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



Bonjour

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 150x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



Together For Ever
 Medium: Iron hand painted
 Dimensions: 140x120cm
 Year: 2022-2023



Ya Rab redak
 Wa red al waladin
 Allah yabarak
 Allah ma3ak





HeLo Al Rawak
 Medium: Iron hand painted
 Dimensions: 140x120cm
 Year: 2022-2023



Chil 3einak 3ein
 Wa ma 3aleik meneh
 Waz3inak
 Tayal al amar



Al Hamdou Lillah
 Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 140x160cm / Year: 2022-2023

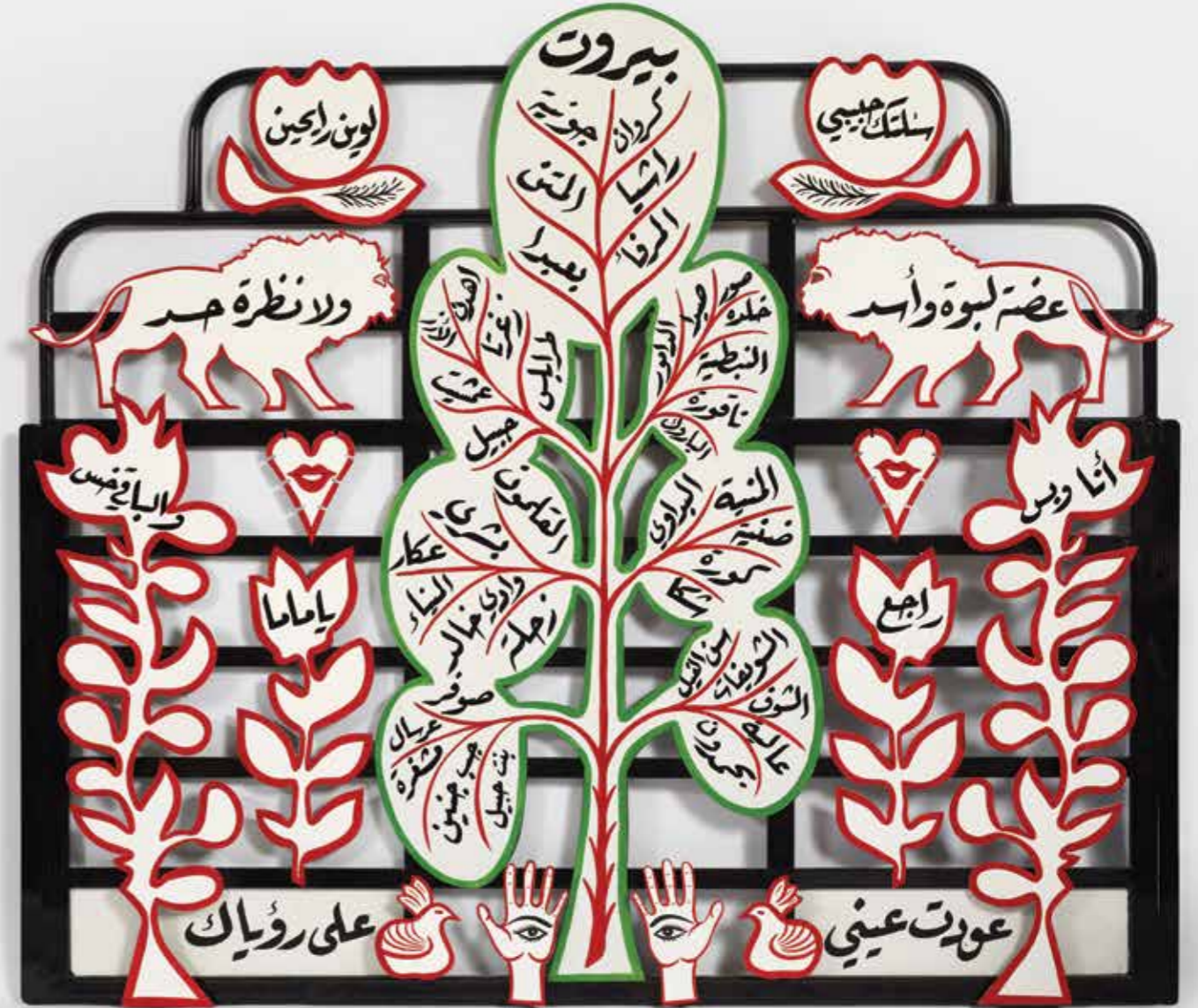
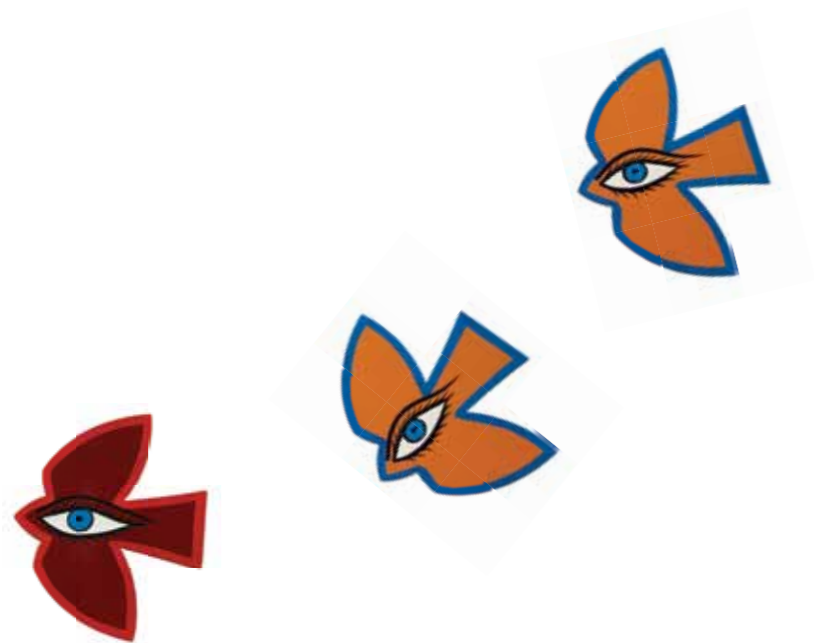


Msayyara
 Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 160x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



Beirut
 Ana wo bass
 3owdat 3eyn
 3ala ro2yak

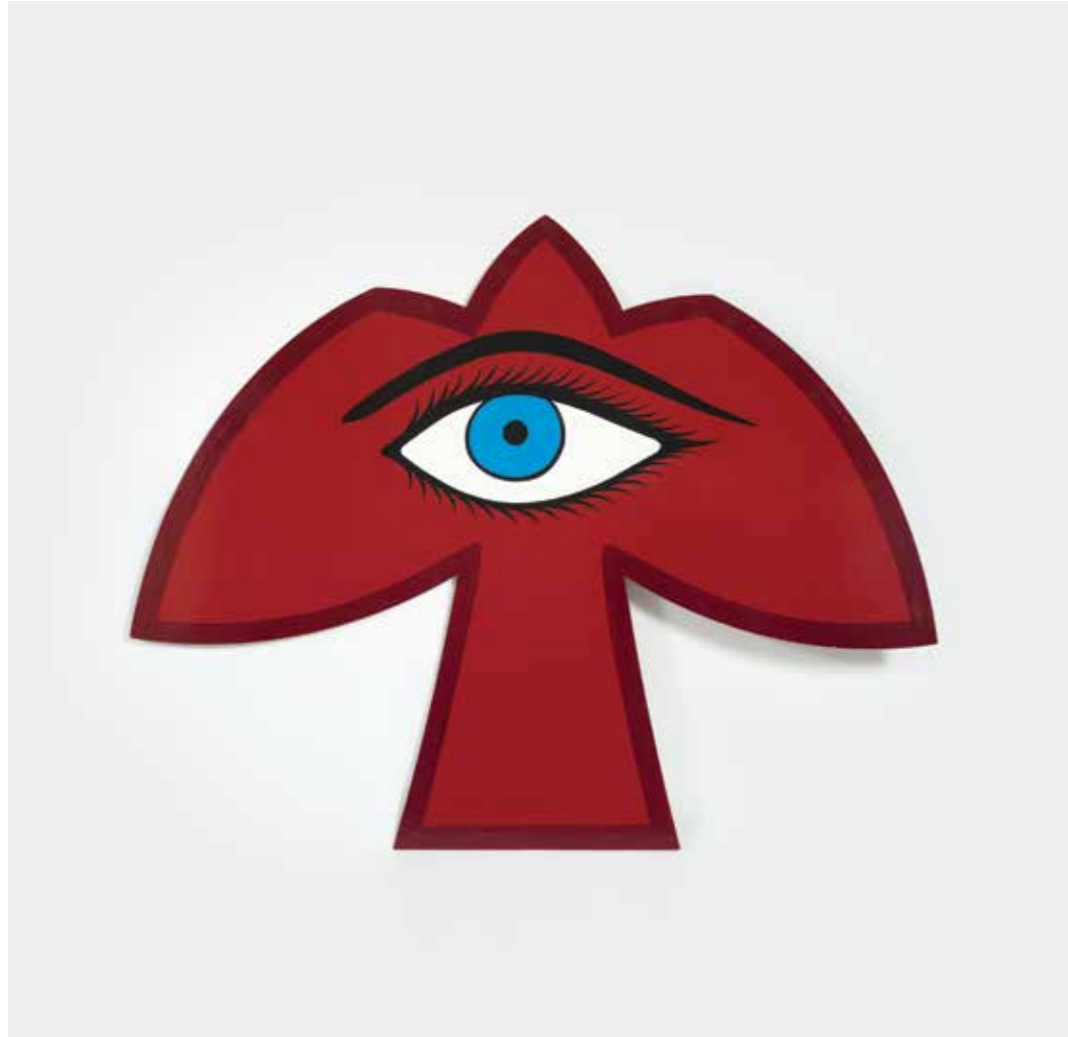
Tree Of Life
 Medium: Iron hand painted
 Dimensions: 145x160cm
 Year: 2022-2023





A1 Tej

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120 cm / Year: 2022-2023



Tayr Al Masa
Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 90x110cm / Year: 2022-2023



Touyour
Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120cm / Year: 2022-2023



Touyour Al Leil

Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x120cm / Year: 2022-2023

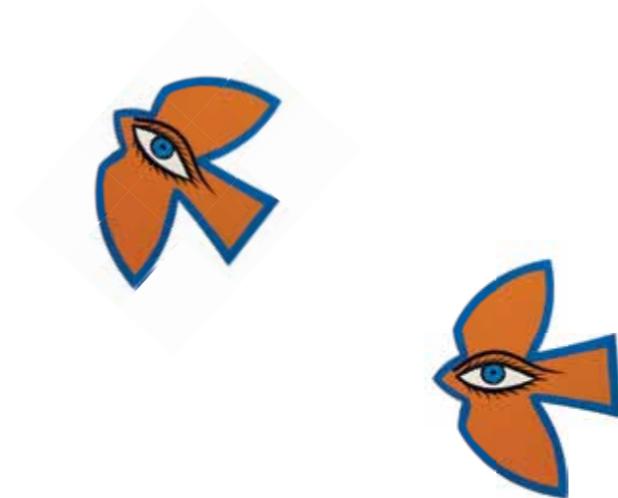


Ya Ghali
 Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 100x50cm / Year: 2022-2023



Arzetna 3ezzetna
 Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 130x50cm / Year: 2022-2023

Ya watani
Izatouna barzatouna
Ahfad ardak
Ya ghali ya watani
Tahmi ardak



Ya Watani
 Medium: Iron hand painted / Dimensions: 100x50cm / Year: 2022-2023



Born in 1960 in Lebanon, a country so absurd, so melted with ongoing problems, so embedded with a history of war and survivals, I feel like I had lived many lives in the same time and many death too.

Resurrection in art was my weapon, my meditation, my armor. Since my childhood, I knew that this would be my path, but the years of war which I grew up with, did not allow me to study properly my passion.

I'm labeled a self-taught artist, which took my long years of working on my artistic expression, using various mediums to express different subjects. Since 2000 my observations and inspirations shifted towards memory, identity, and socio-political subjects that concerns us all, ongoing present life.

Projects, 'Of others' 2011 'Generation war' 2013 'Perpetual Identities' 2018, and 'Raje3a ya mama' 'Mother I'll be back', 2023, reflects our identity and my quest around this subject, life so far has been an interesting journey through artistic expression.

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Design by Chloe Chalhoub

Photography by Mansour Dib

Printed by Salim Dabbous Printing Company s.a.r.l.

Year: 2023

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