

B A H R A M
H u m a n B e i n g s

10. 9. 2022 – 23. 10. 2022

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Vincent Polakovič director of Danubiana,
Bahram Hajou artist, Benjamin Eck curator

The Phenomenon that is Bahram

It was in 2009 when the Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum in Bratislava received an offer to organize an exhibition featuring a selection of Slovak art in Damascus.

It was a great honor for us to be chosen from among many other cultural institutions in Slovakia, and we prepared a joint exhibition of several painters and sculptors with the utmost respect for the history and culture of the host country. The exhibited artists included Vladimír Kompánek, Jozef Jankovič, Rudolf Fila, Peter Pollág, Ján Hlavatý, Dan Meluzin and several others.

The exhibition received extremely positive responses and reactions from everyone who had the opportunity to see it. The warm welcome extended to our artists and museum representatives in Damascus and Palmyra heralded future cooperation in other exhibition projects, and the reciprocal exhibition at the Danubiana featuring the works of Bahram Hajou and Sabhan Adam, among others,



promised to be a great reward for this cultural achievement.

However, when the time came to transport the artwork to Slovakia the war in Syria erupted, all cultural activities were suspended and it seemed that our joint activities would never come to fruition. Yet, after some time, and to my great surprise, I received an invitation to meet with a Syrian artist in Vienna.

Upon my arrival, I was introduced to Bahram Hajou. Not tall in stature, this elegantly dressed man with an extremely sincere gaze radiated energy that filled the room. He was unusually charismatic, always smiling and highly educated. I have rarely met a person like him in my thirty years as a galleryist.

We connected from the first moment of our meeting and his sincerity and child-like innocence and purity had a magical effect on me.

When his master works were presented to me in catalogues and books, I was stunned. I had never before seen such excellent figural painting. His works were dominated by unique and inimitable colors, in particular sandy-browns, blacks, yellows, whites and violets. To me, a European, his paintings radiated an intensive hint of the Orient emphasized by the scents and incense of ancient Kurdistan, Persia and other long-forgotten cultures which I had never before encountered. His works literally pulled me into a dialogue and discovery of the atmosphere and thrill among the figures masterfully captured in the paintings by the artist. The ease with which they were painted, was obvious.





They had to be painted by an artist who thought not only about the composition but the way to express the feeling, experience and story he desired to share with us.

From that moment I felt and knew that this was not our last meeting.

That is why I gladly accepted his invitation to visit Münster, where he had been living and working for several years. Bahram personally waited

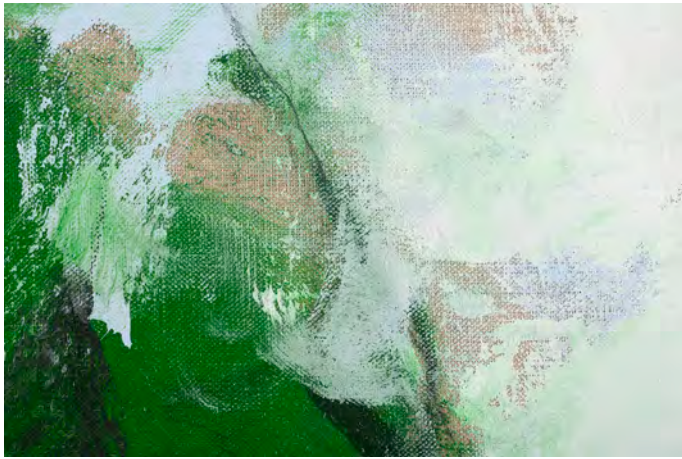


for me at the Düsseldorf airport, and drove me to his studio. We talked for several hours, got to know each other and only then did he gradually reveal his secrets to me and show me not only his works, but also books and catalogues published in connection with them.

From that moment it was clear to me that when we at the Danubiana began preparing our next exhibition plan, we would have to do everything possible to introduce this unique artist to our sophisticated visitors.

Bahram even invited me to his home, where his wife Fatma prepared aromatic and tasty Kurdish dishes full of vegetables and parsley, which I can even taste today. Then he took me back to the airport where we said goodbye, this time as brothers. That flight home passed so quickly. After some time, our museum set the date for the exhibition and we all waited impatiently for the transport company which brought the entire exhibition to our place in mid-January 2013. Bahram's assistance with its installation and his interest in presenting himself in our country in the best light were harbingers of success. And a success it was, as hundreds of guests came to the vernissage to meet this artist, whose name we promoted so intensively.





Bahram did not let us down. He enchanted everybody by his work and his unique charisma and energy which emanated in all directions. Over ten thousand visitors from Slovakia and abroad came to the Danubiana to see the works of this outstanding artist.

After only a couple of years, admirers of Bahram's work began asking museum representatives when we would prepare another exhibition of this artist. Since our contacts and regular mutual communication continued intensively even after the exhibition, it was not a problem to suggest a date to again exhibit his works in the beautiful spaces of our museum.

The new date was planned for autumn 2022, and respected gallerist Benjamin Eck from Munich was the curator who designed the exhibition and installation of works.

It was extremely interesting to observe the ease with which he, with assistance from Bahram placed the artworks and how he grasped the space he had never directly seen before; his only contact had been through floor plans and photographs.

This brilliant exposition full of Bahram's works again excited and thrilled our visitors. It featured the work of a mature artist whose unique and unmistakable artistic line differentiates him from others.

Our friendship with Bahram and his ties to the Danubiana represent a commitment for us even for the future. We look forward to the opportunity to organize a third exhibition of this artist in our unique "cathedral of art" located in the middle of the majestic Danube River. Many people say that it is one of the most romantic museums of modern

art not only in Europe, but the world.

At our first exhibition in 2013 we presented Bahram primarily as a Kurdish-Syrian artist, and in the second exhibition in 2022 he was profiled as an acknowledged European artist. We believe that the third exhibition will showcase him as an artist whose works are admired and respected at the



most famous museums, galleries and exhibition houses around the world.

I wish this for Bahram and the Danubiana from the bottom of my heart.

Until we meet again by the Danube, friends.

Vincent Polakovič



Bahram Hajou, in his NYC studio, 2022

BAHRAM HAJOU

The human being in the center. More precisely: the entirety of being human, with a focus on challenges and shortcomings in (inter)human or even political discourse. Subtle and yet relentlessly direct. In striking and energetic compositions that instantly triggered interpretations, memories and consternation in me. Trepidation and melancholy were followed by acceptance, compassion and many sensations more – an emblem of human existence.

The figurative-abstract compositions of Bahram Hajou immediately drew me under their spell, when a collector friend showed me three works of the German Syrian painter. With expressive passion Bahram Hajou breaks through to the human essence. So powerful and charged with tension that it was impossible for me to focus „neutrally“ on technical-formal aspects. At least not without wanting to connect emotionally and enter a dialogue. In doing so, the images not only made me feel the coldness, anger, or pain of the figures, but also struck me at my core due to their abstract facelessness: a moment of my own unmasking, embedded in a philosophical discourse about being human.

In the summer of 2021, I had the honor of visiting Bahram Hajou in Münster - in his studio at home and in his light-flooded studio in the Kulturgelände Hawerkamp. A dinner with his wife Fatma, Syrian meze and rabbits in the garden full of fruit trees - getting to know Bahram Hajou. An artist who describes his technique as „technique-less“. An artist for whom people are the greatest inspiration and who wants to encourage (self-)reflection. An artist, a visionary, a human being.

Whether dysfunctional relationships, the oppression of women or the battle of the sexes: Bahram Hajou's large-format works are created in a multi-layered process that reflects the depth of content immanent in the images. In the first step, Bahram Hajou lays the canvas on the floor and mixes acrylic paints with powder pigments on the canvas itself. With rags and brushes he spreads

Lidská bytost v centru. Přesněji: celistvost lidského bytí se zaměřením na výzvy a nedostatky v (mezi) lidském či dokonce politickém diskurzu. Jemné a přitom neúprosně přímé. V úderných a energických kompozicích, které ve mně okamžitě vyvolaly interpretace, vzpomínky a zděšení. Po úzkosti a melancholii následovalo přijetí, soucit a mnoho dalších pocitů – emblém lidské existence. Obrazově-abstraktní kompozice Bahrama Hajoua mě okamžitě vtáhly do svého kouzlu, když mi kamarád sběratel ukázal tři díla německého syrského malíře. S expresivní vášní proniká Bahram Hajou k lidské podstatě. Tak silné a nabitě napětím, že jsem se nemohl „neutrálně“ soustředit na technicko-formální aspekty. Alespoň ne bez toho, že bych se chtěl emocionálně napojit a vstoupit do dialogu. Obrazy mi při tom nejen daly pocítit chlad, hněv nebo bolest postav, ale také mě zasáhly v jádru kvůli jejich abstraktní beztvarosti: moment mého vlastního demaskování, zasazený do filozofického diskursu o bytí člověkem.

V létě 2021 jsem měl tu čest navštívit Bahrama Hajoua v Münsteru – v jeho ateliéru doma a v jeho světle zalitým ateliéru v Kulturgelände Hawerkamp. Večeře s manželkou Fatmou, syrským meze a králíky v zahradě plné ovocných stromů - seznámení s Bahramem Hajou. Umělec, který svou techniku popisuje jako „bez techniky“. Umělec, pro kterého jsou lidé největší inspirací a který chce povzbudit (sebe)reflexi. Umělec, vizionář, či Ať už se jedná o dysfunkční vztahy, útlak žen nebo bitvu pohlaví: velkoformátová díla Bahrama Hajoua vznikají ve vícevrstevném procesu, který odráží hloubku obsahu imanentního v obrazech. V prvním kroku Bahram Hajou položí plátno na podlahu a na samotné plátno namíchá akrylové barvy s práškovými pigmenty. Pomocí hadrů a štětců roztírá barevné kapky a do barevných ploch sype písek nebo popel. Bahram Hajou pak plátno pověsí na zeď, několikrát s ním otočí a hledá inspiraci. V dialogu se strukturami a ostrovy barev se obraz postupně vynořuje ve vrstvách. Uhlovou tužkou načrtává postavy nebo hlavy, pak jim dává

blobs of color and scatters sand or ash into the color areas. Bahram Hajou then hangs the can vas on the wall, rotates it several times and looks for inspiration. In dialogue with the structures and islands of color, the image gradually emerges in layers. He sketches figures or heads with charcoal pencil, then gives them shape, sometimes translucent, sometimes pasty, or even paints over parts of them.

The statements are as complex as the layers of material and color themselves, sometimes even hidden behind them. Inadequacies and grievances are simultaneously unmasked and painted over. His pictorial worlds are of universal expressiveness in an internationally understandable (pictorial) language.

Bahram Hajou is a citizen of the world. Born in Kurdistan in 1952, he moved to Iraq in the early 1970s to study first civil engineering and then art. In 1974 he fled to Berlin because of the war and has lived in Münster since the mid-1970s. Here, Bahram Hajou studied archaeology and then completed his studies in sports and art at the College of Education. Since his studies at the renowned Düsseldorf Art Academy, he has devoted himself exclusively to art.

Bahram Hajou's paintings have been exhibited in over 100 galleries and museums around the world. I am proud that he and his works have found their way to Munich and I am happy to be able to show his paintings at the Benjamin Eck Gallery. Bahram Hajou: a painter, a citizen of the world, a human being.

Benjamin Eck, Galerist

tvár, někdy průsvitný, někdy pastovitý, nebo dokonce přebarvuje jejich části.

Výpovědi jsou stejně složité jako vrstvy materiálu a barev samy, někdy dokonce skryté za nimi. Nedostatky a křivdy jsou zároveň demaskovány a přemalovány. Jeho obrazové světy jsou univerzální expresivitu v mezinárodně srozumitelném (obrazovém) jazyce.

Bahram Hajou je občan světa. Narodil se v roce 1952 v Kurdistán, počátkem 70. let se přestěhoval do Iráku, aby studoval nejprve stavební inženýrství a poté umění. V roce 1974 uprchl kvůli válce do Berlína a od poloviny 70. let žije v Münsteru. Zde Bahram Hajou vystudoval archeologii a poté dokončil studium sportu a umění na pedagogické škole. Od studií na renomované düsseldorfské umělecké akademii se věnuje výhradně umění.

Obrazy Bahrama Hajoua byly vystaveny ve více než 100 galeriích a muzeích po celém světě. Jsem hrdý na to, že si se svými díly našel cestu do Mnichova a jsem rád, že mohu jeho obrazy vystavit v Galerii Benjamina Ecka. Bahram Hajou: malíř, světoobčan, lidská bytost.

Benjamin Eck, Galerista



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 160 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 160 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2014 | mixedmedia/canvas | 120 cm x 100 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 120 cm x 140 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 120 cm x 140 cm



Untitled | 2022 | mixedmedia/canvas | 160 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 170 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 150 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2019 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 160 cm



Untitled | 2019 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 160 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 150 cm



Man | 2013/14 | mixedmedia/canvas | 120 cm x 110 cm



Woman | 2013/14 | mixedmedia/canvas | 120 cm x 80 cm



Untitled | 2018 | mixedmedia/canvas | 145 cm x 125 cm



Untitled | 2022 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 160 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 160 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 150 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 150 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2017 | mixedmedia/canvas | 190 cm x 140 cm



Untitled | 2018 | mixedmedia/canvas | 160 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2015 | mixedmedia/canvas | 210 cm x 150 cm



Untitled | 2014 | mixedmedia/canvas | 120 cm x 100 cm



Untitled | 2014 | mixedmedia/canvas | 160 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2010 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2019 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 160 cm



Untitled | 2022 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2011 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2014 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Couple | 2015 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 140 cm x 120 cm



Untitled | 2021 | mixedmedia/canvas | 160 cm x 200 cm



Untitled | 2020 | mixedmedia/canvas | 200 cm x 160 cm

Exhibitions

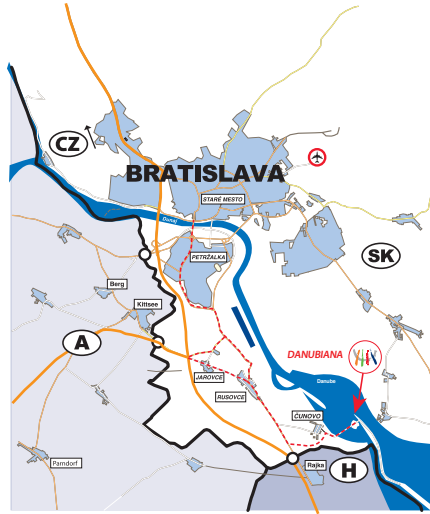
- 1983 Museum Bochum (Germany)
1984 Kulturzentrum Arnheim (The Netherlands)
1985 Pfarrzentrum Münster (Germany)
1986 Schloss Villa Winkel, Ochtrup (Germany)
1986 Design Zander, Emsdetten (Germany)
1987 Museum Bochum (Haus Kemnade) (Germany)
1990 1. Price,
 Quadrat (Josef Albers-Museum),
 Bottrop (Germany)
1990 Le Centre Culturel Regional Wallon,
 Liège (Belgium)
1991 Stadttheater, Münster (Germany)
1991 Galerie AAI, Wien (Austria)
1992 Künstler Haus, Graz (Austria)
1993 World Circuit Arts, Kufa Gallery, London (U.K.)
1993 Galerie Artforum, Wien (Austria)
1993 Galerie Frankenstein, Berlin,(Germany)
1993 Helderse Kunstliga, Den Helder (the Netherlands)
1993 Wohnpark am Tibusplatz, Münster (Germany)
1994 VHS Münster (Germany)
1994 Kunsthaus Pinx, Bochum (Germany)
1994 Internationale Kunstausstellung,
 Budapest (Hungary)
1995 Galerie Artopia, New York (USA)
1996 Kunsthalle der Dominikaner Kirche,
 Osnabrück (Germany)
1997 Hessische Landesvertretung, Bonn (Germany)
1997 Stadttheater Brandenburg (Germany)
1997 Arco Budapest (Hungary)
1997 Breitbach Gallery, Unna (Germany)
1998 AKAD art, Stuttgart (Germany)
1998 Art Frankfurt/Main (Germany)
1998 Art Düsseldorf (Germany)
1999 Gy Crété Galerie, Paris (France)
1999 Regierungspräsident, Münster (Germany)
1999 Rathaus, Wiesbaden (Germany)
1999 Galerie König, Münster (Germany)
1999 Kultur und Skulpturenpark, Katzow (Germany)
1999 Galerie Kunsthaus Pinx, Bochum (Germany)
1999 Kreishaus Gütersloh (Germany)
1999 Zentrum Asept in Königslutter (Germany)
2000 Kunst Uta Dingethal, Merkligen (Germany)
2000 Galerie König, Münster (Germany)
2000 Kunstwerkstatt, Cloppenburg (Germany)
2000 Foyer Rathaus, Wiesbaden (Germany)
2000 Foyer Bezirksregierung Münster (Germany)
2000 Skulpturenpark Katzow (Germany)
2001 Kunsthalle Ahlen (Germany)
2001 OFD Münster (Germany)
2001 Neue Galerie im Artforum, Offenburg (Germany)
2001 Kunsthalle Offenburg (Germany)
2001 Kulturspeicher Oldenburg (Germany)
2002 Staatliches Museum Wien (Austria)
2002 Galerie Kunstfabrik, Düsseldorf (Germany)
2002 Wissenschaftspark Gelsenkirchen (Germany)
2002 BRH Bonn (Germany)
2003 Galerie Blau , Palma d. Mallorca (Spain)
2003 Museum Krakau (Poland)
2003 Kulturspeicher Oldenburg (Germany)
2004 Stadthalle Kamen (Germany)
2004 Kunstraume Norbert Bauer,
 Velbert-Langenberg (Germany)
2004 Kunstmesse Osnabrück - Impulse (Germany)
2004 Haus der Kamener Stadt Geschichte,
 Kamen (Germany)
2005 Galerie Kreuziger, Worbswede (Germany)
2005 Galerie Zeugma, Cologne, (Germany)
2005 Atassi Gallery, Dubai (U.A.E.)
2006 Kunsthalle Faust, Hannover (Germany)
2006 Galerie Holbein, Hannover (Germany)
2006 Galerie Carolyn Heinz, Hamburg (Germany)
2006 Kunstkompakt 4, Gladbeck (Germany)
2007 Galerie Zeugma, Cologne (Germany)
2007 Galerie Green Art, Dubai (U.A.E.)
2007 Galerie Michael Nolte, Münster (Germany)
2007 art club kunstverein,
 Burgwedel/Isernhagen (Germany)
2008 Hewart Art Gallery - Total Arts Gallery in the
 courtyard - Dubai (U.A.E.)
2008 Kunstkompakt 5, Gladbeck (Germany)
2008 Galerie Zeugma, Cologne (Germany)
2008 Kunsthandel Antonia v. Fraunberg,
 Düsseldorf (Germany)
2008 1. Price
 Mediterrane Artbiennale in Trogir,
 Croatia (Symposion)
2009 Artfestival Amman, Jordan (Symposion)

2009 Artfestival Patra, Greece (Symposion)
 2009 Karim Gallery, Amman (Jordan)
 2010 Aida Cherfan Fine Art Gallery, Beirut (Libanon)
 2010 Galerie Kula, Museum Split (Kroatien)
 2012 Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum
 Bratislava (Tzechoslowakia)
 2013 Galerie Ludwig Trossaert, Antwerpen (Belgium)
 2013 Galerie GNG Gilles Naudine, Paris (France)
 2013 White Box Gallery, New York (USA)
 2014 Art House Wien, (Austria)
 2014 Henry Matisse Price,
 Château Musée Grimaldi, (France)
 2014 Galerie Ludwig Trossaert, Antwerp (Belgium)
 2015 Galerie GNG, Paris, (France)
 2015 Kunsthau Langenberg e.V. Alldie Kunst
 (Norbrt Bauer), Düsseldorf (Germany)
 2015 Office Kleine Galerie (Art against violence)
 Wien (Austria)
 2015 Art Élysées, Petit Palace Paris (France)
 2015 Art Fair, Istanbul contemporary, Istanbul (Turkey)
 2016 Foyer des Stadttheaters Münster/Germany
 2016 Galerie Karsi Sanat'ta, Istanbul (Turkey)
 2016 Galerie Ludwig Trossaert, Antwerpen (Belgium)
 2016 Sollefteå konst förening, (Sweden)
 2016 Überkopf Kunstbegegnen, Münster (Germany)
 2016 Palagio Contemporaneo, (Italy)
 2017 Kulturzentrum in Manama (Bahrain)
 2017 Art Karlsruhe (Germany)
 2017 Karim Gallery, Amman (Jordan)
 2017 Artfair Beirut (Liban)
 2018 Artfair Beirut (Liban)
 2018 The Fire Station, Doha, (Qatar)
 2019 GNG, Paris (France)
 2019 International contemporary art fair, Paris (France)
 2019 Im Dialog, Akademie Franz Hitze Haus,
 Münster (Germany)
 2019 Artfair Beirut, (Karim Gallery), Beirut (Liban)
 2019 Gallery Bab, National Cultural Centre Cairo Opera House, (Egypt)
 2020 Art Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe (Germany)
 2020 Galeria Pryzmat, Krakow (Poland)
 2021 Artfair Kairo, Kairo, Ägypten
 2021 B/E Benjamin Eck Galerien, München, Germany
 2022 Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum
 Bratislava (Tzechoslowakia)



Danubiana

MEULENSTEEN ART MUSEUM



DANUBIANA MEULENSTEEN ART MUSEUM

Bratislava-Čunovo, Vodné dielo
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Otváracie hodiny | Opening hours 10:00 – 18:00

v pondelok zatvorené | closed on Mondays

10. 9. 2022 – 23. 10. 2022



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