

CHAOUKI CHAMOUN

'HORIZONS'

April 23rd – May 25th, 2019

Mark Hachem Gallery Beirut is delighted to present 'Horizons', a Solo Exhibition by artist Chaouki Chamoun, featuring a selection of his most recent works.

After last year's immaculate show and Akel Awitt's visit to Chamoun's studio beforehand, he returns for another sit down with the artist, this time with a new body of works and they discuss the fearless use of color in Chamoun's work.

'Danger is nothing but a game to Chaouki Chamoun, and he does play this game fairly well. As if he were a blameless little kid or a courageous man, someone reckless and out of the ordinary.'

According to Awitt, colors tend to be Chamoun's protagonists in his paintings, in fact they actually are. To Chaouki, all of the colors are heroes and each one occupies its whole surface with no partner, companion nor rival or any attempt to mix, dissolve or blend.

Awitt carries on to write: 'Chamoun's usage of the cursed and worrying colors makes you skip a heartbeat. It is these unusual colors in the history of art that reign as masters in this exhibition, with the other more traditional ones. Subsequently, here, in this land of innovation, no boundaries exist on the colors. No censorship, elimination or exception.'

In this exhibition Chamoun plays with fire and court shipping danger, Awitt explains. And even though this exhibition is abundant with extremely dangerous paintings made of combinations of wild, harsh, problematic, shiny, seducing and rousing colors, it does not fall in their trap shying off but it leads on radiant and glowing.

Nevertheless, Chamoun does preserve traditions and customs, whether in the structure, the technique and even the coherence of all the elements and their consistency. Even with the tiny humans horizontally laid out at the bottom of his paintings, Chamoun has yet to release them, a vital element to his message and a unique signature.

Born in Lebanon in 1942, Chaouki Chamoun received his Diploma of Higher Studies from the Fine Art Institute at the Lebanese University in 1972. Being the first in his class, he was awarded a six-year fellowship to pursue his graduate studies in the United States and rejoin its faculty upon his return. In 1975, he received his Masters in Fine Arts from Syracuse University, NY and from 1975 to 1979 he was a full-time fellow at the PhD program at New York University concentrating on Aesthetics and Studio Art.

Chamoun has had over 30 solo shows since 1975, exhibiting in New York and several other cities in the United States, Lebanon, Europe, Hong Kong, and the Arab world. He has also participated in over 55 group shows and Biennales since 1968 including Rochester Memorial museum in 1974, Lowe Art Centre, Syracuse 1975, Sursock Museum in Beirut in 1984-2008, Europe' Art, Geneva 1999, Sotheby's Exhibit and Auction London Oct 2007, Christie's exhibit and auction Dubai October 2007 and April 2008, Washington AU museum 2010, London 15 and Basel Art Fair 2016.