

Madiha Sebbani is a Moroccan Artist and Curator based in London, endorsed by the British Art Council as a Global Talent in the Field of Visual Arts to live and continue the peruse of her career in the United Kingdom. Madiha as a trained and successful Artist, is able to understand the process of making, from concept through to execution and the challenges faced herein. This provides her with a deeper insight and ability to translate, perceive and interpret the subtle nuances in other Artists' work. She has indeed, through experience, also accumulated a unique business acumen required to developing a successful brand, and to maintain a sustainable career. Her discipline expanded in the past year, by utilising these skills in the founding of 'Contemporary Lab', a registered company which functions as incubator, facilitating collaboration between creative professionals by the nurture of curating exhibitions with both emerging and established Artists, predominantly from the Middle East, Africa, and the Arab world.

Her creative sensibility promotes critical thinking in her practice by questioning notions of the conventional, conformity, identity, and body politics.

Madiha was raised in a military family and her childhood consisted of a formulation rooted by the rigorous combination of both behavioural discipline and social conditioning. Her choice to later pursue a career in Art was met with difficulty, as custom and societal norms would have preferred that the daughter of a soldier choose either a medical or legal profession. From a deeply patriarchal society, Madiha faces continued prejudice and unequal treatment due to her gender and the stigmas associated with being both African and a devoted Muslim/Arab.

By actively pursuing opportunities beyond those that exist in her own country, Madiha broadens her international network to facilitate inclusion and exposure to the art world at large. Factors which commonly restrict and dissuade arts professionals from the African continent include the disparaged value between our currency and those of Europe as well as the expense and rigorous qualifying criteria of international VISA requirements.

As covid-19 surfaced during 2020, Madiha was living in London, United Kingdom whilst completing her master's degree in public art and New Artistic Strategies at the Bauhaus University in Germany. The Kingdom of Morocco had promptly closed its borders causing Madiha to be essentially isolated for an extended period of time, for which she had no warning and was not financially prepared for.

Despite the above-mentioned challenges, Madiha's tenacity has continued to drive her towards achieving the recognition and success as detailed in the selection below:

- DEG (Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft) presents the Group Exhibition 'YMA (Young Moroccan Artists)' Curated By Madiha Sebbani, 4 – 17 September 2019 in Cologne, Germany.

Participating Artists Include: Madiha Sebbani, Mohammed Said Chair, Nafie Ben Krich, Amine Asselmane, Rachid Ouhnni, Eliassa & Hamza Ben Rachad.

The 'YMA' was a travelling group exhibition, first presented at the Sulger-Buel Gallery in London, with support of the Kingdom of Morocco Embassy in the United Kingdom, and was later shown at the KFW-DEG Bank in Cologne, invited as the feature country for 2019 as part of their cultural programme.

The 'YMA' exhibition brings together the wide range of art created by emerging Moroccan artists. Each artist is inspired by their own unique environments and takes the beholder on a visual journey.

The exhibition aims at fostering a young Moroccan contemporary art scene through a multidisciplinary exhibition of artists from the same generation. The goal of the exhibition is to showcase young creative talent and the artist's sensibilities as both African and global citizens.

- ESCAP3 Gallery presents 'Sacred' Curated By Madiha Sebbani, the third Group Exhibition of the Gallery, 21 January – 21 March 2021. This is our first Group Exhibition to include international artists beyond Africa and its diaspora.

Participating Artists Include: Hicham Matini & Saad Nazih (Morocco); Hmoud Al Attawi, Ghada Al Rabee & Obaid Al Safi (Saudi Arabia); Tanisha Bhana, Bernard Brand, Allen Laing & Cow Mash (South Africa).

2020 Has undoubtedly been a year of catastrophe and uncertainty which has perhaps forced humanity to adapt, reflect on our habitual practices, our future existence, spiritual rituals and inherited values, and how the rapid increase in technological progress have on our everyday lives.

Inspired by Albert Einstein who said that: "life is sacred, that is to say that it is the supreme value, to which all other values are subordinate" and Frank Capra, the Italian film director, who said that: "A hunch, is creativity trying to tell you something" engaging the interior of an artist in its immaterial quality and its relationship with their artistic practice.

Reflecting on the notion of 'Sacred', I wanted to explore varying perspectives from artists whose creative practices are inseparable from their beliefs, and how they transmute this intimate relationship into their everyday lives and work. The exhibition investigates the sacred as a global value aiming at creating a dialogue and providing insight into the various

methodologies employed by the artists to shed light on their sacred studio work.

- ESCAP3 Gallery presents our first Solo Exhibition: Madiha Sebbani 'Until Further Notice' Curated By Andrew Lamprecht, 21 March – 30 May 2021.

'Until Further Notice' presents a body of work by Moroccan-born, UK-based contemporary artist Madiha Sebbani in which she explores the complex interplay between the private and the public; silences and things spoken; as well as authority and personal identity and integrity. Deeply influenced by her experiences of the period of Covid-19 lockdown, the works exhibited nevertheless draw on a continued practice of several years that is embedded in audibly silent performativity.

How we 'perform' in a space, place and time of lockdown is an extremely rich and often anxiety-ridden terrain and Sebbani faces this challenge head-on in her work. In some ways we are 'all' in a state of waiting 'until further notice': it is as if the pause button has been pressed on a CD-player; the disc is still spinning frantically but there is no sound coming out of the speakers. Everything is insecure; nothing is set in stone; we are in a space of liminality. The artist has not been able to return to her home country due to Morocco's borders being closed: Sebbani is quite literally in an in-between space of tenuous 'unsureness' and has worked with this in expressing such emotions with power and - literally - authority.

The exhibition consists of three intricately crafted masks, where it is almost impossible to separate their donning and being performed by the artist from their material existence; stills of these objects being worn by Sebbani are integral to the show. These masks are made of materials such as copper and sheepskin and incorporate physical elements such as a crown that are vitally and viscerally charged with emblematic and historical memory.

In the 'Authority Project' the artist uses her body to interact with traces of individual and collective memory. Her body literally becomes a material alongside muslin, uniforms and traditional dresses, incorporating daily and militaristic gestures asking, 'What is the price of silence, the price of a bid?' She notes: 'All uniforms are the same - guardians of the law - authority has no face.'

Video footage and stills from the 'Mask Project' and the 'Authority Project' as well as the physical artefacts of the masks convey the full message of the 'body' of work on display.

In these works she attempts to overcome physical, symbolic and authority-imposed boundaries, always addressing and challenging these borders but

staying 'within the lines' as required for one's health and well-being (as much psychological as corporeal).

Madiha Sebbani reflects: 'It has been necessary for me to use the body as an intermediate base or as a third material in this work.'

This is a powerful statement of where we are positioned now... at least until further notice.

- Madiha Sebbani Receives Letter of Recognition from the President of the 'Arab World Institute', Jack Lang in 2021.

"Dear Mrs Madiha Sebbani,

I wanted to congratulate you warmly on your virtual exhibition entitled 'Until Further Notice' at ESCAP3 Gallery.

The accuracy of this title reminds us of the infinite and almost universal wait which we are facing nowadays as a sequel of the pandemic Covid-19.

The bubble which you carry at Fèz, in the abnormally deserted streets of Bab Al Ouard, or even the meditation that you undertake in the Casablancon turmoil of Derb Moulay Cherif...

These different works and performances describe the in-between in which we are immersed, frozen in a halted temporality where movement gave way to stillness, where uncertainty has taken over scientific hypotheses which used to guide us until now.

A colourful artist, I am an admirer of your enthusiasm and of your pledge for art and culture. Programmer of festivals for the collective 'Jeunes Artistes Marocains (Young Moroccan Artists)', you multiply exhibitions in iconic artistic places: London, Cologne, New York... I learned that you will have an exhibition this summer with Saudi artists as talented as Hmoud Al-Attawi or Ghada Al-Rabee.

Your outstanding tenderness or your astonishing artistic precociousness certainly explains the growth of your career. You participate wonderfully to the radiance of your native country, Morocco, whether it is in the region or, on a larger scale, on the international artistic stage.

Congratulations once again on this new cultural event. I hope to welcome you soon at the Institute of Arab World where you are always welcomed.